

laws he likes and he does not like. With this action, the President has invented a retroactive veto on all previous Presidents and all previous congressional acts.

It is ultimately ironic that the executive branch states that several lower courts have rejected the Defense of Marriage Act as unconstitutional, so they are accepting the lower court rulings over a higher court. In the past year, the health care law was ruled unconstitutional, but the Federal Government is pressing forward. The administration was instructed by the courts to lift the drilling moratorium in the gulf, but they stalled.

□ 1110

It is apparent that this administration is bent on placing its political preferences ahead of the courts, ahead of the legislative branch, and the majority of the American people.

Both parties need to understand the precedent that's being set by the President's choosing to not enforce the Defense of Marriage Act. My Democrat friends should imagine for a moment, what if when a Republican President takes the oath and he instructs HHS and all other agencies not to enforce ObamaCare, though it's the law of the land, because some lower court rejected it? They would be outraged, rightfully so, because currently it is the law of the land. A President cannot just unilaterally throw it aside.

Before this conversation is spun as a partisan issue, let me remind everyone, though, that the Defense of Marriage Act passed the House and the Senate by a wide bipartisan majority and was signed into law by a Democrat President. This is not only a slap in the face to our constitutional system; it is a slap to Republicans and Democrats who expressed the will of their districts and States on an issue that has been settled in law.

The people spoke through Congress, and one person, even a President, cannot undermine the will of the people. At least not in the America that I grew up in.

I do not think we will fully understand the implications of this action if we allow it to stand. We must not act partisan now and regret it later. This is not the way to deal with the gay marriage debate, for the President to just sweep it aside and say, "I will not enforce the law."

Many in this Chamber are well aware of my traditional view of marriage and my Biblical world view. I am unashamed of my personal faith in Jesus Christ. I believe that words have meaning, though, and that the meaning of marriage is the union of a man and a woman. The Defense of Marriage Act codified that definition in law, representing the belief of a majority of Americans.

This issue is well beyond faith, though, or a social issue or even a political issue. Marriage is now not only the center of a national debate, it's

now the center of a constitutional debate.

Weeks ago some members of the press suggested that Republicans would ignore the budget and focus on social issues. I find it ironic now that the President has submitted a budget that will raise the national debt to \$26 trillion, by his own numbers, and he has decided to change the national debate from fiscal issues to social issues and gay marriage.

As a Congress, we cannot demand of the executive branch, which is a co-equal branch of government. But I believe we must require the executive branch to fulfill its oath of office and constitutional requirement to faithfully execute the laws of the United States.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. FUDGE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong opposition to attempts by the Republican Governor of Ohio to undermine collective bargaining for Ohio's public employees.

Ohio Senate bill 5 is a measure currently under consideration by the Ohio General Assembly that would strip State workers of collective bargaining rights. I firmly support the right of public employees to collectively negotiate. Who are we as a Nation when we tell our firefighters and our police officers and other public protectors that they should have no say in their working conditions? Does a teacher's experience or education have no economic value? Ohio's proposed legislation is less about fiscal responsibility than an overt political attack on public workers who speak with a collective voice.

As labor battles erupt in State capitals around the Nation, a majority of Americans say they oppose efforts to weaken the collective bargaining rights of public employee unions. According to the latest New York Times/CBS News poll, Americans are against cutting the pay or benefits of public workers to reduce State budget deficits.

We shouldn't forget, Mr. Speaker, the benefits that collective bargaining offers. For almost 28 years, collective bargaining has reduced labor strife, it has reduced the likelihood of strikes, improved training and productivity among public employees, created a sense of job security, and it is fair. It is fair to all working people.

The repeal of collective bargaining will do nothing to balance the budget. Nine percent of the State's budget is for State employees. So just as an example, if we fired every State employee in Ohio, it would save us only \$2 billion, leaving the State without vital services, and there would still be a \$6 billion deficit. Since this does not address the budget deficit, it is clear that anti-worker forces are using this to harm middle-income workers and to kill jobs.

I would like to share a observation with you that was from a former President of the United States, and I quote:

"Republicans stand foursquare for the American home—but not for housing. They are strong for labor—but they are stronger for restricting labor's rights. They favor minimum wage—the smaller the minimum wage, the better. They endorse educational opportunity for all—but they won't spend money for teachers or for schools. They think modern medical care and hospitals are fine—for people who can afford them. That is the philosophy of the masters of the Republican Party."

These are the words of President Harry Truman, and they were spoken in 1948. These words ring as true today as they did in 1948. We have made too many advances over the past generations, and Americans should not be forced to choose between a job and their rights.

We cannot and should not return to the days when public workers had limited rights to bargain. The middle class was created and has been sustained by collective bargaining and other labor protections. The public sector is about working families. Rolling back these rights will hurt the middle-income wage earners of this country and will hurt America.

Ohio needs jobs, not a partisan victory. I urge members of the Ohio General Assembly to deliberate with care and avoid rushing to adopt a measure that weakens our middle class, weakens our State, and costs us jobs.

HIGH-SPEED RAIL FUNDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker and Members of the House, I rise today as the ranking member on the Transportation Subcommittee on Railroads. I have been on this committee for over 19 years. I serve on Transportation because it's one of the most bipartisan committees in the House.

I have got to tell you I am very, very disappointed with Florida Governor Rick Scott. Last week, the Governor told Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood that the State of Florida can do without the \$2.5 billion for Federal highway rail funding. That's \$2.5 billion, and 90 percent of the project is funded with Federal tax dollars. That's money that Floridians sent to Washington that we are sending back to Florida, gasoline tax money, not money from any foreign source, by the way.

In addition, it didn't just happen. We worked on it, bipartisan, for years. In fact, in 1980 Bob Graham appointed me to a committee to work on high-speed rail in Florida. Over 30 years we worked on it. And let me just tell you 90 percent of the funding would put over 60,000 Floridians to work. It's 90 percent of the funding. Is the other 10 percent there? Absolutely. The private

sector has indicated that they would put the 10 percent there.

□ 1120

I have model trains in front of me today. We have over eight companies committed to high-speed rail. In fact, we started the rail system in Florida in this country, the Florida Flagler. In this country, we started the rail system, and now we are the caboose; and they don't use cabooses anymore.

But all of our partners, the Chinese, the French, eight different countries want to be our partners. They have indicated that they would put up the 10 percent because they want to have the first right of refusal to go from Orlando to Miami. And everybody knows that's the money maker. Well, why is the first portion that the State of Florida applied for and the legislature in Florida came to the Congress and asked us to be partners, why was that first leg the first leg? Because all of the environmental issues have been resolved. In other words, we could put rail in Florida tomorrow if this contract went out.

Florida has 12 percent unemployment—12 percent—and in my area 15 percent. The Governor says that he's not a politician—and I agree with him—but he says he's a businessman. What businessman would walk away from 90 percent funding? So, 90 percent funding, and you're a businessman? Well, he's concerned about Florida being left with the 10 percent. Well, if you're a businessman, then you know attorneys. They can write it any way you want to make sure that we can protect the people of Florida. So that's not the issue. Money is not the issue. Liability is not the issue.

This is the worst kind of politics I've seen since I've been elected. It's a sad state of affairs. The Governor says let's get to work. I agree with you, Mr. Governor, but you have to be working on something. You have to have some projects. Infrastructure is what put America to work.

What projects do you have, Mr. Governor, in your budget? You say: Well, I want this money. I think it would be better used for ports. What's in your budget? Ports. Florida has 14 ports. We compete with other States. So what is in your budget that is going to put Floridians to work? You come and say: I want another lane on I-4. Well, anybody who lives in Orlando or visits Orlando knows another lane will not help us. We have eight lanes.

I just returned Monday from Salt Lake City, Utah, where we lost the money. A few years ago, money for Orlando went to Salt Lake City, Utah, and they run trains every day, move 40,000 people a day by rail. That's Salt Lake City, Utah. And so the money that we have appropriated this Friday will go to some other State. It will go to New York or California or Salt Lake City, Utah, or some other place. We are going to have rail in this country.

What happens when failure is not an option? We must make sure that we

work together to put Floridians to work.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

RESPECTING THE AMERICAN WORKER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, a few years back towards the end of my grandfather's life—he was a steelworker for about 40 years—and towards the end of his life, he couldn't drive anymore. I had the pleasure one day of taking him shopping. In Ohio, and where I come from in Niles, shopping is an art form; so we had to go to a certain place for the meat and a certain place for the cheese and a certain place for something that was on sale somewhere else. So I got to spend the day with my grandpa. We had to go and get something, and he said we should go to a certain store.

I said: Well, Grandpa, Giant Eagle is right here. We can just go right here.

He said: We can't go there.

I said: Why not? It's right here.

He said: The meat cutters are on strike and we can't cross the picket line.

He didn't go to Giant Eagle out of respect for the worker, out of respect for the situation that those workers were in at that grocery store.

And the issue that we are talking about in Ohio and in Wisconsin is an issue of respect for the average worker in the United States of America. And for us to somehow try to obscure the issue and blame workers, firefighters who go into burning buildings while we are all running out of them, police officers who we call up when we are in trouble, or teachers who we ask in many instances to spend more time with our kids than we do, somehow push the blame of the major financial meltdown that happened because of Wall Street recklessness, blame the teachers for that and ask them to go out and get rid of their right to stick together and determine what size of classroom, how many kids are in their classroom is ridiculous.

And at the same time, in Ohio, we have the top person who works for the current administration get a \$40,000 pay increase from what the last Governor was paying, and the secretaries and the people in the mail room get a cut. And the firefighters and the police and the teachers get a cut.

While all of this is going on in Ohio, they want to cut the estate tax for the wealthiest people who live in the State of Ohio and ask the teacher to make the sacrifice. This is disrespectful and unfair to the workers in the State of Ohio.

If we want to have a 21st century America where we compete with the globe, where we compete as 300 million people, compete with 1.3 billion people in China, over a billion people in India, and we are going to tell our teachers that they can't be treated with respect, how are we going to get good teachers to come into the teaching profession when they are going to be the foil for all of the problems we have in our country?

When we ask them to take our kids who have lice, who haven't eaten today, who are hungry, who have a domestic violence issue in their family—these children all go before our teachers—and we are going to say that they don't have a right to bargain, a right to come together to say what size their class is? We are going to pull their pensions from them? This is not right. This is not right, and we need to get back to where we were when my grandfather was around.

We realize the world is different and we have to compete globally, but the issue is: Are we going to respect work in the United States of America? Are we going to respect the workers in the United States of America? While all these fat cats have gotten off scot free, we turn around and tell the workers in Ohio and Wisconsin and Indiana and the Big 10 Conference: You've got to take the hit.

It is unfair and it is disrespectful and it is not an American value.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 28 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Pastor Alisa Lasater Wailoo, Capitol Hill Methodist Church, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

Ever-Present God, we know You by many names, but most striking, You know us and each person we represent by name and with love. Thank You.

God who heals, we pray for the full restoration of Representative GIFFORDS