

haven't even put a single jobs bill on the House floor. Instead of creating jobs, they are slashing them. The GOP spending plan eliminates 700,000 jobs and stifles economic growth. Rather than moving the Nation forward, they are forcing America backward.

And this week is no different. Republicans are making things worse for American families as they continue their assault on the middle class. They want to completely abolish four programs designed to help homeowners keep their houses and avoid foreclosure. Republicans have no interest in making these programs work better for the American people. By offering nothing in their place, the GOP is simply abandoning hardworking homeowners who are underwater and struggling to find jobs to pay the bills.

Now, we all know that government foreclosure programs are not perfect. But why are we completely dismantling programs that have helped thousands of Americans stay in their homes? Though not perfect, why are we targeting the victims of the foreclosure and financial crises instead of helping them by fixing these programs?

There's a lot that we can do better without giving up on people like Francisco. Francisco is from Duarte in my district. After a year, he was underwater, and, at the height of the recession, he tried to modify his home loan. He visited his servicer and was pushed back and forth between customer representatives. After 2 years of fighting for help, he only had four pieces of mail from the lender to show for it. He was eventually denied the modification, and he can't even appeal the decision. And though we should be doing more to help him, the Republican plan of doing nothing means that he is completely out of luck.

Commonsense improvements can be made to make the government foreclosure program better, ones that could provide relief to Francisco. Take the Home Affordable Modification Program, or HAMP. Simple fixes like having a case manager assigned to each case will allow for better communication between the customer and the bank. If a customer is denied a loan modification, it would be more effective to appeal the decision instead of having to reapply all over again. And we can do more to provide incentives for banks to complete modifications and ensure that servicers complete due diligence before denying modifications.

These are reasonable solutions that servicers have been slow to adopt, if at all. And if we don't make changes to these programs and instead just throw them away, what will struggling homeowners be left with? They will be left to the banks whose bad policies caused this financial crisis in the first place. They will be left with unstable communities strewn with abandoned homes, and they will be left without a home and no one to turn to for help.

It sounds like Republicans would rather return to old policies that we

know don't work rather than trying to fix the policies we know that can work. Struggling Americans deserve better than that.

NO-FLY ZONE: A CHALLENGE TO THE WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

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

Mr. PAUL. The important question being asked today with regards to foreign policy is should the United States impose a no-fly zone over Libya? There are leaders on both sides of the Capitol and leaders in both parties who are now advising this as well as individuals in the administration. It is my opinion that we should not. It would be foolish, it would have a downside, and we should think very, very carefully before we go expanding the wars that we're already involved in. We're in two major wars with Iraq and Afghanistan, and that involves Pakistan and Yemen already.

So to go into Libya now and impose a no-fly zone—we have to remember, a no-fly zone is an act of war. What moral right do we have to participate in war activity against Libya? Libya hasn't done anything to the United States. They're not a threat to our national security. There's been no aggression. There's no constitutional authority for a President to willy-nilly go and start placing no-fly zones over countries around the world.

We tried this in the 1990s and did it for 8 or 9 years. We had a no-fly zone, along with sanctions and blockades, around Iraq. Finally, it ended up with war. And the wars were based on lies. And then when that happened they said, yes, but it was well worth it because we got rid of a bad guy. But we also lost close to 4,500 American military people, 30-some thousand suffered severe injuries and hundreds of thousands are applying now for disability because we went to war when we shouldn't have gone to war.

To expand this war now makes no sense whatsoever. It's against international law. It challenges the War Powers Resolution. For that reason, we should stop and think. Congress should act. I'm preparing to introduce a resolution next week that it is the sense of Congress that the executive branch can't do this without approval from the Congress.

□ 1020

Why should we do this? Do you think it will cost some money? Yes, it is going to cost a ton of money. Innocent people will be killed. You can't just all of a sudden turn a switch and say don't fly over Libya; you have to bomb a lot of anti-aircraft sites and a lot of military establishments, so the war is on.

From my viewpoint, this is the kind of thing that has been going on too long. It contributes significantly to our bankruptcy, and we are now spending approximately \$1 trillion a year main-

taining our empire around the world. We are in the process of remaking all the borders and leadership in the Middle East and Central Asia, and now in North Africa we're getting involved. We have invested \$70 billion trying to prop up a dictator in Egypt, and look at how that ended up. Now we are hustling around to find out who the next dictator is.

So if we get involved, I'm not sure they even know who to bomb and which one and who is going to come out on top. That is an internal matter. It is a civil war that is going on. We can cheer for one side or the other, but that is not a justification to place the burden on the American people, both militarily and individually, as well as monetarily. Some would say yes, that sounds good, I agree, and as long as we get approval from the U.N. and NATO, it will be okay. But, you know, that is just really a cop-out. What army and air force and technology does the U.N. have, and what does NATO have? You get a resolution at the U.N. that says let's take out this bad guy and do these things, or NATO does it. They are all of our airplanes and all our money. And no matter what, anything and everything that goes wrong, the United States will be blamed for it. There is enough resentment against us already for pretending that we can tell every other country how to live.

The best way to look at this, I believe, is how would we as a people and how would we as a Congress respond if we were a weaker nation and there was a stronger nation, if they came and imposed a no-fly zone over us or had sanctions against us or had a blockade. We wouldn't accept that. That would unify us. So I don't buy into this thing that this is the only humanitarian thing we can do, expand the war.

If we want to do something for humanity, we need a new foreign policy. We need a foreign policy that isn't built on militarism; it's built on more cooperation and more trade and not picking our dictators.

Look at what happened after we picked a dictator for Iran. Sure, it lasted for 25 years or so. But eventually it radicalized the Islamists and they had a revolution, and we came out on the short end of that. So I think it is time that we reassess this and think about a policy that makes a lot more sense. Economically, we need to do it.

NUCLEAR WASTE AT YUCCA MOUNTAIN: OVER MY DEAD BODY

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

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I have been in Congress now for 12 years. The very first speech I made on the floor of the House was why nuclear waste should not be stored at Yucca Mountain, Nevada. I cannot believe 12 years from when I first made that speech, I am back in the well of the House talking about why Nevada should not be

the site for the nuclear repository for this country.

President Obama defunded the Yucca Mountain project, and let me tell you why he took this very bold step: because 77 percent of the people of the State of Nevada do not want nuclear waste stored at Yucca Mountain. There are groundwater issues, seismic activity, volcanic activity, and it is 90 miles from the major population center of Las Vegas.

It is dangerous. There are no current EPA standards. And why is that? No current EPA radiation standards, because there is no way to set radiation standards for material that has a radioactive half shelf life of 300,000 years. But the Republican budget that has just been submitted resurrects Yucca Mountain and starts the process of dumping another \$100 billion into a hole in the Nevada desert where there will never, ever be any nuclear waste stored.

At the same time that the majority is calling for spending more money to dump nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain, they are also pushing for devastating cuts that will end the loan guarantees for a new solar power plant in the State of Nevada near the community of Tonopah. The result will be the loss of 600 jobs at a time when the Silver State has double-digit unemployment. Almost 15 percent of the people who live in Nevada have no job, and they are going to take away 600 more by this very foolish act. Construction of this new solar plant will not only provide hundreds of paychecks to Nevada workers, it will also supply enough clean and renewable energy to power 75,000 homes in the State of Nevada. Without these loan guarantees that are now on the Republican chopping block, this solar project's bright future is looking mighty, mighty dim.

Tapping renewable energy sources, like the wind and solar and geothermal, all in great abundance in the State of Nevada, is where the future of this Nation and certainly Nevada's energy needs are.

Do we want to continue to rely on the Saudis and the Venezuelans and the Libyans for our energy needs to be met? I don't think so. Renewable is the way to go.

This Nation and Nevada's future is in clean energy, not in nuclear waste stored at Yucca Mountain, yet the Republicans want to cut funding for solar and other renewable resources that can be harnessed to provide clean energy and jobs for our local workers. And they are pushing these cuts while calling for \$100 billion to be dumped down a hole in the middle of the Nevada desert, as I said, 90 miles from a major population center.

I reject these efforts to restore the funding to Yucca Mountain. It is more wasteful spending at a time when they are talking about fixing the deficit. This is no way to do it by adding an extra \$100 billion. And I will make this pledge to you now: There will be no nu-

clear waste shipped to Yucca Mountain because it will be shipped over my dead body. I will lay across those railroad tracks and stop that train from depositing nuclear waste in my great State.

I oppose the cuts as much as I oppose the funding of Yucca Mountain. I oppose the cuts in the solar energy loan guarantee program that will cut 600 jobs from the State of Nevada and prevent us from moving forward for a bright, renewable energy future.

HONORING LANCE CORPORAL RAYMON JOHNSON

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

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House this morning with great sorrow but also with great honor to celebrate the life of Lance Corporal Raymon Johnson, who answered his Nation's call of duty in 2007 after graduating from Shaw High School in 2006. On October 13, 2010, he made the ultimate sacrifice while serving his country and protecting his country and fellow servicemen abroad. He was killed while conducting combat operations in the Helmand Province of Afghanistan.

Lance Corporal Johnson was deployed to Afghanistan as part of the 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division out of Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. He leaves behind his mother, Gwendolyn; his father, Gregory; a sister, LaQuita; and a brother, Ramon, who serves in the Georgia National Guard. He also leaves behind a nephew, Andre.

Raymon desired to become a United States Marine from an early age. Family members recall Raymon spending hours playing military video games and watching the military channel when he was a teenager. Raymon began training to enter the service even before he graduated from high school, and he passed up recruitment offers from the Navy, the Army, and the Air Force to join the Marines. Many family members were apprehensive about Raymon joining the Marines, but he felt it was his duty to serve. He told his family: Don't try to worry about me much, I'm glad I'm doing what I always wanted to do.

Friends and family members who recalled Raymon remember a young man who was not only driven to serve his country, but also someone who was caring, compassionate, and filled with integrity. At his funeral, a teary-eyed Ramon Johnson, his twin brother, remembered the good times he and his brother had baking cakes with their grandmother. His uncle, a reverend and former Marine, said Raymon wanted to fight for a cause.

Like all men and women in the armed services, Lance Corporal Johnson wanted to serve his country bravely, and he did. He took satisfaction in his job every day because he knew his

work touched so many millions of people. He was encouraged every day because he truly felt the Afghani people appreciated what the U.S. military is doing.

□ 1030

He desired to build a school for the Afghani children once the Taliban had been driven out.

No words can express the loss of Lance Corporal Johnson's family and how they feel. And I'm proud to salute such a fine young son, brother, uncle, and friend.

The young men and women of our armed services continue to make great sacrifices every day for the Nation that they love and a Nation that will never forget to remember the debt that they have paid.

Thank you, Raymon Johnson.

THE FEDERAL BUDGET AND OUR NATION'S PRIORITIES

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, it's been 2 years, 5 months, and 23 days since Lehman Brothers collapsed and the Wall Street dominos began to fall. It's been 2½ years since Wall Street mortgage bond traders and their criminal management brought the world financial system to its knees.

There hasn't been one person held accountable for it. Not one conviction. The biggest scandal in American history, and there's been no jail time for anyone.

We Democrats cleaned up the mess. We saved the country from riots in the streets. But no one was convicted. I think a lot of voters, Tea Party voters included, are seething with anger about the injustice.

Riding this wave of voter anger, 2 weeks ago this House passed one of the worst bills ever considered in Congress, H.R. 1, a bill the Republicans have called a "budget," that was nothing less than an attack on children and working people in this country. I think all the people who voted for it should be ashamed.

Budgets are moral documents. They say what a country's priorities are. But looking at what the Republicans passed in this House, it's hard to believe that the bill is what Tea Party voters really bargained for in the last election.

In the papers this week, we're reading that the Tea Party freshmen are now going to school. They are taking classes on the Federal budget—"Budget 101" is what they call it. So after they balanced the books of the country entirely on the backs of children and women, they are actually learning a thing or two about the budget. It's about time. They're learning the basics after the vote.

But I don't think the Tea Party voters wanted a war on children. Tea Party freshmen certainly didn't run on