

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

that basis. I think the voters look at what this country has been through in the last few years and they see the terrible injustice of it. I don't think the Tea Party movement is about punishing women and children and poor people. I think they want common-sense justice.

Mr. Speaker, only 12 percent of the country's budget is spent on these important programs for the needy. When you cut these programs, you pull American children out of Head Start, you put Americans on the street, you let the bridges we go to work on crumble. That doesn't balance the budget.

Without any changes to current policy, the budget deficit will drop to \$500 billion in 2 years. Now, that deficit will slowly rise again. This slow rise in the coming years is the big issue, and it's caused by two things: increased health care costs and a defense budget that is out of control.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to fix the long-term budget deficit of this country by lowering health care costs and by having a sensible defense budget. We aren't going to do it in an orgy of intolerance and demonization of the middle class and working people in this Republican budget.

I think the Tea Party voters want responsible spending. So do my constituents. The Tea Party voters want basic fairness. So do my constituents. Tea Party voters have been misled by the American fear machine into thinking that education and basic services and public employees is where the big savings are. That is a terrible myth and a terrible disservice to the public.

I hope the Tea Party members in the House quickly learn the basic math of the budget. The deficit is about defense and health care spending, not about pushing even more children into poverty.

Every Member of this House ought to watch the 60 Minutes segment from last Sunday night on children who are living in cars, living in motels, living in shelters because they have lost their homes. Twenty-five percent of American children in this country are living in poverty. That show looked like we were looking at Bangladesh. That's what we ought to be pointing to, not spending our time out here today on H.R. 830, whacking the daylights out of another bill to prevent foreclosures. It is simply not what America is about.

I urge all my colleagues to vote "no" and to go pull up on the Web that segment from last Sunday night and look at the faces of those children and realize you're creating their lives by the kind of economy you put together.

BUDGET/DISCRETIONARY SPENDING

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the gentleman from Washington State for focusing America on what the issues are before us.

In recent weeks I have come to the floor to argue that the Republican spending plan does two extremely harmful things: It weakens our economy and fails to seriously reduce our debt.

Democrats agree that cutting spending is part of the solution to our difficult problems that confront us. But we also believe that cuts should be smart and targeted, not reckless.

Rather than cutting investments in growth—at the same time our international competitors are ramping up theirs—Democrats support the Make It In America agenda, a plan to invest in innovation, manufacturing jobs, and middle class opportunity. That's what the President talked about in his State of the Union, and he was right.

Unfortunately, the consensus that the Republican spending plan will halt our economic recovery and cost jobs is widespread and nonpartisan.

Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke, appointed by President Bush, tells us that the plan will cost "a couple of hundred thousand" jobs. Macroeconomic advisers tell us that the Republican plan will wipe out approximately 450,000 jobs. Moody's Analytics chief economist Mark Zandi, who advised Senator McCAIN in his Presidential campaign, tells us that it will cost up to 700,000 jobs. The Economic Policy Institute puts the number at 800,000 jobs. Whatever the precise number, it is a large number of jobs that will be lost if we pass the Republicans' budget solutions.

What they want to do, as the gentleman from Washington State said, this is all exempt. This is security. These are all mandatory expenditures. This small slice of the budget, about \$460 billion, the Republicans want to cut by 22 percent, give or take a percentage point. So they are holding harmless almost all of 85 to 86 percent of the money that we spent and say we're simply going to cut from education, from health care, from children, from community development—projects—the guts of what makes our communities have a better quality. At the same time, I have argued the Republican spending plan barely puts a dent in our budget deficit.

It's reasonable to ask how can this plan have such severe consequences for our economy, yet so little impact on our fiscal predicament? This chart helps us answer the question. All of the proposed cuts, all of the cuts, come from this small slice of the budget, the category of our budget called "non-security discretionary spending."

But non-security discretionary spending, the gentleman from Washington State said 12 percent. We have here 14 percent. It's in that neighborhood depending upon exactly what you include as security or non-security. When you attempt to find \$100 billion in savings and when you insist on getting these savings from 14 percent of the budget, you have to cut very deeply into absolutely essential projects and programs for our people.

□ 1040

You have to cut billions in funding into new medical cures and energy technologies. You have to kick 200,000-plus children off of Head Start. You even have to cut port and transit security by two-thirds. Hear that again. They're cutting port and transit security by two-thirds while they're holding terrorism hearings.

The chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, a Republican, said those cuts were "too dangerous." As David Brooks recently argued, Congress should "never cut without an evaluation process." But instead, legislators—he referred to the Republican initiatives—"are simply cutting on the basis of what's politically easy and what vaguely seems expendable."

It may be possible to portray taking on 14 percent of the budget as fiscally responsible, but only because doing so exploits Americans' misunderstanding of the budget. A recent poll shows that 63 percent of Americans think we spend more on defense and foreign aid than we do on Medicare and Social Security—all the blue, all the green, and then the yellow, that small sliver—which, by the way, includes discretionary foreign policy expenditures.

Mr. Speaker, I urge our citizens to look at the consequences of these cuts and look at the small sliver that the Republicans are focusing themselves on and you and me on. We need to see the whole picture if we're going to come to grips with the challenge that confronts us.

When another poll asked Americans how much we spend on foreign aid, the average estimate was 27 percent—when the right answer is about 1 percent.

It is entirely out of step with fiscal reality to attempt to tackle our deficit while ignoring 86 percent of the budget.

"Fiscal responsibility" is not synonymous with "cutting non-security discretionary spending."

In truth, fiscal responsibility is much more difficult than that.

As former Republican Congressman Joe Scarborough put it this week, "The belief of some on the right that America can balance the budget by cutting education, infrastructure, the corporation for public broadcasting, and home heating assistance to the poor is tantamount to budgetary witchcraft."

We have to start doing more.

We have to address the Defense spending that takes up more than a quarter of our budget. We have to make hard choices that can keep our entitlements strong for generations to come.

And, with tax revenues at a 60-year low, we have to pass deficit-reducing tax reform.

Unless we're willing to take on that hard work, on a bipartisan basis, none of us deserve to call ourselves fiscally responsible.

NFL PLAYERS AND TEACHERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) for 5 minutes.