

STANDING BEHIND NORTH DAKOTA RESIDENTS AFTER DEVASTATING FLOODS

(Mr. BERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BERG. Mr. Speaker, today the residents of Minot, North Dakota, and the surrounding communities are preparing for a devastating flood that is going to impact their cities. The water levels in the Souris River have never reached the levels that they will reach in the next 24 to 48 hours. Many parts of the city and the surrounding rural areas will be inundated with water as water levels rise above the current levies. More than 10,000 residents have already been evacuated.

In North Dakota, we pull together in challenging times and we support our friends and our communities. The city and people around Minot need to know that, when the water recedes, we will be there to help. We will be there to clean up, and we will be there to rebuild.

I ask everyone to please join me in keeping these residents who are fighting for their homes and their communities in your thoughts and prayers and to stand with Minot and other communities up and down the Souris River to ensure a strong recovery.

REPUBLICAN WOMEN ON JOB GROWTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, it is with tremendous pride that I stand with my fellow Republican women on the House floor tonight. We stand before you from every corner of America, as businesswomen, nurses, physicians, farmers, mothers, educators, and attorneys to tell you the story of the Republican woman.

While our backgrounds and professions may be different, one thing is not: We are all conservative reformers committed to leaving America better for our children and grandchildren. After all, women in this country know better than anyone the effects of harmful economic policies. Why? Because two out of three businesses are started by women. Women-owned business are the fastest growing segment in the United States economy and they generate over \$2.5 trillion in revenue a year. Women manage 83 percent of household income, spend two out of three health care dollars, and make up the majority of health care providers in America.

Women are at the center of this debate, and the House Republican women are committed to leading it. But at a time when our country has accumulated over \$14 trillion in debt and faced 28 consecutive months of unemploy-

ment above 8 percent, we know this is not an easy task. Yet despite the obstacles and the opposition, House Republican women are committed to fighting this fight, to creating jobs, to making America what she once was—the land of opportunity, innovation, and ingenuity. And that is why we are all here. That is why we ran for Congress and why we stand in the Halls of Congress; some of us for many years, others are brand new, all of us bound by the commitment to real reform.

We have seen the numbers. Eighty-one percent of Americans know someone without a job; the average unemployed American has been searching for over 38 weeks; and since President Obama took office, we have lost over 2 million jobs in this country. We refuse to sit here and watch those numbers rise.

As eastern Washington's Representative, I ran for Congress 7 years ago to help keep that American Dream alive. I spent 13 years working beside my mom and dad and brother in our family-owned business in Kettle Falls, Washington. I was the first in my family to graduate from college, and I later had the honor of serving as State Representative, while continuing to work in our family business and learning firsthand the value of hard work, the value of opportunity. From the fruit stand in Kettle Falls to the Halls of Congress, I am here years later because I refused to let that opportunity be threatened.

I come home every night to two beautiful children, Cole and Grace, and I want them to have the opportunities that I have had. I want them not only to know the American Dream and what it is, but I want them to have the opportunity to live it.

America stands at a crossroads like never before in our Nation's history. Last year at this time the administration was talking about a recovery summer. This year we should be talking about a reality summer. The reality is clear and it is unprecedented. I was just home in Spokane, where unemployment is over 9 percent and there is one thing on the forefront of everyone's minds—jobs.

So, tonight we Republican women are here to remind the American people that creating jobs is our number one priority. Our GOP plan for job creators will empower small businesses, fix the Tax Code, encourage entrepreneurs, increase competitiveness, and pay down America's national debt. We will stand on this House floor, debate in committee hearings, work with our colleagues across the aisle, and continue to listen to those at home until we get Americans back to work. And we will. We are on the road to economic recovery, and the House Republican women are committed to ensuring that we get there.

With that, it is with great pleasure that I would like to yield to the dynamic woman from North Carolina.

Mrs. ELLMERS. Thank you so much to my colleague from Washington, and

thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing us tonight to come as Republican women to speak out to the American people.

I came to Washington as one of the new freshmen here, and I am very honored to be part of this group. We are a group of women who believe in our country. We believe in the right of every American to achieve. There are no guarantees, but if you put your mind to it and you work hard, everyone can achieve.

I, too, came from a family that was not wealthy. My parents did not really see the value in a college education. I am a second generation American here in the United States, and I am first generation college educated. I basically put myself through college and nursing school with many different jobs. I became a nurse, and I have been a nurse for over 21 years and am very happy to be so. I am a wife and a mom. My son, Ben, is 16 years old.

When health care became such a huge issue in this country and when our President spoke about changing it, the best health care system in the world, I knew that that was not only going to be detrimental to health care but also the economy, because it is such a large portion of our economy. So I put myself forward to run for office, because I believed that if you are going to change things in Washington, you have to change Washington itself. So here I am, proud to be serving with these great women.

We have many, many issues in this country right now that we are faced with, and we need jobs. Unemployment has been above 9 percent for over 23 months now. Yes, our colleagues across the aisle put forward their plan over a year ago. That plan has failed, and it is time for a new plan.

As a woman, being a multitasker, Mr. Speaker, as you know how wonderful women are, we can put our minds to it and we can solve these problems.

□ 2010

Speaking as a nurse, I've always taken care of many patients, but none more dear to me than my seniors. And what they are faced with today because of the destruction that has been put forward by our Democrat colleagues across the aisle in ObamaCare, it has truly done just that—destroyed it. And it is our job to rescue it back for the American people so that it will be there for our seniors and it will be there for generations to come.

As it is right now, \$500 billion has been taken out, and a 15-person panel will be put in place to decide what kind of health care you receive. That right will be taken away from you and your physician. Imagine a group of individuals without any health care background whatsoever deciding for you whether or not you'll be able to have surgery or whether or not you'll be able to have a treatment. Imagine trying to explain that to your family. Imagine sitting at the bedside of your

loved one and telling them that, No, I'm sorry, your doctor cannot do surgery on you, and there is no way that we can appeal it. That is what has been put in place by ObamaCare, and we are determined as Republican women to pull back on this.

We spoke about jobs. My colleague from Washington has a wonderful illustration of what we need to do. That is the answer to the problems that we face here in America today. And as a woman, I am dedicated, as are my colleagues, to doing just that.

Again, in closing, I'll just say that it is an absolute and incredible honor to be here—and I am getting emotional—with my fellow women who are going to stay tonight and speak to all of you out there in America about the importance of being a good conservative woman and how much we all, if we work together, can come up with the answers to our problems.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. I'd like to yield to the gentlelady from South Dakota.

Mrs. NOEM. I appreciate that.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to join my fellow female colleagues and Members on this side of the aisle to highlight exactly what it means to be a Republican woman.

Mr. Speaker, I grew up in a family that didn't believe that there were certain tasks for boys or certain tasks for girls, but that we all did it all. My dad taught me how to drive a semi-truck and a combine, just like he did my brothers. I was expected to help with the chores even though they were tough and they were often dirty ones. I grew up thinking that I could do anything that the boys could do, and that way of thinking has certainly stayed with me. Over the years, I helped run our family businesses, including the farm and the ranches. I helped run the family restaurant and our hunting lodge. Although our businesses never grew so large that I was one of the women who are a part of what controls now 51 percent of the New York Stock Exchange, I always remembered what my dad said, and I always remembered that I could work just as hard as the guys could. My contribution was always just as valuable.

A few years ago, with young kids, raising them still at home, I saw that we needed someone with business experience, someone with common sense and ag experience to serve in our State legislature. So I ran and won a seat there. I realized that if I was going to be there and spend time away from my family and away from my businesses, I wanted to be as effective as I possibly could. So that meant running for a leadership position.

So in my second term I became the assistant majority leader in the South Dakota State legislature. I soon realized that the place that really needed a person with common sense and business sense and a place that really needed someone who had worked in agriculture and run businesses and some-

one who isn't afraid to roll up their sleeves and get to work was in Washington, D.C.

So I ran for Congress last year on the platform that we need people to represent us who have real-life experiences; who have experience running businesses, balancing checkbooks, dealing with regulations, and paying taxes. I didn't run because I was a woman, and I didn't expect people to vote for me because I was a woman. That had never ever even entered into my thought process, as the person I was running against was also a woman. I worked to earn each vote in talking about what was important in this country, in talking to folks about our life experiences and my position on the issues. That's what I knew mattered to South Dakotans, and that's what mattered to me.

Mr. Speaker, my agenda, the Republican agenda, is indeed pro-women. It is pro-women because it's pro-small business, pro-job creator, pro-family, pro-economic growth. You see, just as my dad taught me years ago, women in my home State of South Dakota and all across this country, we care about the same things that men do. They're worried about the security of their jobs; they're worried about their children's future, and they're worried about finding a job if they need one.

We're worried about the excessive spending that this country is engaging in and the overwhelming debt that we're continuing to accumulate and that we're going to leave to our children and our grandchildren. We're worried about what new government regulation is going to come in and hinder our businesses and what is around the corner that's going to try and control our portion of our lives or hurt our small businesses on the street corner.

Mr. Speaker, our Republican Conference has rolled out a jobs plan. It's pro-woman and it's pro-man because it does exactly what we need to get our economy back on track. It cuts burdensome regulation; it fixes the Tax Code; it increases American competitiveness, and it maximizes our production of American-made energy.

I would like to close by thanking all of my colleagues for this opportunity to speak on the House floor tonight on what it means to be a Republican woman and what it means to be someone who serves here with common sense, business experience, and life experience, who cares about our children and grandchildren in this country. I would like to thank my colleagues as well for organizing this special hour. It has been my honor to serve and to speak and to share this evening with you tonight.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Next, I'd like to yield to the gentlelady from Florida.

Mrs. ADAMS. Thank you. I, too, want to join my colleagues here tonight. And like my distinguished colleague from South Dakota, my father always taught me that you can do and

be anything you would like as long as you're willing to work hard for it. It had nothing to do with your gender. It's just as long as you're willing to work hard for it.

So I took this to heart, and it is something that has stuck with me throughout my life whether it was when I joined the Air Force at 17 or when I was a single mother working two jobs trying to keep food on the table, or as a person who was working during the day and paying my way through the police academy at night or later on as a State legislator and now as a Member of Congress. I know what it's like to struggle, and I understand how difficult it is for women and families across this Nation during these tough economic times. I never aspired to be in public office, but a strong sense of justice and a love and an appreciation for our great country led me to where I am here today.

I ran for the Florida legislature years ago after I lost my second husband in the line of duty as a deputy sheriff because I was always there testifying on behalf of victims' and citizens' rights issues. One year I couldn't believe what I had heard, and I got involved so much with legislation that had passed that I felt it tied my hands as a police officer to do what I was sworn to do, and that was to protect and serve the community I was hired in in Orange County, Florida. So I decided to do something about it. I ran and was elected to Florida's 33rd district.

Eight years later, as I was preparing to come home and retire and be back and reacquaint myself with my family, I witnessed what a lot of people, a lot of families witnessed throughout this country—and that was our country was accruing an astronomical amount of debt. They were recklessly spending taxpayers' hard-earned money, and the passage of the Obama health care plan and rapid unemployment in Florida and across the Nation was just too much to bear. So I knew our country was heading down the wrong path—an unsustainable path—and something needed to be done.

The trajectory of the Nation's fiscal path was clear. Like so many mothers across this country, I saw the future of our Nation and especially our children's future at risk. I couldn't sit by and watch as our country continued down this reckless fiscal path. I had the strong desire to change our Nation's course, and that's what led me to this Nation's Capital.

The truth is that our Nation expects more from its leaders in Congress. I came here to make a difference—to remove the barriers to job creation that have been imposed by this administration's addition to spending, taxation, and regulation. Only by giving more power back to the families and small businesses that make this great Nation can we put our economy back on a sustainable path and help the private sector put people back to work.

I made a promise to the men and women in District 24 that I would fight

to end the spending-driven debt crisis that led to our Nation's dire economic state. I will continue to keep this promise, and I will continue to fight for families across this country by working towards fiscal responsibility, lower taxes, and by removing job-killing regulations that have stifled our Nation's economic growth for far too long.

□ 2020

We need to get our people back to work. We want jobs, and that's what we are fighting so hard to do. As Republican women, we understand, and we will continue to fight to empower small businesses and to reduce the regulation that is hurting our businesses.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Let's hear from the gentlelady from New York.

Ms. BUEKLE. First of all, let me thank my colleague from the State of Washington for hosting this very special and important Special Order.

When the Obama administration took office, many Americans were so concerned that the administration was too inexperienced to know how to even govern this country; but we soon understood that they were too mistaken to learn and too arrogant to care.

Americans continue to see the unveiling of various provisions of the President's health care bill, such as the creation of the Independent Payment Advisory Board to ration health care, a disastrous half trillion dollars in Medicare cuts for new benefits, the betrayal of our friendship with Israel, and the willful pursuit of Libyan "kinetic action" in opposition to the wishes of the American people and in defiance of the War Powers Act. We have been betrayed by the choices of the leaders we depended on to steer this ship safely through troubled waters.

But I have hope, just like the other Republican women here tonight, that while we have to accept the Democrat leadership's choices for a time, nothing says we have to live with them. I am here in Congress because I have watched the American Dream become increasingly fragile, and I said to myself over a year ago that I would not sit this fight out. Mr. Speaker, this is a fight. This is a fight for the very United States we love so dearly.

Both sets of my grandparents came here from Italy. They worked hard; they raised their families, and they gave back to their communities. My presence in Congress, really in so many respects, just like so many of my colleagues', embodies the American Dream. I am a registered nurse, an attorney, and for the last 13 years have represented a teaching hospital. I am the mother of six children and a grandmother of 11. Mr. Speaker, I am a proud Republican woman.

We Republican women stand here tonight not as an anomaly; we represent millions of Republican women who say that we are not going to accept being marginalized because of our political

party. We are real women. We are real Republicans. We are here to restore the American Dream.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Next, I would like to yield to the gentlelady from Illinois.

Mrs. BIGGERT. I thank the gentlelady for having this tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I thank all of the Republican women who are here and especially the freshmen because they have brought so much enthusiasm, so much talent, so much intelligence to this body, and it really has been such a help to us.

When I was elected to Congress, I was the only Republican woman to be there. It was kind of lonesome, so I thought, well, at least I can be the president, the vice president, the treasurer, the secretary of the freshmen Republican women that year, but there was nobody else to be there with me, so I had to do it all alone. I've been here a long time. This is my 13th year. To see what has happened and the enthusiasm and what is going on and the changes that are happening is incredible.

I came from a family where my father was the first to go to college. His parents had emigrated from Finland even though they were Swedish. He went to college, but he always said to my three siblings and me, You can do anything you want to do if you get a good education; but he made one mistake, maybe, because he said he would pay for it. So my older sister went to medical school; I went to law school; my brother went to law school; my sister got her master's in Latin and Greek, but she doesn't use that too much anymore.

So that was true, because I never, never expected that I would be in Congress. I never expected that I would be a lawyer. In fact, I went to a wonderful school—Stanford for undergraduate—and then applied to law school. For my first year, I went to the University of California; and the first thing that greeted me was a professor who said, You're taking the place of someone who belongs here, which was a man. That really has changed my life, because I excelled in everything I did. I transferred law schools, by the way, and went back to Illinois.

My first job out of law school was clerking for a judge in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. The reason I got it was that a young man from a different school where the judge had always hired—the judge didn't particularly like him, so he called over to Northwestern, and they sent me over there, and that's how I got that job. I continued in the legal profession, but I found that I got involved in a lot of volunteer work along the way, too—being chairman of boards and whatever and then running for and being elected to the State assembly.

The reason I wanted to go into the State assembly and into Congress was from what I learned from volunteer work—and from having four children,

first of all, and then from being president of the high school school board—because I wanted my children to have the best education; and the way to do that is to get involved and to participate as with all of the others, like being chairman of the Visiting Nurses Association of Chicago, and I got into Medicare and Medicaid. So all of these things led me to want to go into Congress. I was asked to do those things. Then finally, when a seat opened up in Congress, I said, I'm going for this. I was elected, and I've been here and on three committees that are really important still—with the Financial Services, the Education and Labor, and the Science Committees.

Let me just talk a little bit about trade because, as has been said by so many Members much more eloquently than I, government does not create jobs; it's the private sector; but government needs to act to reduce and get rid of the barriers that we have put on so many of the businesses so that we can have economic growth so that we can have those jobs. One way is to look at the trade issue.

We cannot have protectionist trade policies. Free trade agreements are one of the many ways to improve all American standards of living and to get our economy back on track. The administration has three trade agreements that are on the shelf, already negotiated and all ready for approval—Colombia, Panama and South Korea. These trade agreements alone have the potential to create 250,000 jobs for Americans in America. What has been so concerning is that the President has not acted, and a failure to act means that we will continue to lose sales and jobs to other countries which do not face the trade barriers that our goods and services are facing. On many products, tariffs would come down immediately upon the enactment of these agreements, giving a boost to exports and jobs.

Let me just tell you about one company that has trade with Colombia. It's a big company with big, big machinery; and every time they send one of those pieces of machinery into Colombia, it's a \$200,000 tariff, which shouldn't be there, while we have open doors and while we have trade that can come here.

We have wasted so much time. We have wasted at least 2½ years for not doing this. I think, with these trade agreements, such an increase would provide a tremendous boost to the national economy, especially to my home State of Illinois, where we rank No. 5 in the exporting States for manufacturing and agriculture products. So I would encourage the administration to immediately send up those trade agreements. Doing so would immediately put people back to work and provide a much needed boost to our economy.

I thank all the women who are here today, and I thank you for doing this and for giving us the opportunity.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Thank you. A great point.

Next, I would like to yield to the first woman from Alabama.

Mrs. ROBY. Thank you so much, and to the gentlelady from Washington, I appreciate so much the opportunity.

What an honor and a privilege to serve with each and every one of you and to be here on the floor tonight to just share with Americans about who we are and what we stand for and why we are here.

The question that I'm most often asked in the district and certainly here as well is: Why in the world would a 34-year-old woman with a 6-year-old and a 2-year-old run for Congress?

I will tell you that Margaret and George, my two children, are the very reasons that my husband, Riley, and I decided to enter into the race for Congress to represent Alabama's Second District: because we are committed to leaving this country, the best we can, in better shape for our children than it was for us. That's why we're here—and what a privilege to serve.

□ 2030

In college, I studied music and thought I was going to work in the music industry and went to law school to further those aspirations, where I met my husband, Riley, and we were married shortly after law school and we both went into private practice.

About 2 years practicing law, I was watching the news one night, and my predecessor on the city council said that she wasn't going to seek reelection, and I felt this lurch in my stomach. It was just really a gut check moment for us. I tapped Riley and I said, That's what I need to be doing. I want to serve my community.

Of course I had a wonderful example in both of my parents. My father is a public servant and my mother served in many capacities as a volunteer in our community all growing up, and I think that gave me that sense of urgency of wanting to be involved in my community. Riley and I didn't have children yet, but we knew we wanted to, and I thought, if we're going to live in this city and in this State and raise our children here, then we want to be a part of it.

I served 7 years on the Montgomery city council, and shortly after my son, George, was born—he was 8 weeks old—we started praying about this opportunity to run for Congress, to serve Alabama's Second District and our country. So little George was 8 weeks old, and I felt as a mom of these two small children and as a wife that I had something to bring to the table, that it was an opportunity to bring a perspective as the one that runs through the grocery store and goes to the gas pump as to how much Americans are hurting with the lack of jobs right now. Again, what a responsibility and a privilege. Riley and I wake up every single day and know that we have a real responsibility to serve the people that we represent.

I recently had the distinct privilege of going with you, my colleague from

Washington, to Afghanistan for Mother's Day. I serve on the House Armed Services Committee. What an honor to spend that time with our men and women in uniform, but particularly the women that are serving overseas away from their children and particularly on that day. As a mom that's here in Congress, on a plane back and forth, doing my best to serve my constituents and my country, I realize, looking into their eyes, the tremendous sacrifice that they make, that what we do here doesn't even hold a candle to. It was truly an honor to get to spend that time in the war zone, to have a better understanding of what our men and women sacrifice for our liberty and freedom that we have right here.

I am committed to doing my part to help remove this cloud of uncertainty that is hanging over job creators in the United States of America. As I travel throughout my district—and all of you do—I hear story after story about what is the government going to do to us next. I was at a manufacturing company 2 weeks ago in the district where they put a \$1 million addition to their 700,000 square foot manufacturing facility, remanufacturing, only to keep up with the regulations that are imposed on them by the Federal Government. This is where we are. How in the world can we expect the private sector to be creating jobs when the heavy hand of government is that strong?

So I am committed to that, and I am committed to real reforms that will allow for the private sector to do what they do best. That is what our country was founded on. I am proud to serve my State and my country as a Republican woman, but more importantly as a conservative committed to doing my part to get our country back on track, not for the next election but for the next generation.

Thank you.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Thank you.

Let's hear from the lady from Ohio.

Mrs. SCHMIDT. I thank my good friend from Washington.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today because I really want to say thank you to my parents for instilling in me the opportunity to live the American Dream. My father didn't have much as a child. He didn't even have an education. But he grew up in a place where he could live his dream. He knew if he worked hard that he could live and do what he wanted to do, and that was to provide for his family, buy a farm, own a business, and give us the opportunity to lead our lives in the way that we wanted to. I instilled that hope and that desire in my own daughter. Over 5 years ago, I decided to run for this office. It was March 23, 2005. I'll never forget the date. It was the day my daughter got engaged. As we celebrated both decisions, I realized the enormity in the decision that I was making. See, back then I realized that government was spending too much money, and we had to do something about it. But now that

she is married and I've been here over 5 years and administrations have changed, I realize that we weren't spending as much then as we are today. The accelerated spending is really hurting our American Dream.

My daughter owns her own business, and she has two wonderful little children, but I fear that they won't be able to have the American Dream that she is trying to hold onto and that I was afforded by my own parents. And I look today and I say to myself, what has this administration done to help us move forward? A year ago, the President announced that in 2010, June 17, was going to be the summer of recovery.

How is that recovery going? Well, we're still over 9 percent unemployment. We spent over \$1 trillion in stimulus money to no effect. Our underemployment is at 19 percent. We have over 14 million people that are underemployed and looking for work and 9 million people have part-time jobs. But in addition to those statistics, our economy is not growing, and it's not growing because this government is getting in the way of the growth and it's with overregulation.

I worked with BOB GIBBS on one bill, H.R. 872, the Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act, which took an erroneous court decision and put it in its place. But it's more than just that bill that's in our way. As a mother and a grandmother, I'm alarmed at the USDA getting into my grandchildren's lunch boxes and into my pantry with overregulation, telling schools what they can provide for their students. They're taking potatoes out of the lunch room. It's not just eliminating potatoes to one cup a week, but it's the enormity of the burden of expense that's put onto our school system, over \$5 billion mandated to public schools, and most of that burden is on schools that can least afford it.

I could go on and on about the overregulation that is squelching the ability for our country to grow. I have a stake in this. Actually I have two. It's Michael and it's Anthony. They mean everything to me. I want those two wonderful little boys to have all the hopes and dreams that I had as a child fulfilled as an adult. I want them to have the same hopes and dreams that my daughter had fulfilled. I want what my father gave to me, the belief that with God and living in America, all things are possible.

We have to stop the overregulation and the overspending that is occurring in this country today. Our future is at stake, and it is serious. The Republican women in the House get it, and I applaud them for fighting with me for their children, for their grandchildren, but most importantly for my Michael and my Anthony.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Next I would like to yield to the gentlelady from Kansas.

Ms. JENKINS. I thank my friend from Washington for yielding me some time.

My name is LYNN JENKINS, and I am a Republican woman in my second term from the Second District in Kansas. Before entering public office, I worked for over a dozen years in public accounting as a certified public accountant helping businesses and individuals with their tax planning, their tax compliance, and I did that so they could focus on what they did best and that was create jobs and be successful for their local economies.

I originally ran for office for the House of Representatives in Kansas, because I was frustrated by the burdens the State government placed on my clients and the families. As a member of both the Kansas House and the Senate and then as State treasurer for a term and a half, I was pleased to help Kansas work to secure sound economic policies.

□ 2040

But several years ago, I became increasingly concerned about the policies of the Federal Government and how they were holding back our citizens and our job creators. So I ran for Congress, and I am honored to be here this evening with my fellow Republican women to highlight the Republicans' plan to promote job growth.

Over 2 years ago when I came to Washington, my goal was to pass policies to stimulate the flagging economy and get us back on firm financial footing. Unfortunately, one of the first things the Democrat majority did at that time was to ignore our proposals for economic growth and choose instead to pass a stimulus package that we Republicans opposed. And just as we predicted at the time, it has failed.

Let's look at some of the facts. The White House advisers said that passing the stimulus would keep unemployment below 8 percent. The unemployment rate is currently over 9 percent, and it has been above 8 percent for more than 2 years. I've got a visual aid here that shows a new study by economists from the University of Western Ontario and Ohio State University found that the President's failed stimulus, the largest stimulus in American history, destroyed or forestalled roughly 1 million private sector jobs. Taxpayers will end up paying \$1.16 trillion for all the private sector jobs lost or forestalled by the Democrats' stimulus.

The facts tell us the total cost of the Democrats' stimulus, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, to be over \$820 billion, and interest on the debt for the bill will be nearly \$350 billion for over a \$1 trillion pricetag. The number of net jobs the economy has shed since the Democrat stimulus was signed into law is reaching almost 2 million. In the last 12 months, entrepreneurs have started up the fewest new U.S. businesses in more than a decade. The national debt has increased by more than \$3.5 trillion.

The Federal Government shouldn't be in the business of job creation. We should be focusing our efforts here in

Congress on putting policies in place that encourage private sector job growth, and that's why I'm so proud of the Republicans and their job proposal that's before us. Included in the proposal are many reforms. Some include an opportunity to fix the Tax Code to help job creators; spur investment; create more American jobs by streamlining our Tax Code; by increasing competitiveness for American manufacturers; by reining in this unsustainable debt and start living within our means; addressing the issue of regulatory overreach; and encouraging entrepreneurship and growth.

So, tonight, along with my fellow Republican women from across this Nation, I'm calling upon our President and the Democrat majority in the Senate to work with us. Help us pass our jobs plan so we can get Americans back to work.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Great. Thank you.

Next, I would like to yield to my classmate and member of the Rules Committee from North Carolina.

Ms. FOXX. Thank you. I want to thank my colleague from the State of Washington, CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS, for organizing this Special Order tonight, and Mr. Speaker, I am a Republican woman and so proud to be a part of this great group of women that we've heard from tonight.

Growing up in a poor family in rural North Carolina meant that there were many opportunities in life that simply weren't available to me. But there was one important opportunity that has always been available to me and to all of us, and that is living in the freest land on Earth, where working hard, taking chances, and persevering are catalysts for success.

I'm a Republican woman because over the course of my life I've seen how the incentive to succeed and the guarantee that the fruits of your labor are your own have shaped a people and a Nation that accomplishes great things.

Before I came to Congress, I worked in higher education and as a small business owner. Over the course of my career, I encountered good government and bad government. Each is a powerful force. Good government frees us to pursue ideas to invest our money as we see fit, to build, create, and grow a business or even to fail in our endeavors. As a small business owner, I also observed firsthand how government has the power to crush people under high taxes and oppressive rules, or it has the power to unleash creativity with a light touch and low taxes.

I came to Congress as a Republican because my life experience in business and education taught me that, by easing off the rulemaking and the tax hiking, government can help foster an environment where hardworking, innovative, and dedicated people can succeed.

I'm a Republican because I want to be part of creating a Federal Government that is nimble, focused, responsive, and aligned with the Constitu-

tion. I believe that such a government will capitalize on our strength as a Nation of innovators and entrepreneurs by removing barriers to job creation and wealth creation.

As Republicans we're going to put our government on track to spend less and live within its means, just like women across the Nation do every day with their family budget. When government is right-sized, our economy grows and businesses create jobs.

We know that the Constitution guarantees the rights of the people, not the rights of the government, Mr. Speaker. That's why as a Republican woman I'm focused on making sure government doesn't stand in the way of the people, and that the laws we make here in Congress expand freedom, rather than expand government.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Thank you.

Next, I'd like to yield to the gentlelady from Missouri.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, my friend from Washington State.

This is so exciting to get to be here tonight, to get to visit with the American people about what it means to be a Republican woman, and I am honored to represent Missouri's Fourth Congressional District, and as I share with people about the great district that I get to represent, it's a story of the heartland.

Missouri's Fourth District, we are just made of small towns and farms, and we work hard and we hunt on weekends and go to church on Sundays, and we just want the government to leave us alone. And basically, what we have seen over the years is Washington getting bigger and bigger and pushing out the private enterprise and threatening our basic freedoms. And so that's what we have to push back against and restore America's greatness.

Who I am and the reasons I align myself with the Republican Party is a reflection of my background and experiences that I've had over the years. I wanted to share just a few of those things with you.

I grew up on a farm near Archie, Missouri, and my mom and my dad and my sister and I, we raised corn and soy beans and had a lot of hogs and had a cow/calf operation. And one thing that strikes me as very pivotal to my life is my parents in January would sit down and take several days cash-flowing the year, projecting forward what they thought the yields on the crops were going to be, the prices on the crops, looking at the expenses, the payments that we had, seeing if we'd be able to make it all work. And after a few years, my mom and dad called my sister and I over and said, you need to sit here with us and learn this process.

Well, I can tell you, as a little kid, that wasn't the most exciting way to spend our evenings, but it was a wonderful experience because we learned how hard it was to make everything work and to pay for everything and to

live within your means. And I learned that you can't spend more than you take in. I learned fiscal responsibility that is so much a part of the Republican Party, and what we're here trying to do is to restore that because Washington keeps spending money that it doesn't have, and we can't do that at home. We don't do it on our farms. We don't do it in our businesses, and it's time that Washington learned some lessons from the heartland and from ordinary families like mine.

□ 2050

Something else I learned on the farm is that hard work pays off usually. Of course there are a lot of things dealing with weather and other things that you can't control. But one thing lately that you can't control is the amount of government regulations that are threatening agriculture. Now the EPA is trying to regulate dust. Well, I still live on a gravel road. And I have news for people at the EPA: If you farm, if you drive down a gravel road, you are going to get dust. So don't try to fine us or tell us that we can't have that. That's just a lack of common sense. So Washington needs to listen to us ordinary people and not do that.

Something else I learned growing up was a love of our country and a respect for our military. My dad served in the U.S. Army Reserves. That really made a huge impression on me, that he was willing to serve his country. And all of those brave men and women who today are putting their lives on the line for us deserve our highest respect. According to the Constitution, there are only a few things we're supposed to do, and one of them is to provide for the common defense. And I'm so honored to sit on the House Armed Services Committee, where I can work hard for those men and women and keep our country strong and safe and secure.

I grew up and became a teacher, and I taught home economics. Now they call it "family and consumer sciences." I love that. I chose that profession because I believe in the family, and I want to make it as strong as possible, and I love young people. One thing I taught was a class dealing with finances in the home. I taught the kids how to balance a checkbook, and kids got it. I would say, You can't spend more than you take in. They understood it. And I don't understand how come Washington doesn't understand that same principle. So that's what I'm trying to bring here, how we need to have a balanced budget. And that is one thing the Republicans are fighting for.

I also taught a class called food services. It was a vocational class where we actually—I trained them in how to have a job. And a lot of food service jobs are beginning career opportunities for young people, and they can move forward. But I taught them, if you work hard and you do an excellent job and become skilled in what you do, you can move forward in life. And in Amer-

ica, anything is possible. I want that to still be the mantra that we share with our young people today, and make sure we preserve the opportunity that we had.

Later I was a State representative. And then after that, the Governor appointed me as chairman of the Missouri Women's Council, and I enjoyed that for 2 years. In that council, as an agency in the Department of Economic Development, we helped women connect with and meet their economic goals, and that's jobs. You know, Mr. Speaker, women are starting businesses at twice the rate of men, which amounts to 400 new businesses every day that are started by women. And women-owned businesses are the fastest-growing segment of the United States economy. There are 10.6 million businesses owned in the United States by women that employ over 19 million American workers, and women-owned businesses generate some \$2.46 trillion in revenue each year. Women are smart. They're able to own their own businesses, and we here in Washington need to help them meet those goals, not provide hindrances for it. And clearly from the last speaker, you see that President Obama's plan has failed. Throwing money at something does not create jobs. There is a better plan.

I'm also a small business owner now. My husband and I own a company where we sell farm equipment. We employ about 50 people, have three stores. So I know the challenges of day-to-day operating a small business in America. Most jobs in America are created by small business owners, the same people that President Obama is trying to tax. What he doesn't understand is that if you tax job creators more, they're not going to have money to be able to hire a worker. It doesn't make sense. We've got to change course here.

A couple of stories, quickly, I wanted to share with you from businesses in my district reflect how the policies here in Washington are killing jobs. One is, when I was on the campaign trail a couple of years ago, I met with a business who told me that they wanted to open up a second location. Things were going pretty well. They had about 30 employees at the time. But they asked about this new health care bill that was being debated, that the President was pushing through. And they said, If this passes, our business will fold. We provide health care for our employees as much as possible. We provide them a stipend so they can go buy their own policies. But if this bill passes, we can't afford that. So they told me they have decided not to open up a second location because of the government's takeover of health care that Washington was forcing down the throats of Americans. That is tragic because in this town, there are hundreds of people out of work. And it broke my heart that what is going on here in Washington was directly causing people to be unemployed back home.

Another example: I've been visiting with a lot of companies in my district that manufacture goods. And thank goodness we still have a lot of manufacturing jobs here in America. But as I visit with them, they share with me the hurdles that they're having to overcome just to stay open because of Washington's policies of high taxes and regulations. Their competition is overseas. And they've told me, VICKY, we do not want to move to China. We do not want to take those jobs there. But yet if we move there, we're not going to have to pay near as many taxes, and we don't have to live by these awful regulations from EPA and all these other government agencies. So we're going to try to stay here as long as possible. But please, please help us get government off our backs. And I assured them I certainly would do everything that I can because, you know, as House Republicans, we know how to create jobs, and that's what we're putting forward.

We're putting forth a plan to lower taxes. We're putting forth plans to push back on these government regulations that are out there that are killing jobs, hurting our farmers. We are promoting trade overseas and want to get these trade agreements passed—and we're also getting rid of that huge uncertainty of debt that is hanging over our country and promoting a balanced budget, like my mom and dad did around the kitchen table at home, like I taught my kids at school how to do.

But the last thing that influences me is being a wife and mother. And that is what inspires me to continue to fight for faith, family, freedom, and our future. That's what we're all about.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield to the inspiring Representative from Tennessee.

Mrs. BLACK. My name is DIANE BLACK, and I represent the Sixth Congressional District in Tennessee. I am hearing more and more from women in my district. More and more women are decision makers in their households. As a matter of fact, statistics show us that 84 percent of women are primary decision makers today. They set their budgets. They buy groceries. They take their children to school and to doctors, and they also work outside the home. I hear from women all over my district who are on the front lines, and they say that the economy is making life tougher and that they are constantly trying to do more with less. They tell me that when they go to the grocery store, how much the rising food prices are cutting into what they buy. Gas is more expensive, and their budgets are shrinking, and their choices are limited because Washington is deciding for them.

As these past few years got harder, government stood in the way of our economy getting back on track. And in Tennessee, we have an unemployment rate of 9.6 percent. I also hear from women in my district whose husbands are looking for jobs, and these women

are working two jobs to make ends meet, a struggle that is very real to me. As a nurse for over 40 years, I worked two jobs when my children were little and our family was trying to better ourselves, as my husband was working on his degree. I worked not only as a nurse, but I also had a school for children in my home. My fellow GOP women here tonight, we are all with similar stories of struggles and challenges and working hard for our families. Government needs to get out of the way and allow businesses to grow so that jobs are created and America gets back on track.

I am a Republican woman, and I am proud of that. I am proud to say that I am not only protecting children and their families but also am working to make sure that our country gets back on track so that we have jobs that will allow these families to be strong and grow.

□ 2100

I believe that I'm not only speaking for myself, but also for the women back home and across this country.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. I would like to yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), chairman of the International Relations Committee.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I thank the gentlelady from Washington for yielding me the time. I'm inspired to hear my wonderful colleagues, proud Republican women, proud to be Republican, as well as plugging our gender because we have a very positive story to tell our country.

And as my wonderful friend, the colleague from the State of Washington, pointed out, my name is ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN; and I represent Florida's proud and beautiful 18th Congressional District that covers from Bal Harbor all the way down to sunny Key West, 265 miles of coastal beach area.

And I'm a daughter, I'm a mother, I'm a grandmother, I'm a wife of a Vietnam veteran, a former educator and a former small business owner. I fled Castro's communist Cuba with my parents when I was 8 years old. I'm proud to be a naturalized American, so Cuban by birth, American by choice. And I am also a Republican woman.

I entered public service after talking with my parents, with the parents of a school, a small private bilingual school that I operated along with my parents in Hialeah, a blue-collar working town of Miami-Dade County.

And after hearing from the parents of the school that I operated about their hopes and their dreams and the problems and the concerns that they had, I decided that the best way to help them was not just to help them individually, but rather to help them in a bigger way by being involved in the legislative process in order to change the policies that were causing them difficulties.

As we have said here tonight, Mr. Speaker, our Nation faces grave economic dissatisfaction and a sluggish

economy and no job recovery. And Republican women understand and recognize the need for creative and bold solutions to get America moving in a positive direction once again so that small business owners, such as the ILEANA ROS-LEHTINENS in south Florida, who have a small school or who have a small business, are not hampered by burdensome regulations that inhibit their growth.

And we know how small business suffers due to this growing bureaucracy and this unnecessary regulatory wrangling that goes on and that has occurred in the last few years, and the previous speakers spoke on this issue of the regulation that has run amuck.

So Republican women also recognize this economic prosperity cannot be created by government because small and medium-sized businesses are the engines that fuel our economy. So together, Republican women don't want to—we're in unison to say that we do not want to leave this burden, this financial debt, this deficit to our children and grandchildren. We want to leave them with a more prosperous and secure Nation. And that's why I'm proud to be a Republican woman.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. I'm proud to yield to my colleague from Washington State.

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. As the youngest woman in the U.S. Congress, I'm proud to be here tonight joined by my colleagues from across the Nation. And I'm here tonight to politely decline the anti-woman label that some who must not have better things to do have pushed our way, because the women here in this Chamber, the Republican women on this side of the aisle, as you've heard, are incredibly diverse. They're cops, attorneys. They've served, they're moms, some of them have served in public office like myself. There's a tremendous group of problem-solvers here and that's what we need.

We know that we need solutions, and the most important solution we can find right now has to do with bringing more jobs to folks at home, making sure that we have good, strong American jobs that will support our families.

And as Congress looks for the job creation solutions that so many Americans are craving, I believe that we Republican women possess or bring a special skill to the table. One of my woman colleagues summed it up best when she said, women take technical problems and come up with creative solutions. We're simply better at looking at the issues from outside the box. I believe much of what she said, and I think that's one of the reasons that you see us here tonight fighting for the families back home, whether it's home in southwest Washington, where they've been out of work; where it's the mom who knows how much it costs to put gas in the tank, how much it costs for health care, for the education bills; who's worried about her older

parents and making sure that they have access to health care; or thinking about her children and her grandchildren.

It's these women in and throughout our Nation who have really borne the brunt of this economy. So it's very important that we're at the table here tonight pushing back on that label, because we do represent those American women; and the solutions that we're bringing and that we're fighting for are going to make it so that those women who have dreams to start their own business, to plan for retirement, who want to see less of their hard-earned dollars going into the gas tank, those are the women we're standing up for tonight, and the solutions that we're bringing forward are going to help them help their families, help our communities, and help our country.

I recognize we have limited time here tonight, and I thank you for allowing me to share and stand up with these tremendous ladies.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2021, JOBS AND ENERGY PERMITTING ACT OF 2011, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1249, AMERICA INVENTS ACT

Mr. NUGENT (during the Special Order of Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112-111) on the resolution (H. Res. 316) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2021) to amend the Clean Air Act regarding air pollution from Outer Continental Shelf activities, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1249) to amend title 35, United States Code, to provide for patent reform, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BURTON of Indiana (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of a family medical emergency.

SENATE ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTIONS SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to enrolled Joint Resolutions of the Senate of the following titles:

S.J. Res. 7—Providing for the reappointment of Shirley Ann Jackson as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

S.J. Res. 9—Providing for the reappointment of Robert P. Kogod as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.