

and, in some cases, over 10 percent has been unacceptable. It's been a hardship for so many people in the Nation.

Also, I am looking forward to finding out what the President's pro-job growth agenda will be going forward. We want to get unemployment rates back to much lower levels so that families and businesses can thrive again.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I am looking to find out what will be the specific cuts that the President will be proposing. We haven't heard specific cuts so far. In fact, we have heard that the President may be referring to investments, meaning more spending yet again, spending that this country simply cannot afford because, as we know, Mr. Speaker, we are falling off the cliff in terms of debt increases. That is not good for the next generation of Americans.

Second, I am wondering what specific pieces of legislation that the President has proposed would he be willing to repeal. We know, for instance, that the cap-and-trade proposal that's working through the EPA will be one that will be a job killer. We know that for the health care law as well, that it is, in fact, a job killer.

Finally, I am wondering, Mr. Speaker, what areas of regulations the President would be willing to do away with. The President had made a statement last week that he wants to direct all of the agencies to look for regulations that would kill jobs. Well, we know that the EPA regulations will, in fact, do that, and we are wondering if, perhaps, the President would be willing to put those on the table and delay implementation of the cap-and-trade system through the EPA.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we also know that with Americans paying in excess of \$3 a gallon for gasoline that it may be wise now to look at American energy production. What would those proposals be from the President? We look forward to hearing that this evening.

MAKE SERIOUS INVESTMENTS IN THIS COUNTRY'S FUTURE

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, tonight the President of the United States will deliver the State of the Union address, as we all know. If the reports are accurate, what he will talk about today is the need to make serious investments in this country's future.

Now, we have just heard from a colleague from the other side of the aisle, and we have heard from many Republicans over the last few days, concerning the issue of spending and whether or not we need to be spending any more money in this time of admittedly dire financial circumstances.

You know, most families, when they borrow money, they do it for two reasons: either for survival—they need to eat; they need to feed their children;

they may need a house for their family; they need to clothe them—or they borrow because they see an opportunity to invest and to make their lives better down the road.

Now, I know that many people don't think of government spending as investment. But if we look back not too long, just over recent history, the last few decades, we have seen numerous instances in which government investment has not only created jobs, it has spawned entirely new industries.

As a matter of fact, even though people made fun of Al Gore many years ago, the fact is that government investment actually created the Internet. Government investment, through the Defense Department and other research institutions, has created literally billions and billions of dollars in private sector growth and created thousands and thousands and thousands of new jobs.

We face a very difficult choice right now. We can sit back while the rest of the world advances, or we can make the tough choices right now to make serious and important investments that will not just create new industries but may, in fact, solve some of our most intractable problems. I am talking here about medical research, for one.

We now invest \$6 billion a year in cancer research. Cancer treatment and the cost to society because of cancer amounts to literally hundreds of billions of dollars each year. It costs Medicare. It costs Medicaid. It costs the private system. If we spent \$20 billion a year on medical research for cancer and over 10 years finally cured it, made it manageable in an inexpensive way, the long-term payback to this country would be enormous.

One of the problems with analyzing our health care reform proposal, now in the law the Affordable Health Care Act, is that we weren't able to factor in the long-term benefits of preventive care, research, more efficient operations, because they are not quantifiable.

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But we know that if we could just deal with two major diseases, diabetes and cancer, then we would probably solve our long-term health care financial issues. So tonight the President will lay out choices for us. And I think this is a very, very important aspect of our public dialogue right now. We need to make sure that not only the American people, but also every Member of Congress, really understand what our choices are. Because it's very, very easy to stand up and say we're going to cut spending by \$100 billion in the Federal Government when you're not willing to talk about what specifically you're willing to cut. And my colleague from Minnesota just said the President may not be specific. Well, the fact is, Republicans haven't been specific either.

We need this laid out for the American people. We need it laid out for us.

We have difficult choices. We need to make them. I think the President is on the right track. We cannot cut back right now on medical research. We cannot cut back on the type of research that will create new industries, particularly in the energy field. We cannot cut back right now in education when the rest of the world is passing us by in terms of the achievement of their students. And we cannot cut back right now on investments in our infrastructure when much of it is crumbling around us.

So I look forward to the debate we're going to have over the next few months. It's an important debate. It's probably the most serious debate we've had in this country in decades, because we are at a crossroads. We can allow this country to become a secondary international power, or we can maintain our status as not just the world's largest economy, but the world's most ingenious economy, the world's most innovative country, and a society which cares about making life better for every American citizen.

CLEAN-ENERGY JOB CREATION

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

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I came to the floor this morning to talk about our excitement hearing the President tonight express that feeling of optimism, confidence and can-do spirit that has always epitomized America, and that is in the field of the development of our clean-energy job creation program.

I'm excited about it because, as we're coming out of this very deep recession, many of us believe that one of the brightest spots on our economic horizon is our ability to develop hundreds of thousands of new jobs in this country so that America can fulfill its destiny of leading the world in clean-energy development.

We believe it is our destiny to do that because we have always done that throughout America's history, leading the world in aeronautics, leading the world in software, leading the world in aerospace; and now we have a great opportunity to lead the world in the development of clean energy. And when we do that, we do believe that we will create hundreds of thousands of new jobs. And I look forward to the President's ideas on how to do that.

But I want to talk about where we are right now in our ability to do that. I remember I came to the floor 2 or 3 years ago and talked about the prospects of creating jobs in America in the creation of an electrified transportation system and our ability to electrify our cars. And when I did that, I remember I was criticized by some in this Chamber thinking, well, that was sort of a pipe dream, couldn't happen, that was Buck Rogers-kind of stuff that really wouldn't allow us to create jobs in this field.

Well, I want to bring us back up to where we are now this year to see what progress we've made. I want to mention three pieces of progress we have made that are going to, I think, be examples A, B and C of why the President's message of clean energy will be received well tonight:

Number one, this year is the General Motors Volt. It is a plug-in hybrid electric car, a car that you can plug in and go 40 miles all on electricity; and then if you want to go more than 40 miles, it has an internal combustion engine that will generate electricity to charge the battery that will run the wheels of the General Motors Volt.

And when I asked General Motors to bring the Volt to Capitol Hill a few years ago, people thought, interesting idea, will never work. Well, guess what. The General Motors Volt this year was North American Car of the Year a couple of weeks ago. It stunned the auto industry, and it is going to be one of the great leaders as we move to the electric cars of the future.

We have the domestic manufacturer, the Ford Focus, that we think is going to follow. Tesla is being manufactured here. We hope to see Toyota and Nissan produce electric cars here as well. These are the cars not of the future but of today. And we can lead the world in the manufacture if we do some of the things that the President will talk about tonight to electrify our auto transportation fleet.

Second, I want to talk about one of the most exciting events I've ever had as a U.S. Congressman, and that is last October I went to the Wooden Cross Lutheran Church in Woodinville, Washington. And I got to participate with that congregation in dedicating the very first electric charging station in America in a church parking lot. And I thought, this is a great thing for America that we are electrifying our transportation fleet, allowing Americans a place to plug in their electric cars.

And we dedicated this charging station. It's about 3½, 4 feet tall. And you pull up to it and plug in your electric car in the Wooden Cross Lutheran Church parking lot. The Good Book says "let there be light." Well, now let there be power, and verily there is power in this church parking lot. And there's going to be more power in thousands of places in America because of our stimulus bill which has allowed the creation of these electronic charging stations.

Third, I want to mention the production of batteries. We have grown something like—and I want to make sure I get the number right—700,000 clean-energy jobs doubling renewable energy manufacturing and generating jobs in America by the year 2012. And the clean-energy sector has grown 2½ times faster—faster than the U.S. economy in the last year and a half.

And one of the reasons is because we are growing an electric battery manufacturing capacity industry here in the United States. We only had 2 percent of

that capacity in 2009. We believe we can have 40 percent of the world's capacity by 2015. And if you want to think this is not a reality, go to Holland, Michigan, where because of our stimulus bill that we passed last year, we are putting hundreds of formerly laid-off auto workers to work in Holland, Michigan, making lithium ion batteries to run our electric cars. And that is happening because of what we did.

Let's grow these clean-energy jobs. I look forward to the President's speech tonight.

A MORE PERFECT UNION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as I was walking through the hallway, I encountered an individual who was enormously excited about the President's State of the Union. They happened to be a new employee of this House. This would be the very first time that they would have this privilege and this honor. I think it is important for us to recognize that it is a privilege and an honor. In essence it is a responsibility of this administration, of this President, to follow in the tradition in the law of the land that the President presents to the Congress, to the people of this great country, the State of the Union.

Frankly, I'm an optimist. I am so grateful that we live in a country that has a Constitution that has prevailed for so many years, that we have language in our Constitution that says that we have organized to create a more perfect Union, that the words of the Declaration of Independence are pressed upon our hearts: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that we all are created equal with certain unalienable rights of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness.

That's what I expect to hear from our President tonight, a man of passion and commitment and dedication, a man who feels the pain of this Nation, a man who has sacrificed his own personal prestige and popularity in order to make very difficult decisions.

The American Recovery Act, for example, went into the nooks and crannies of this Nation and built up small communities, provided extra police officers, provided more patient rooms, gave more resources to local hospitals and research institutions to make this country great and created jobs. And if you look at a grid that shows the job creation of the last administration, you will see that it is predominantly all red, jobs lost. But as we have struggled to build and climb, we aren't going in the right direction.

And so I would ask the President to stand his ground on investment in America and infrastructure in America. And I would say to this body that we must stand committed and dedicated to the protection of the vulner-

able. Does that mean increasing the deficit? No. I happen to have had the privilege of working on a balanced budget. It's exciting. We passed a balanced budget, and out of that we created the Children's Health Insurance Program and 22 million jobs in the last Democratic administration.

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We can do that now. We can create jobs, and I would encourage the President to focus on the infrastructure. Why? Let me give you an example.

The city of Houston, now the third largest city in the United States based upon the census data that will be finalized in the month of February, we are in line after 30 years to create a world-class mobility system. We have been granted a billion dollars over a number of years, not wasting money because Texas happens to send more to the United States' tax coffers than we get back, but we will be creating 50,000 jobs by investing in a light rail system to move people forward, to eliminate the emissions crisis that we have, and to put people to work.

The crisis that we are now in with not having passed the appropriations of the 111th Congress, which I secured some \$150 million for us to start, stymies all of these need-to-build projects on bridges and freeways, on dams that need to be repaired. All of that creates the genius of America or boosts the genius of America and let's us work.

So, Mr. President, stand your ground on making sure that we move forward on infrastructure so that we can make it in America, meaning that Americans can make it, they can survive, they can improve their quality of life, and we can make it in America.

I want us to build the light railcars. Bring it on home. Let us build turbines that are part of wind energy. Let us build the solar panels. And, yes, let us build our buses and trains. Stand your ground, Mr. President.

And then for the most vulnerable of America, let's put it on the line that we are not going to touch Social Security. I know the panic that goes through senior citizens, the disabled, veterans who are dependent not only on the veterans' compensation but they are dependent on Social Security. Let's draw the line. And, too, the young people of America. Let's be very clear, you are not carrying the senior citizens. We are not taking out of your future. Remember the words of President Kennedy who said: Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country. Social Security is an investment of those who have worked and those who are disabled.

And so, Mr. President, stand your ground tonight in this most privileged opportunity to speak to the American people. Bring us together as we will all be sitting with each other. So let us stand our ground for the future of America.