

program or using it as an ATM for the top 2 percents.

Happy birthday, Medicare. If we stay true to our values, you will have many happy returns.

PROTECTING AMERICAN JOBS AND SECURING AMERICA'S ENERGY FUTURE

(Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, the administration's war on coal led the Office of Surface Mining and Reclamation to try and change a rule that would redefine what is considered a stream as it pertains to mining operations.

I am pleased than an amendment I offered during the debate over the budget continuing resolution has been included in the Interior appropriations bill in an effort to stop this irresponsible regulatory overreach.

No one is surprised that the Obama administration is continuing the war on coal, but this is also a war on jobs. And the coal industry employs thousands of people in eastern and southeastern Ohio.

Mr. Speaker, we all want a cleaner environment, but we need to make sure that the policies being enacted are common sense and do not come at the expense of jobs and our economy. Stopping the Obama administration from rewriting the stream buffer zone rule will be a victory for jobs and a defeat to a radical agenda that is seeking to outlaw coal entirely. We can and we must enact smart policies that clean up our environment while protecting American jobs.

□ 1210

MEDICARE

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

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, as the deadline nears for Americans to raise its debt limit, the American people have sent a clear message to all of us:

They will not stand for a budget that is balanced on the backs of seniors and the middle class.

The American people know that it is wrong to privatize Medicare with a new voucher program, to cut guaranteed health benefits for seniors and to sacrifice Medicaid services for the poor and disabled.

It's not too late for us to compromise on a balanced approach. Yes, we can trim spending with intelligent cuts, but we must end tax breaks for the ultra rich. I state: We must end tax breaks for the ultra rich and corporations that shift jobs overseas.

No new taxes equals no new jobs. No taxes—no jobs.

We have an historic opportunity in front of us. Let's stop the partisan

bickering and work together on a plan that strengthens the middle class, lowers our deficit and creates new jobs here at home.

THE DEBT CEILING REDUCTION ACT

(Mr. BROUN of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, we have overspent and we are over-extended. Now we have to get out of debt.

For the last 20 years, we have been increasing the debt ceiling and allowing Washington to spend more and more of the taxpayers' money. This method of madness hasn't worked, and today, our economy is suffering because of it.

Yesterday, I introduced a unique bill that would lower the debt ceiling to \$13 trillion. This proposal would force Washington to make the spending cuts that we so desperately need to pay down the debt.

State and local governments, businesses and families understand, when you've maxed out your credit card, you can't just give yourself a credit increase. Instead, you have to cut spending and pay down your bills. The Federal Government is the only entity that does not understand this.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2409, the Debt Ceiling Reduction Act, because we need to turn this country in a completely different direction.

MAKING AMERICANS SAFER HERE AT HOME

(Mr. CLARKE of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I have a proposal that will help us save tax dollars, pay down our debt, and better protect the American people.

Instead of spending billions and billions of dollars to secure Afghanistan at the rate that we are—and we've spent over a half a trillion of our precious tax dollars in Afghanistan over the last 10 years—I propose to redirect a small share of our tax dollars back to the U.S. and to use our money to hire and equip more police officers, more firefighters, more emergency medical providers, because one of the most effective ways to help protect the American people from a terrorist attack is to make Americans safer right here at home.

THE REPUBLICANS' ALL-OF-THE-ABOVE ENERGY STRATEGY

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, on June 22, President Obama released 30 million barrels of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve—just over a day's worth of oil. The administration continues to play politics rather than develop a comprehensive national energy plan, which will lay the path for future economic growth, help lower unemployment and improve our stagnant economy. This country's economy was built on inexpensive and abundant energy.

Folks are frustrated now. A fellow stopped me the other day, and said, Doc, it's a sad day when a guy can't buy a gallon of gas and a gallon of milk for \$10.

And it's true. People don't want half measures that don't address their problems. They want solutions. They want to work. They want to provide for their families.

It is way past time to ease this pain at the pump. The President has shown no interest in the Republicans' all-of-the-above energy strategy that encourages oil and natural gas development in places like ANWR and the Outer Continental Shelf. With national unemployment stubbornly above 9 percent, the American people expect us to work together to lower the cost of energy, reduce our dependency on foreign oil and create American jobs.

OPPOSING THE PRIVATIZATION OF AMTRAK

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

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose the privatization of Amtrak, which would threaten reliable, dependable, and accessible passenger rail service throughout the United States. I travel home every weekend on Amtrak to my district in New Jersey, and its service is an essential part of our region's economic vitality.

Under the plan to privatize Amtrak, the essential service they provide to millions of passengers could be lost, and nearly 20,000 Amtrak jobs could be eliminated. State-owned infrastructure that Amtrak currently maintains could be turned over to the already deficit-burdened States to maintain. It is likely that station stops will be cut and that commuter rail services will bear increased costs. Additionally, freight railroads that currently use Amtrak-supported lines may face logistical problems if Amtrak becomes privatized.

Under the proposal to privatize Amtrak, many important labor provisions will be eliminated. Future railroad employees will be exempt from disability, pension, retirement, and unemployment benefits. By removing future employees from these benefit systems, current and retired employees will be negatively affected, and railroads will face increased taxes to maintain the solvency of these systems.

I urge my colleagues to oppose the privatization of Amtrak.

THE CUT, CAP AND BALANCE PLEDGE

(Mr. HARRIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, while marching in parades and town festivals all over my district during the 4th of July weekend, I spoke with concerned parents, job creators, seniors, and folks who have been out of work for a long time. The one message I heard loud and clear from all of them: Reduce government spending so that businesses can create jobs again.

That's why I signed onto the Cut, Cap and Balance Pledge, which calls for a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. I know the idea that the government should have to actually balance its budget every year is strange to some here in Washington, especially to entrenched bureaucrats and the special interest groups that fill this city. Imagine if the Federal Government had to run a budget like we do in our homes.

It's time for the Federal Government to live within its means, and it's time for us to reduce spending so that businesses will have the confidence to create jobs again.

Cut, cap and balance. Let's make sure we put America back on the path to prosperity, not on the path to unemployment and bankruptcy.

CURRENCY REFORM FOR FAIR TRADE ACT

(Ms. HANABUSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, for so long we've been hearing about our debt. We've also been hearing about who owns our debt, and of course, the name "China" comes up. That is why we need to have the Currency Reform for Fair Trade Act come to this floor, because that is the only way—the only way—we are going to address the currency manipulation by China and simply ask that they play by fair rules for fair trade.

Look at what this means for us. Let's understand that, by having the currency manipulated by them, they are having the benefit of 25 to 30 percent. That's what we're subsidizing them in terms of their exports. If we get the currency manipulation under control, this is what we could hope to accomplish:

Our budget deficit will be reduced to about \$857 billion over the next 10 years. The trade deficit will be reduced by \$138 billion. The GDP over the next 18 months will increase by \$285 billion. This will support 1.6 million American jobs.

So as we are asking "where are the jobs?" look to currency manipulation.

FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE FROM CHINA AND AMERICAN JOB CREATION

(Mr. HENSARLING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, on July 4th, we celebrated our political independence from Great Britain.

My constituents want to know when are we going to celebrate our financial independence from China, which funds much of our national debt. My constituents also want to know: Where are the jobs? Mr. Speaker, these two are connected because too much spending-driven debt leads to too few jobs.

Now, our President doesn't seem to get this. If his stimulus, his reckless spending, his small business tax increases, his class warfare rhetoric helped promote job creation, we would be the most highly employed society in the history of mankind; but instead, we are mired in the longest period of sustained high unemployment under his policies since the Great Depression.

House Republicans have a plan for America's job creators. In the trillion dollar deficits, make the Tax Code fairer, flatter, simpler. Stop the President's job-crushing tax increases, and end the dumb regulations that prevent jobs in America.

□ 1220

EVERYTHING MUST BE ON THE TABLE

(Mr. WELCH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, Congress has a responsibility to level with the American people. We face a looming decision about extending the debt limit, not because we want to but because we have to reaffirm the obligation we have to pay our bills. The majority of us on the Democratic side voted to do that. That was not to incur new spending or new obligations; it was to meet obligations already incurred: \$2.3 trillion for the Bush tax cuts; an Iraq war, \$1 trillion on the credit card; Afghanistan on the credit card. If we're going to level with the American people, we have to acknowledge that we have to pay for things, whatever their intentions. The time is long overdue for us to accomplish this.

If we're going to be successful on the two things we must do—pay our bills, maintain our full faith and credit, and have a long-term fiscal plan—then everything must be on the table, and that has to include taxes as well as spending, and it must include the Pentagon.

Mr. Speaker, this is not an ideological battle to win. It's a practical problem to be solved.

FREEDOM TO INVEST ACT

(Mr. DOLD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that our economy is struggling. With stagnant unemployment, over \$14 trillion in debt, and soaring food and gas prices, America does face some challenging decisions.

In my home State of Illinois, the debt per person is over \$4,400, and the State faces a \$15 billion shortfall in next year's budget. These indeed are real problems that need to be addressed with commonsense solutions.

One solution is to encourage American companies to reinvest their earnings here at home. Currently, companies are holding an estimated \$1.4 trillion in earnings overseas because the United States Tax Code encourages companies to keep their earnings outside of the country. We must encourage companies to reinvest their earnings here in America. Not only would these earnings stimulate the American economy, but the government would collect approximately \$50 billion in immediate tax revenue. This money would help spur job creation, more growth, and investments here at home.

I would encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting the bipartisan H.R. 1834, the Freedom to Invest Act, so that we can strengthen our economy with commonsense solutions.

GETTING AMERICA BACK ON TRACK

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to say today that I was elected in November of last year for the 10th time here, and I am in my fourth district in that period of time. I have spoken to people all over Dallas County, Tarrant County, and Collin County, and unanimously they are seriously concerned about the lack of a true job plan from the Republican majority.

We must cut spending. We must ensure long-term fiscal health. But gridlock over spending cuts does not create jobs. We need a bipartisan compromise that focuses on fiscal responsibility while maintaining investments in our community that continue to create jobs and grow the economy.

To get Americans back to work, we must invest in science, education, research and innovation to create the jobs of the future, and we must focus on America's ability to build, construct and grow manufacturing across the country to remain globally competitive. Mr. Speaker, these efforts can and will spur job growth and ensure that our Nation can compete and be a leader in the global economy.

TIME TO GET OUR FISCAL HOUSE IN ORDER

(Mr. YODER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1