



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 112th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 157

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, JULY 11, 2011

No. 102

House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HARRIS).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 11, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ANDY HARRIS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. LANKFORD. Nineteen years ago, when my wife and I married, I was still in school, I was working as much as I could, and she was also working, but we were barely making it. But we made the decision we were not going to run up credit card debt and live beyond our means. We paid our school loans, we tithed to our church, we ate a lot of peanut butter, and we lived simply. As Dave Ramsey says, "We determined to act our wage."

It is a biblical principle for myself and my family. Proverbs 22:7 states: "The borrower is slave to the lender." Proverbs 22 applies to families, and Proverbs 22 applies to nations. If we were living within our means as a Nation, almost all the debate in the last 6 months in this Chamber would have been different.

We've tried every method in the Fed's bag of tricks to protect our interest rate, because if the rate goes up at all, the house of cards falls. We work to manipulate banks, mortgage lending and manufacturing because we must keep revenue up. We carefully manage every relationship worldwide because we need the borrowing liquidity. We pour billions of dollars into the economy that we borrow from future generations because we're afraid this generation will have to make hard choices if we do not keep up the borrow pace. Our economy struggles, which leads Washington regulators to overmanage every sector, which causes even more economic uncertainty.

Our focus has shifted from families to corporate bailouts because we're living beyond our means, and we're trying everything we can to make it work. It's not sustainable. We have to get back in balance.

Capital investment in business and industry is slower because so much of the money that would go toward starting new businesses is actually financing our national debt obligation. There's only a limited amount of money in the world economy at any one moment to subsidize our debt and the debt of other nations around the world. When we consume that money for our debt payments, we remove it from the market.

America is the world leader. Unfortunately, we have led the world in debt and deficit spending, and now it's time we lead the world in how to solve a debt crisis.

You see, I believe we have a debt crisis, not a debt ceiling vote crisis. If we

increase the debt ceiling without beginning to solve the debt problem, we did not avert the economic disaster; we accelerated the disaster. I understand we're painted into a corner, and we cannot balance our budget instantly without completely collapsing this fragile economy. I get it. But I also get that we were sent here to make adult choices.

This is a bipartisan problem. We all point fingers at each other, but we all know both parties made promises with no plan to pay for it. So since we know that, why don't we also agree to a bipartisan solution? I've heard a hundred times since I've been here, we need a balanced approach to solving this problem. Well, let me tell you I agree. We do need a balanced approach—a balanced budget amendment approach. That is the first big step to forcing us to get into balance permanently.

The Constitution is not a Republican or a Democrat document. A balanced budget amendment is not a Republican or a Democrat issue. You see, you can't make changes to the Constitution without both parties engaged. But if both parties actually worked together, we can solve this debt crisis for our children and grandchildren.

The last time this body dealt seriously with a balanced budget amendment was 1996. It passed this House with overwhelming bipartisan support, and it failed in the Senate by a single vote. Can you imagine for a moment what our financial condition would be like right now if we'd started balancing our budget during the good economic times of the 1990s and kept that discipline to this present day?

If you want to know the true consequences of that failed balanced budget amendment vote in 1996, point to the financial collapse of 2008, because I believe the financial collapse of 2008 would not have occurred if we had balanced the budget when we did. Even if we did, we would be in a position to

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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better respond to it. We can either learn from that lesson or repeat it. The balanced budget amendment passed the Senate in the 1980s and failed in the House. Then it passed in the nineties in the House and failed in the Senate. This is the moment we will either doom the next generation of Americans to more financial uncertainty or we will solve the problem.

A balanced budget amendment solves the S&P and Moody's rating question because it settles the issue forever that we will live within our means. While this body should be able to make tough choices, we all know full well this body will make the tough choices only when it has to. It has always been that way; it always will be that way. A balanced budget amendment gives future Congresses the gift of a moment each year when they must make tough choices. Let's bring up the amendment.

Let's send it to the States for a vote. It is the ultimate "allow the people to speak" moment. I think Americans get this more than Washington gets this. Forty-nine of our 50 States have a structure in place right now for a balanced budget every single year. They make it work every year. We can too. The only fear from Washington is the inability to spend more money at will and to control the States with our preferences and money.

At the end of this labor, if we birth a balanced budget amendment, all the pain of this process will have been worth it. Let's show the Nation we can work together. Let's solve the debt problem. Let's take up and pass a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, and then let's get to work in solving our debt crisis.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

We give You thanks, O God, for giving us another day. We ask Your blessing upon this assembly and upon all to whom the authority of government is given. We pray that Your spirit of reconciliation and peace, of goodwill and understanding, will prevail on the hearts and in the lives of us all.

Encourage the Members of this House, O God, to use their abilities and talents in ways that bring righteous-

ness to this Nation and to all people. Ever remind them of the needs of the poor, the homeless or forgotten, and those who live without freedom or liberty. May they be instruments of justice for all citizens. May Your spirit live with them, and with each of us, and may Your grace surround us and those we love that in all things we may be the people You would have us be in service to this great Nation.

May all that is done within the people's House this day be for Your greater honor and glory. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKEY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. VISCLOSKEY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

HIGHER TAXES KILL JOBS

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, sadly, with the unemployment rate rising on Friday, today's Investor's Business Daily's lead editorial is correct: With unemployment now at 9.2 percent and job growth at a standstill, is there anyone not blinded by ideology or rank partnership who can't see that Obama's spend-and-regulate economic plan has been an utter failure?" Citing that the unemployment rate has dipped below 9 percent in only 5 of the President's 29 months in office, the verdict is clear: "No President since the Great Depression can match that record of failure."

On Friday, The Hill proclaimed the President's campaign responds that people won't vote based on the unemployment rate. I believe the American people know better. Even worse, now liberals are pushing harder for tax increases that will kill jobs. Liberals do not understand, as The Lexington County Chronicle explained, people's income belongs to them and does not belong to the government. Tax increases hurt small businesses and kill jobs.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

SUPPORTING ENERGY AND WATER APPROPRIATIONS BILL

(Mrs. BIGGERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2354. I commend the work of my colleagues, Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN and Ranking Member VISCLOSKEY of Energy and Water Development appropriations, for their efforts to balance important energy and infrastructure funding in nuclear energy, the Army Corps of Engineers, and in particular the Office of Science.

Strong funding at DOE is critical for the development of future reactor technologies and licensing for new nuclear and small modular nuclear power. Similarly, healthy funding for the Army Corps of Engineers is vital to our waterway commerce, protection from invasive species and water quality in the Midwest.

Finally, by maintaining our investment in the Office of Science, Congress will preserve our capacity to innovate, enhance our competitive edge in the global economy, and create good American jobs well into the future. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support the Office of Science.

ENOUGH OF THE BACKROOM DEALS

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

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, enough with the backroom dealing on the debt ceiling. The debate has continued for months behind closed doors in the proverbial "smoke-filled room" with nothing to show for the effort. As a congressman, why should I be forced to peruse cable stations and blog sites for information on the discussions—and then be asked to vote for the deal when I have no input and no time to know even what's in it?

Let's pull back the shades and open the window. Let's put the sunlight and fresh air on this discussion. Should we cut spending? Should we reform entitlements? Should we have a balanced budget amendment?

Mr. Speaker, let Congress do its job and put the debate right here on the floor. Let's do this in the people's House for everyone to see. This will be the way the people and their choice come to fruition.

DON'T TAX JOB CREATORS

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

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, another week, and another week that our fiscal problems in this country are unsolved. We saw the jobs report—18,000 jobs created when we need 350,000 jobs created in order to get our unemployment rate back down to 5 percent. And who can blame our job creators when all the