

the halls of Congress. But what have we done? The House has passed a number of bills that would immediately open up a marketplace for job creation and job growth, but unfortunately our friends on the other side of the Capitol in the Senate have done nothing to advance these pieces of legislation. And it's not like they've had anything to do. I mean, they haven't even passed a budget in over 800 days. So I would ask our friends in the Senate to start to push these pro-growth economic policies so we can get Americans back to work.

But it's not just our friends on the other side of the Capitol who are holding us back. It's the administration who has pursued policies that have hurt job creation and economic growth. To be a good manager, to be a good executive, you have to be able to do two things well: One is to be able to analyze and pinpoint a problem, and the second part is to find a solution for that problem. Unfortunately, we have an administration that doesn't even do the first part well. They actually pinpoint problems that don't exist, or problems that aren't problems at all, so you can't even get to a solution that will get Americans back to work.

Let me give you a couple of examples of this. Recently, the President said that one of the problems we have with job creation is with ATMs and kiosks at our airports. I didn't know about the scourge of ATMs and kiosks, but apparently those are what are holding back our job creators. This is called innovation. This is called efficiency.

It reminds me of a story of when the famed economist Milton Friedman went to China. He was witnessing some excavation for a canal, and there were thousands of people who were digging with shovels. Milton Friedman asked: Why aren't you guys using bulldozers or excavators, those things that will make this more efficient?

The Chinese officials said: Then we couldn't put these people to work.

To that, Milton Friedman responded: Why don't you give them spoons?

Innovation and efficiency make our economy stronger, they're net job creators, so we should be going after what is really holding our country and is really holding back economic growth, and that is the NLRB who is attacking American companies who want to create American jobs. That is the EPA, who is going after numerous pieces of regulation that will in the near term kill jobs, in the medium term kill jobs, and in the long term kill jobs. We should be going after the FTC who is now going after Captain Crunch and Tony the Tiger. Those sorts of things are the ones that are holding our country back and holding back economic growth. We should be looking at those burdensome regulations and removing that and letting our entrepreneurs and our job creators unleash the ingenuity that they have within them.

There is one area of agreement that I do have with the President, and that is

with the free trade agreements. The free trade agreements with South Korea, Colombia and Panama need to be passed through the House. But we've got to agree on something. They have been sitting on the President's desk since he has been in office. I urge the President to send those free trade agreements without any additional spending attached to them, because those are job creators. For every billion dollars worth of exports, it is 10,000 jobs here at home.

So I really hope the administration starts to pinpoint and look at the real problems that our country is facing so we can get America back to work and we can lead to more economic growth and prosperity, because it starts with the American worker.

DEBT CEILING NEGOTIATIONS

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

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I was just kind of curious about which one of those EPA regulations that my colleague was talking about. Perhaps it's the one that would prevent the emission of mercury into the air, or arsenic into the water. Maybe they want to poison the air and the water. Maybe that's what they're looking at. Or the SEC regulation that would bring to heel Wall Street and all of its excesses which just about terminated the economies of the world. Maybe those are the regulations they don't want to see. In any case, what I would really like to talk about here is the negotiations that are under way to deal with the looming crisis of the debt.

The President of the United States has said, okay, let's not kick the can down the road any further, let's deal with this issue, and has proposed a \$4 trillion solution. No sooner did he make that proposal than our Republican colleagues said, oh, no, we can't do that because that will include finally creating in America a fair Tax Code, one in which the superwealthy are actually going to get to pay for their share of the burden. For example, the hedge fund managers who pay a 15 percent rate on their earnings, their ordinary income, while the rest of us get to pay the full freight, whatever that might be, 35 percent for those at the top brackets. But, no, no, we can't deal with that problem, so we can't have a \$4 trillion solution.

The President also says, We're not going to kick the can down the road. We want to extend the debt limit to at least 2013, to put this issue off. But the Republicans don't want to do that. They want to do a short term.

I wonder what's going on here. Talking about cuts, the only cut that I've seen thus far defined by our Republican colleagues is to cut Medicare. In fact, not just cut it, terminate Medicare, to somehow take all of those Americans

who are 55 years or younger, and say to them, no, when you become 65, you will not have Medicare. We'll give you a voucher and you can go out and take your best shot with the private insurance sector.

Good luck. I was an insurance commissioner. I know what those private insurance companies will do. They'll deny you benefits, deny you coverage, and they will tell the doctor exactly what you might actually receive in terms of health care. It doesn't make much sense to me.

I think we need to support the President in this matter. I think we need a balanced approach here, one in which the wealthy finally get to pay their fair share, in which the oil companies no longer receive our hard-earned tax dollars so that they can have their \$4 billion subsidy. I think it's time, as we heard earlier from our colleagues, to end the wars. If we end the war in Afghanistan, we could over the next 4 or 5 years have a third of a trillion dollar reduction in our deficit.

There are many things that can be done, but one thing we will not do is to attack Social Security. Social Security and Medicare are the foundation of support for all Americans. When they become old, 65 and older, they know that they have that benefit available to them.

Medicare works. Medicare is actually far more efficient than any private health insurance system. It has provided seniors across this Nation with an opportunity to not be impoverished when they become 65, that their health care will be provided to them. It has allowed for the extension of their lives. It has reduced the poverty rate. Together with Social Security, these are two of the foundations that we have promised every American. When they become 65, they will not face poverty. They will have a foundation. Not enough to provide all that they might want but at least a foundation.

And so as we go through this whole issue of whether we're going to raise the debt limit or not, let us be mindful that we will not do it on the backs of the seniors, and we will do it in a balanced way as the President has said. We will provide for a fair Tax Code in which the superwealthy pay their fair share, in which corporations are no longer able to evade taxes, in which the oil companies no longer will receive our hard-earned tax dollars so that they can have even greater profits, and let us be mindful that the oil industry itself over the last 10 years, the top five oil companies have had over a trillion dollars of profits. It's time to bring back those subsidies and to balance our budget. We can do these things.

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DEBT LIMIT

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

Mr. SCHILLING. Madam Speaker, I come before the floor of the House this morning to talk about the top issue of the Illinois 17th Congressional District, and that is the debt limit. The debt limit has been raised 51 times since 1978. Mr. Geithner has indicated that doing the same thing over and over again is insanity, and I tend to agree with him.

Where are we at today? \$14.2 trillion in debt. We reached the debt limit on May 16, 2011. Business owners such as myself share a message with people: it is time that we did the responsible thing and come up with some solutions so we stop the continuance of leaving this debt to our kids and our grandkids.

As a small business owner, I'm asking President Obama not to balance the budget on the backs of the small businesses across the United States of America. The thing that I understand as a small business owner is that in a downturn economy, the worst thing we can do here from Washington, DC, is raise taxes on small businesses. The reason why, and I use my business as an example is, in a downturn economy, I understand that raising prices on my product when people are already struggling to purchase a product is not the best thing to do. When my taxes go up, I can raise the price or I can let someone go. And, you know, as hard as it is to let someone go, that's what businesses will have to do because people won't be able to afford their product.

We need to try a different way, and that's why we are promoting a new train of thought here in Washington, DC. These 87 Members of Congress have changed the thought process of Washington, DC. We've changed the thought process from how much can we spend to how much can we cut. What we have also done is, we are trying to get Washington, DC, to focus in on wants versus needs and then prioritizing those out.

The President has even admitted that the overregulation needs to be addressed. Whether it is the EPA, OSHA, the overtaxing, the 1099 tax form that we just got repealed, the Small Business Administration says that businesses like my little pizzeria in Moline spend four-and-a-half times as much per employee to comply with environmental regulations than bigger companies. We spend three times more per employee on tax compliance than large businesses.

Congress needs to provide an environment with some economic certainties. We can do this by stopping tax increases on our job creators. My home State of Illinois, and quite frankly President Obama's State of Illinois, recently had the largest tax increase in the history of the State. It seems like every morning you open up the paper in Illinois and another business is threatening to leave. We can do something about this. We can provide our job creators with a certainty that with the unemployment rate at 9.2 percent, we don't need to add any more tax bur-

den or further any more overregulation.

HOME RULE FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, before I begin my remarks, I too want to acknowledge my good friend, LYNN WOOLSEY, for 20 really illustrious years in the Congress. I cannot imagine why she would want to end her illustrious career here so early. We will miss her.

I should warn Members of Congress that a peculiar part of the Financial Services appropriations, which comes to the floor this week, will seem particularly strange, even inappropriate. It is a historical anachronism, and I can only apologize for it. We must quickly make sure that we enter the 21st century on the District of Columbia local budget. Yes, it is our budget. We raise it all in the District of Columbia. We are American citizens.

Some have said, But the District of Columbia is mentioned and comes under the Constitution. So be it. I'm a constitutional lawyer; I concede that. But in their wisdom, after 150 years of shame, the Congress of the United States decided to grant home rule, as we call it, to the District of Columbia. So that instead of having a city of hundreds of thousands of Americans run by a Federal body, the Congress said that we delegate, we use our power under the Constitution to delegate to the District of Columbia the ability to elect its local officials, and raise its own money—we were raising our own budget all along. And spend its own money. For the most part Congress has adhered to this delegation by law. After all, we raise \$4 billion. That's more than some States.

It is, of course, the very essence of the principle of federalism embraced by both sides of the aisle of this body. Our federalism is what has held the Union together. We are a very different jurisdiction, so we have acknowledged different strokes for different folks. As if to reinforce that principle, a new crop of Republicans has come with federalism as a virtual original principle, giving new meaning to the notion of local control. Indeed, these new Republicans want the Federal Government out of even many Federal matters and to them turned back to the States. And so I imagine that the whole notion of the big foot of the Federal Government on the District of Columbia in local matters would particularly offend the new so-called "tea party" Republicans if they are adhering to their own principles.

The appropriation that will come before this body already intrudes on the District of Columbia with one rider, a rider involving abortion services for local women. That's embedded in it. If this Congress holds to principle, there certainly will be no more.

The world saw the reaction the last time the Congress tried to add attachments to the District of Columbia appropriation. It was in the budget deal of 2011. At a time when people in the Mideast were in the streets against their government, it was our government that went into the streets, and you saw elected officials from the top of the government, both the executive and the legislature, arrested in acts of civil disobedience because of intrusion on the way that the citizens of the District of Columbia spend their own local money. And the White House was not exempt. Residents also went to the White House and some were arrested right there because the White House agreed to the 2011 budget deal at the very last minute.

Now a new national organization composed of national organizations that themselves have millions of members across the United States have come forward to help us, and they have sent letters to Members of Congress saying that you will not be able to anonymously any more engage in intrusion on the local affairs of a local jurisdiction. We are activating our members to let them know if you intrude by voting for any attachment that takes away the ability of the District of Columbia to spend its own local funds as it sees fit. Local taxes, my friends, local issues. Not your business unless you raise the money.

Some of these issues are controversial. That also is the essence of federalism. We, of course, bow to the differences among us instead of trying to take away our rights to embrace those differences. Much that occurs in your district is enough to raise the hairs of my own citizens. We would not want to deprive you of your rights. We ask that you do not deprive us of ours. There will be consequences.

DEBT CEILING NEGOTIATIONS

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

Mr. ROKITA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to address the ongoing debt ceiling negotiations, or so they're called. The debt crisis currently facing our country is a grave one. Make no mistake, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has called the debt the greatest threat to our national security. Not Iraq, not Afghanistan, not al Qaeda, but our debt.

Since January 2009, \$3.7 trillion has been added to the national debt. Currently, our debt stands at \$14.3 trillion, and I'm told if you add in the cost, the present day cost of all of the promises that irresponsible people who have stood here before me have made to the American people, that the cost would be over \$70 trillion.

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Many Americans, including this one, can't even conceptualize that, can't count that high. And that's not their