

"We urge Colombian authorities to fully investigate the murder of freelance reporter Luis Eduardo Gómez, establish whether he was killed for his work, and bring those responsible to justice," said Carlos Lauria, CPJ's senior program coordinator for the Americas. "Colombia has made progress recently in its fight against impunity in journalist murders. It must not allow this new killing to set its progress back."

The parapolitics scandal broke in late 2006, after the weekly newsmagazine *Semana* published a series of investigative pieces that forced Colombian authorities to examine the alleged associations. Dozens of former and current members of Congress have been detained or investigated since 2007, the press said.

The Urabá region of Antioquia province has been marked by violence for some time and was controlled for many years (until 2006) by the paramilitary group the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), press reports said. Colombian provincial journalists, working in areas where paramilitaries and other illegal armed groups are prevalent, face challenges in trying to report on the organizations' activities, CPJ research shows.

With 43 journalists killed for their work since 1992, Colombia has historically been one of the most dangerous places in the world for journalists, CPJ research shows. However, CPJ's Impunity Index has showed that over the past four years the country is improving its record, as anti-press violence has slowed and authorities have had some success in prosecuting journalist murders.

DEBT CEILING/JOBS

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

Mr. NUNNELEE. Mr. Speaker, last week we learned that the economy added a meager 18,000 jobs and the unemployment rate went up to 9.2 percent, far from the 6.7 percent that President Obama claimed it would be today if the stimulus bill had been signed into law. Far too many Americans are looking for jobs. Yet the President insists that tax increases are the way to fix Washington's spending problem. Tax hikes that will destroy jobs and destroy the confidence that our job creators need to hire new employees. To keep American jobs here we don't need to raise taxes. We do need to get our fiscal house in order.

Twenty-two million Americans search daily for full-time work, the worst sustained unemployment streak since the Great Depression. To these Americans, there is no end in sight. For them, unemployment's not a rate, it's a reality. Our job crisis has everything to do with our spending crisis and our debt crisis.

If we hit the August 2 deadline, the United States Government will face what many Americans have felt: Too much month left at the end of our money. We simply won't have enough money to pay our bills. Americans have had to make that decision time and time again. At the end of the month, they have to decide what to pay first—the mortgage, the electric bill, the grocery bill, or the car payment.

Now, I will be very disappointed if, in making those decisions, the administration chooses to play politics. We need to make sure we pay Social Security, interest on the debt, Medicare, and our troops that are standing in harm's way. The American people want real solutions, and the House of Representatives has committed to a long-term plan. We voted for a budget that would make Washington start living within its means. Even the President's own chief of staff has said that in 5 years Medicare is going broke.

However, it's been 800 days since our friends in the Senate have passed a budget. And they have nine House-passed jobs bills sitting in their hands, but they refuse to act on any of them.

A recent poll shows that only 17 percent of mothers believe that their children will have a better life in the future. At every townhall meeting I ask participants whether they think their grandchildren will live a better quality of life than they live. The response is slim.

If Congress is going to be asked to raise the debt ceiling, we must have a long-term plan to fix Washington's spending problem. House Republicans have made our demands clear. We will not raise the debt ceiling without spending cuts larger than an increase in the debt ceiling. We will not raise the debt ceiling without structural reforms that restrain further spending and guarantee that we don't get into this mess again. And I am not interested in a temporary band-aid. We have already voted "no" on raising our debt limit without significant cuts and reforms.

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We will not support a plan that raises taxes on hardworking Americans. We didn't get into this problem because taxes are too low. We are in this situation because of runaway spending and the failed economic policies of this administration.

We need to move forward and solve this crisis in a responsible way.

HONORING FREDRICK DOUGLAS WILLIAMS III

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the accomplishments of Mr. Frederick Douglas Williams III of Selma, Alabama, a great American and a trailblazing Alabamian.

After more than 50 years in the floral business, Mr. Fred D. Williams III retired on June 30, 2011. A fixture in the Selma community for more than five decades, Fred Williams has provided his floral expertise to countless families for weddings, funerals, graduations and other special occasions in the Seventh Congressional District of Alabama and throughout the Southeast. Fred's Flower and Gift Shop opened on Octo-

ber 15, 1956, and served as a vital part of the Selma community.

Fred Williams comes from a family of public servants and entrepreneurs. His parents were pillars in the City of Selma and served as role models for the entire community. His mother, Ms. Mary Ellen Richardson Williams, was a beloved educator; and his father, Fred D. Williams, Jr., was a wise and generous business owner. His father owned J.H. Williams & Sons Funeral Home, established in 1905 and still in operation today in Selma, Alabama. The Williams family were pioneers in a time when African American businesses were few or nonexistent. The opening of Fred's Flower and Gift Shop was an extension of his family legacy.

Fred Williams spent most of his formative years in Selma. He moved with his family to Richmond, Virginia, in the 1950s where he graduated from Maggie L. Walker High School. He then went on to attend the historic Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. After graduation, he returned to his hometown of Selma and opened his flower shop in 1956.

For 45 years, Fred Williams was married to Martha J. Williams, who passed away on July 15, 2003. Their marriage was blessed with two children: Kay Frances Williams, who is married to Earl Johnson of Alexandria, Virginia; and Kimberly Joyce Williams, who is married to John Dylan of Bloomington, Minnesota. He has two beautiful granddaughters: McKenzie, who is 13; and Madison, who is 7.

For over 50 years, as Selma's premier florist, Fred Williams shared his creative genius, creating exquisite floral arrangements, providing supreme service to his loyal customers, and serving as an inspiration to all small businesses. Fred Williams is loved, admired, and highly respected by the entire Selma community, and I am honored to call him "Uncle Fred." His retirement will be a great loss to the business community, but I know that his commitment to bettering Selma will remain unwavering.

On a personal note, I grew up in the Williams household, and his daughter Kim and I were childhood best friends. In fact, there is not a childhood memory that I have that does not include the Williams family or my many visits to Fred's Florist. Because of the closeness of my family that we shared with the Williams family over these many years, I have always affectionately known him as "Uncle Fred."

Through his business and philanthropy, Uncle Fred has made an indelible mark on the community in Selma, Alabama, and I am extremely grateful for the part that he played in raising me. I would like to sincerely thank him for his fortitude and over 50 years of service. The community of Selma and the State of Alabama appreciates your public service and commitment to business excellence.

Therefore, I, TERRI SEWELL, Representative to the United States Congress from the Seventh District of Alabama, do hereby recognize Mr. Fred D. Williams III for his numerous contributions to the City of Selma, Alabama. I ask those present today to join me in honoring Fred D. Williams III for his retirement and commending him for his many achievements on behalf of the State of Alabama.

THE DEBT CEILING

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

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I came to the House floor today to talk about the big deal. Every time I open up a newspaper, Mr. Speaker, this week it's been talking about the big deal, the big deal that's going on at the White House.

I want to set the record straight here today. The big deal happened right here on the floor of this House, when the only budget that's passed in all of Washington, D.C., all year long, cutting \$6 trillion in spending, was passed by this body, Mr. Speaker. That's the big deal—\$6 trillion agreed upon by this United States House of Representatives. Now, I know down at the White House they are talking about the big deal is 3 trillion in spending cuts, 6 trillion, Mr. Speaker. The big deal started right here now.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I am a big fan of the open process that we have had in this House where every single Member of the United States House of Representatives come here and have their voices heard, offer their ideas, offer their opinions, and that happened in our voting process, Mr. Speaker.

I have a vote tally here from that week of voting on the budget. The Congressional Black Caucus budget came to the floor of this House, was debated, considered. It received 103 affirmative votes, 103. The Republican Study Committee budget came, debated in this House, 119 affirmative budgets. The Progressive Caucus budget came, 77 affirmative votes. Congressman VAN HOLLEN brought a Democratic alternative, 166 affirmative votes.

The only budget to get 218 votes, Mr. Speaker, was the House Budget Committee budget with 235 "yes" votes, 235. Now, that's a budget that was laid out line item by line item by line item, so absolutely everyone in America could see what it was that we were doing to achieve these savings to change the direction of our borrowing and our spending.

Now, no one even introduced the President's budget in this body, Mr. Speaker. No one offered it. Now the Senate brought the President's budget to a vote, and it was defeated 0-97. The United States Senate, Mr. Speaker, defeated the President's budget 0-97.

Now, they brought the House-passed budget up over there. They couldn't pass that either. It received 40 affirma-

tive votes, but they still couldn't pass the budget. As my colleague said earlier, it's been over 800 days since the Senate has passed a budget.

Now, I know the President has come back out and he has talked about some alternatives, some things he would do differently from the budget that he offered in February, differently from that budget that got zero votes in the Senate. And in a Budget Committee hearing the other day, we asked the Congressional Budget Office Director what's the score on the President's new plan. And the office told us, Mr. Speaker, that they can't score a speech. I think that's true.

There is a lot of talk in this town, but there is a not a lot of line item by line item by line item putting your name, your money, and your vote by where your priorities are. But this House did it, Mr. Speaker. We are the only body in town to do it. It's the only budget in town to pass and it's the big deal, \$6 trillion over 10 years to help try to get this country back on track.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, it did it by not cutting one penny from the benefits that seniors are receiving today, not one, so that seniors, even those over 55, Mr. Speaker, would continue to receive the same Medicare program that seniors are receiving today; so those over 55 would receive the same Social Security benefits as those folks who are receiving those benefits today. I cannot believe, when I open up the front page of the newspaper, I hear folks talking about Social Security benefits might not go out the door, veterans benefits might not go out the door.

Mr. Speaker, we have a plan that this body passed that gets those checks out the door. It is responsible in that it cut \$6 trillion in spending. It is responsible in that it bends the budget curve going forward over the next 10 years and it gets those checks out the door.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know what's going to happen over the next 3 weeks. I don't know where this town is going to go. This town is a tough town to predict. But I know that this House has put its mark in the sand. This House has brought every single Budget Committee alternative that was offered to this floor. We voted on each and every one, and the only one to pass this House was the big deal, \$6 trillion, and it gets our seniors and our troops paid on August 3.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to rally around that and let's give the American people what they deserve, and that's some certainty in the budget process.

□ 1040

THE UNEMPLOYED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, as we have the opportunity to

debate whether or not our brave young men and women are fighting in wars in foreign lands that have not been approved by the Congress, as we talk in terms of trillions of dollars as to the national debt that we have acquired and think of ways that we can reduce it, and as we look at our revenue code and recognize that it is just so totally unfair and should be reformed and revamped, millions of people have awakened this morning unable to really consider these important issues because they are without work. Millions of people have lost their self-esteem, have lost their jobs, and some have lost their health insurance. Many have lost their homes, others have pulled their kids out of college, cars have been lost for inability to pay, and creditors have been just nightmares to them.

Included in this vast amount of people are African Americans, many who have served this country, hardworking people that find themselves not at the 9.2 so-called unemployment rate but at a 16 percent unemployment rate. And this doesn't take into account the millions of people, and especially African Americans, that know that there are no jobs for them. And to be going to the unemployment office just to be counted among the faceless unemployed doesn't make sense.

Included among them are veterans that have fought for this country. Some have come home with physical and mental problems, but they have not received the support or the transitional aid that's necessary for them to assimilate in a work market that has no jobs. So many of these people have worked in local establishments, in our butcher shops, our cleaners and our shoe repair, and they are without work. So many of them are women that have toiled and raised their families without the assistance of anyone else, and they too are without work and without hope.

As we think about these people and think about reduction of our spending, we find that Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security seems to be constantly referred to as entitlements, and people talk about that it has to be protected. So many mayors and Governors are talking about how they too have to cut their budgets. And so many African Americans, for reasons that I do not have to go into, have sought public service as a way of life because of the security that's involved in it. And so when we talk about cutting the budget and cutting the services that are provided, we're talking about a larger number of minorities that will be losing their jobs as a result of budget cutting, whether we're talking about teachers or policemen or clerks that work in the city halls or the communities that have Governors that have slashed back their jobs, but certainly as we talk about Medicaid and Medicare, we're talking about hospitals. And all of you know, no matter where you come from, that you see a large number of African Americans working