

1867 was quickly transformed into a private picnic retreat, complete with a bowling alley, a dance hall, and a mule-powered merry-go-round.

In 1886, Parker Grove became known as Ohio Grove, the Coney Island of the West, after being sold to the Ohio Grove Corporation. Modeling itself after Coney Island in New York City, they quickly dropped the name of Ohio Grove and just called it Coney Island and began to add more rides and more attractions. In 1911, the first roller coaster was added, the Dip the Dips, and in 1913 the Dip and Dots was added. But it wasn't until 1924 that the signature attraction of Coney Island was realized when George Schott, one of Cincinnati's greatest philanthropists, purchased with a group of investors Coney Island.

In 1925, they added Sunlite Pool, the world's largest recirculating swimming pool. Mr. Speaker, let me give you the dimensions of this pool because it is bigger than a football field. A football field is 300 feet by 160 feet; this is 200 feet by 401 feet. In addition to being the world's largest recirculating pool, it continues to be the largest flat surface pool in North America, and was the precursor to zero-depth pools in the United States. It went through a lot of trials and tribulations over the next part of the century, but they kept adding new attractions and new rides, including ones that I enjoyed as a child, like the Wildcat and the Shooting Star.

In 1971, a decision was made to take the amusement portion of it and move it to another portion in my district in Kings Island, which made people wonder what would happen to Sunlite Pool. But again, the visionaries realized they had an attraction, they had a water park, and they continued to add dimensions to Sunlite Pool to make it an attraction. In 1986, River Bend was realized by putting in two separate theaters, outdoor theaters, to allow concerts to occur. Today, Coney Island continues to thrive with a small amusement park for children, the Sunlite Pool, and a thriving River Bend.

I would like to say, on a personal note, I remember my mother telling me stories when her mother took her; my mother took me; I took my daughter; and over the Fourth of July break, I was able to take my two grandsons to Coney Island to swim in the pool.

I am so excited that this beautiful attraction has continued to exist for 125 years. I want to celebrate the tenacity of the folks along the way who have continued to invest in this great asset in my district, and I want to wish them a great happy birthday, and I hope Coney Island continues for at least another 125 happy years. Happy birthday, Coney Island.

GETTING AMERICANS OUT OF DEBT

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

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, to the American people, I want to address the debt that is killing jobs in this country and robbing Americans of their financial security. And I also will propose how we get out of that debt, to really create jobs and restore financial security to all Americans.

Now, the Federal debt is important. We have to do everything we can this week and next week to avoid a government default, because if the government defaults on its obligations, at the very least that is going to cause interest rates to rise on the borrowing that the American people hold as debt and that could drive people further into financial distress and into foreclosure and bankruptcy.

But the debt that is crushing the American people is the mortgages, the student loans, the credit cards, that people have to bear. Now I am from Detroit, and jobs are important. In fact, I represent one of the regions of the country that has the highest unemployment rate. But as important as jobs are to the economy, we have got to get Americans out of debt. I know folks who are working right now, they have jobs, they are earning income, but they have no money because their income is going to pay off bills. It's going to creditors. They can't provide for themselves. They can't provide for their families. They can't provide security for the future because they are in debt. And this American personal debt is also costing this U.S. economy jobs because when people don't have money to save, money to invest, they can't really spend it on businesses that could hire more people and create more jobs.

My point is this, and I am speaking to a few of the Members of Congress who are here right now, but more importantly, I am speaking to you, the American people, because maybe you can help me drive this Congress to address the real debt that is threatening this democracy and our economy.

□ 1110

This country's economy will not rebound strongly, and we will not easily get out of this recession as long as Americans are underwater on their mortgages, defaulting on student loans, and maxing out on their credit cards. If we want to create jobs, jobs that will truly be sustainable and help provide families with real financial security, this Congress must realize that when the American people are in debt, so is this country.

So here's what I'm urging today. I am going to have a resolution I'm going to put forth, that as we work to prevent a government default on its obligations, that we also have to work to make sure that Americans don't further default on their debt. So I am asking, in as strong as possible a way as I can, for this Congress, on certain loan obligations, to immediately work to cut mortgages down to the value of your home, to forgive student loans,

because the most powerful way that we can restore our economic strength, to create jobs that are sustainable, is to help Americans get out of debt.

Now Congress has an obligation to do so because we changed the rules over the past decade or so to put Americans in all this debt. But just as Congress has an obligation to act, I've got to talk to you, the American people. You've got to act, too. You've got to take responsibility. You want this government to get out of debt, then you get out of debt personally. Stop the spending. Stop the borrowing. Stop overconsumption, buying things that you don't need with money that you don't have. That's robbing you and your family of a future. It's robbing this country out of jobs.

So I am going to ask every American right now, get out your credit cards, cut them up, free yourselves. Free yourselves. Don't count on this Congress to help you. This Congress already voted to end Medicare. They're flirting with disaster on this debt right now.

I'm asking Americans, take control of your financial future, get out of debt, and let's demand that this Congress help you get out of debt.

CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE ACT IS A PLAN THAT CAN WORK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today the House is going to debate a bill that holds the potential to move us away from a debt crisis and toward prosperity. I want to associate myself with the comments that were made by our colleague the gentlelady from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) a couple of speakers ago when she talked about how our colleagues on the other side of the aisle say that it is irresponsible to amend the Constitution in order to require the Congress to balance the budget.

Yesterday in the Rules Committee, we heard from the gentleman from Maryland who talked about how we're twisting the Constitution to put in a limit on how we could cut taxes, raise taxes, into the Constitution, that how, by putting a two-thirds vote and restrictions into the Constitution, we're damaging the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, nothing could be further from the truth. Congresses in the past have proven that they don't have the restraint that's necessary to keep our spending under control. We need a constitutional amendment in order to do that.

They did admit yesterday that we are paying the credit card from the past, and I want to point out that under President Obama, the average annual deficits that were in existence under President Bush became monthly deficits under President Obama. Since 2½ years ago, the national debt has increased by \$3.7 trillion.

That's why we need to cut spending, Mr. Speaker. We need to cut our spending. We need to cap our spending at no more than 20 percent of the GDP. That's what it was traditionally. It has now eased up to 23 percent. We have to take it back down.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to point out, as my colleague from Missouri said, that when President Obama was Senator Obama, he spoke on the Senate floor and voted against raising the debt limit, saying that it was a failure of leadership. He doesn't admit that now, that it's a failure of leadership. He doesn't even admit that he's part of the problem. And part of the problem is that he has no plan. When we asked yesterday in Rules, "Where's the President's plan?" we were told it was in his speech at George Washington University. Well, even his own staff people, even his own appointees, say they can't score a speech.

Republicans have a plan, and our plan is to cut, cap, and balance. We need a constitutional amendment, Mr. Speaker, in order to force the Congress to do its job. Past Congresses, as it has been shown, couldn't do it. We're willing to do that. There is no leadership on the part of the Democrats. The budget that the President presented in February was voted down, 97-0, in the Senate. Even his own party will not support him.

And what about all these corporate loopholes that the President and our colleagues keep talking about? The President talks about these corporate jets, but he doesn't admit the fact that the loopholes he's talking about, which he calls subsidies, that loophole was in the stimulus that he forced through this Congress, that no Republican voted for. So the corporate loophole for the jets is one the President put into place, and now he's condemning it.

Mr. Speaker, we need our President and our colleagues on the other side of the aisle to fess up to the fact that they've created this problem, they have no plan to solve it, and all they want to do is throw barbs at the Republicans who are showing the courage to do something about this serious debt crisis that we face in this country.

VOTER SUPPRESSION

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

Ms. WATERS. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

In 2011, we see that voter suppression is real and rearing its ugly head in too many Republican-led legislatures across this country. With only 15 months left before the next Presidential election, Republicans are rewriting voting laws to require photo identification at the polls, reduce the number of days of early voting, and to enhance voting restrictions against ex-felons and out-of-state students.

Since January, voter ID laws have passed in Florida, Wisconsin, South

Carolina, Alabama, Texas, Kansas, and Tennessee. Governor Scott Walker of Wisconsin and Governor Rick Perry of Texas both signed laws this year that would require each voter to show an official, valid photo ID to cast a ballot, despite the fact that studies show up to 11 percent of eligible voters nationwide don't have government-issued IDs.

In Florida, Governor Rick Scott signed a bill to tighten restrictions on third-party voter organizations and shorten the number of early voting days. Governor Scott also helped to pass a ban on felon voting rights, forcing nonviolent offenders to wait 5 years after completing their sentences to apply to have their rights restored.

The Florida legislature also passed new laws that makes it tougher for get-out-the-vote groups to register new voters and reduces the number of early voting days from 14 to 8.

Make no mistake: We've been down this road before with Jim Crow laws. These smoke-and-mirror policies are poll taxes and literacy tests by another name. Communities must be alert and aware of these new laws. We will not allow the work, sacrifice and death of our forefathers and civil rights leaders to have been in vain. We are prepared for this fight, and fight we will.

The new voter ID laws and other restrictions have the potential to disenfranchise millions of eligible voters. Minorities, poor people, seniors, and students are among those that will be impacted the most.

□ 1120

The Justice Department must get involved. They must make sure that these laws that we have fought so hard for on voting rights are not undermined.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, when I became a Member of Congress, I swore an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America. And I rise today to affirm that commitment by speaking out against State efforts to undermine the basic right to vote—a right that has been affirmed by no less than three amendments to the Constitution: the Voting Rights Act; over 150 years of litigation, blood, sweat, tears, and lies. No right under the Constitution has been more defended by the American people. Yet Wisconsin just passed a very restrictive voter ID, photo ID card in order to vote.

I can remember when then-Representative Walker and I, the Governor of Wisconsin, debated this issue. And he, like so many other people, said, Well, what's the big deal? What's wrong with having a photo ID? You need a photo ID to go to Blockbuster's and get a video. You need a photo ID to drive. You need a photo ID to get medicine. Well, getting a video from Blockbuster's is not a right. The right to vote is a very, very important badge of democracy in this country. We need a

very high bar before we make it more difficult to exercise our rights as U.S. citizens.

And what's the bar that Wisconsin uses to justify its law? The Wisconsin Attorney General's office found in the 2-year Election Fraud Task Force investigation that there were 20 instances of possible voter fraud out of 3 million votes cast. That's seven-thousandths of 1 percent. And a photo ID would not have prevented any of these discrepancies.

People of color are singled out for disenfranchisement when you consider in Wisconsin that 55 percent of African American women, 49 percent of African American men, 59 per of Latinas, 46 percent of Latinos don't have this kind of ID. And when you consider the 18- to 24-year-old group, 78 percent of African American males don't have this ID and 66 percent of African American women don't have the ID. I wonder who they're trying to disenfranchise.

We implore the Department of Justice to intervene and prevent these extremely transparent efforts to burden likely Democratic voters at the polls.

IN SUPPORT OF THE CUT, CAP, AND BALANCE ACT

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. I rise today in support of the Cut, Cap, and Balance Act, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle here to support the bill when it comes to the floor later today. This legislation not only provides a workable framework to avert an economically dangerous default on our obligations but it also sets the stage for real structural changes to the way the Federal Government spends our tax dollars, something that the President has yet to propose.

Lately, there have been stories and speculation about the major credit rating agencies such as Moody's and Standard and Poor's threatening to downgrade America's creditworthiness should we fail to raise the statutory debt ceiling. These ratings are more than letters on paper. They affect Americans in all walks of life and in very real ways. A downgrade of our Nation's credit rating would make mortgages more expensive, make it more difficult to get a loan for a car, and could make student loans unaffordable.

While default would likely ensure downgrade, a debt ceiling increase is no longer alone sufficient to ensure our AAA credit rating. Moody's has warned that the outlook to our bond rating would remain negative should any plan going forward not include long-term deficit reduction. It is not enough to simply raise the limit on the credit card and continue making the minimum monthly payments. We must begin to pay down our debt.

One need look no further than Greece and Portugal as examples of governments which have failed to address