

budget amendment to the United States Constitution. We will, I hope, have the opportunity to vote on such an amendment this week.

Experience has proven time and again that Congress cannot, for any significant length of time, rein in excessive spending. The annual deficits and the resulting debt continue to grow due to political pressures and dependency on government programs. In order for Congress to be able to consistently make the very tough decisions necessary to sustain fiscal responsibility over the long term, Congress must have an external pressure to force it to do so. The most realistic chance we have today to enact this type of institutional reform is through a balanced budget amendment to our Constitution.

Many Members of Congress have introduced balanced budget amendments in this Congress. I introduced two versions on the first day of the 112th Congress. H.J. Res. 2 is the exact text that passed the House in 1995 and failed in the Senate by one vote. This amendment requires that total annual outlays not exceed total annual receipts. It also requires a three-fifths majority to raise the debt limit, and, in addition, this legislation has limited exceptions for times of war.

H.J. Res. 1, which I also introduced, goes much further. In addition to the provisions of H.J. Res. 2, it requires a two-thirds majority to raise taxes and imposes an annual spending cap that prohibits spending from exceeding 18 percent of GDP.

In the United States Senate, 47 Republican Senators have cosponsored a balanced budget amendment, which is a strong sign that the Senate is ready to engage in debate on this subject.

Our extraordinary fiscal crisis demands an extraordinary solution. So we simply cannot afford to succumb to political posturing on this issue at a point in time so critical to our Nation's future. We must rise above that and move forward with a strategy that includes legislation that will get at least 290 bipartisan votes on the House floor.

So as we consider a balanced budget amendment, I encourage the Members of this body on both sides of the aisle to devote our effort to passing this strongest balanced budget amendment that can garner two-thirds of the House of Representatives.

We are at a crossroads in America. We can make the tough choices and control spending paving the way for a return to surpluses and ultimately paying down the national debt, or we can allow big spenders to lead us further down the road of chronic deficits and leave our children and grandchildren saddled with debt that is not our own.

The choice is ours. The stakes are high. Failure is not an option.

FAMINE IN AFRICA

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

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I had breakfast this morning. I had granola and yogurt, a little fruit, an egg and bacon sandwich, and I'm feeling irritable because I didn't have my coffee. I'm looking forward to a delicious lunch that I've planned at about noon-time.

But in the meantime, on the Horn of Africa, 11 million people are facing starvation. And not because they're lazy people or unworthy people, but because they're suffering from the biggest drought that they have seen in 60 years, because they're experiencing flooding, because there are people who have stepped away from the loving care that we usually extend to others of our brothers and sisters, others who are human beings on this planet. Tens of thousands of people will die.

There is an official famine that has been called by the United Nations. And for those of you who know what a famine is, it's not when you don't have a particular thing like me—I didn't have my coffee this morning. Famine exists when at least 20 percent of the population has extremely limited access to basic food requirements, global acute malnutrition exceeds 30 percent, and the death rate exceeds 2 out of 10,000 per day for the entire population.

An example that was in the news recently is of a 7-month-old Somali boy who weighed the same amount as any one of our newborns—weighed 7 pounds. A 7-month-old boy weighed 7 pounds. That is an example of what happens in a drought.

And what are we doing here in the United States of America, the world's largest humanitarian donor, when the United Nations has called for, on July 20, has asked for more than \$1.6 billion to support the humanitarian response in the next 12 months urgently, desperately needed to address and abet this burgeoning humanitarian crisis that is unfolding? We are in the midst of cutting funding of our foreign aid and peace food budget.

The fiscal year 2012 Agricultural appropriations budget bill that passed a few weeks ago, over my opposition, cut this program by \$200 million. It was heartbreaking to see amendment after amendment after amendment come forward to cut it further, and even amendments to eliminate it completely.

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The United States, as the world's largest humanitarian donor, we need to do more. We talk about balanced budgets here; and there are people in this world, our brothers and sisters, who don't even have a balanced meal on a day-to-day basis.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that we not become numb to the conditions of peoples around the world. Less than 1 percent of our budget goes toward foreign aid, and that includes operations of the

State Department and everything, Mr. Speaker. I'm asking that in these discussions of debt and deficits that we do not turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to those people who are starving.

In closing, I just want to mention, Mr. Speaker, that of course we know who suffers disproportionately among the poor, the usual suspects. Women and children are disproportionately represented among those who are food insecure, those who are starving, and those who die.

I thank my colleague for yielding and for his continued leadership to make sure that we do not forget or overlook this tragedy that is currently occurring in the Horn of Africa. I know that as chairman, and now, ranking member of the Africa Subcommittee, he has been a true leader in working to empower the people and nations of Africa.

The United Nations has declared a famine in parts of Somalia and an emergency humanitarian crisis throughout the Horn of Africa—including Eritrea, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Somalia.

In Somalia alone, tens of thousands of people have died in the past three months because they cannot get enough food to keep themselves alive.

Tens of thousands will surely die in the coming months if the international community, led by the U.S., does not respond quickly and comprehensively. Famine exists when at least 20 percent of the population has extremely limited access to basic food requirements, global acute malnutrition exceeds 30 percent, and the death rate exceeds 2 out of 10,000 per day for the entire population.

The lives of over 11 million people in East Africa are at risk. That is twice the population of my state of Wisconsin. And as usual, those most vulnerable women and children are suffering disproportionately. One in every three children in southern Somalia is malnourished (some 550,000 total). UNICEF estimates that 2.3 million children are suffering from acute malnutrition in the region.

These numbers don't include those who are dying on literal "roads of death" as they attempt to flee famine in Somalia to neighboring countries (Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea) that are struggling with drought themselves.

There was a news report recently about a 7-month old Somali boy who weighed the same as a newborn, some 7 pounds. At this stage in his life, he should weight three times as much. A nurse at the refugee camp his family made it to recently puts the little boy's odds of survival at 50–50, a flip of a coin.

The U.N. has asked for some \$1.6 billion to support the humanitarian response in the next 12 months.

Yet, as the humanitarian crisis unfolds, this Congress is in the midst of cutting funding our foreign food aid budget. The FY 2012 Agricultural Appropriations bill that passed a few weeks ago over my opposition, would cut Food for Peace programs by some \$200 million. During that debate, some of my colleagues offered amendments to even make deeper cuts and even eliminate funding for that program all together. It's as if we are telling the men, women, and children desperately searching for food, to "keep warm and well fed."

I hope that my colleagues on the House Foreign Operations Committee will not make that same mistake and will in fact boost funding for our global humanitarian aid programs which will be needed as this crisis unfolds.

The U.S., as the world's largest humanitarian donor, must do more if a humanitarian catastrophe is to be averted.

Tens of thousands of lives can be saved, but the window of opportunity to do so is extremely limited and is closing even as we speak.

DEBT NEGOTIATION

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

Mr. HERGER. Six days, Mr. Speaker. Six days until we exceed the debt limit, and we still haven't seen a plan from the White House. However, we have the first 2½ years of his administration as an example of the future he wants for America. The President's policies display his commitment to unchecked government spending. The President supports massive tax hikes on a Nation already enduring the worst jobless recovery since the Great Depression.

The President is content to ignore our entitlement crisis. His actions over the last 2½ years have put this country in significantly worse shape than when he took office. We have seen a total failure of leadership from the White House. He threatened to veto the commonsense solutions of Cut, Cap, and Balance. The reason? By his own words, he wants a debt limit increase to carry him through the next election.

Mr. Speaker, the American people have had enough. We need action, and we need it now. No more speeches, no more rhetoric. The American people deserve to know what the President's plan is. It's time for President Obama to come to the negotiating table and work with us. We're running a \$1.6 trillion deficit, borrowing 40 cents of every dollar we spend. Without action, we will guarantee our children and grandchildren a future far less bright than the one our parents left us.

Republicans are here, ready to make the tough decisions, cut spending, and reform the way business is done in Washington. We're ready with solutions that will turn around our debt crisis and begin getting America back to work. But these solutions will remain a fantasy as long as the President's focus remains on politics and reelection rather than the good of the American people. We have 6 days left. It's time to act.

REMEMBERING JAMES T. MOLLOY

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the memory of James T. Molloy. Many in Washington knew Jim as the former, and last, doorkeeper of the House of Representatives. Western New Yorkers know Jim as a proud third-generation Irish American and career public servant.

Jim was born on June 3, 1936. He was raised in South Buffalo and paid his way through Canisius College. He de-

veloped his strong work ethic in the grain elevators on the waterfront and as a member of the city's fire department. He also worked as a schoolteacher for the city of Buffalo and the city of Lackawanna.

Jim came to Washington, D.C., in 1968 at the invitation of Congressman John Rooney. He managed the House Finance Office until 1974 when he was elected doorkeeper of the House. He held this position until it was eliminated in 1995. As the last doorkeeper of the House, Jim was a member of an elite group. Only 34 people have served in this position in our 215-year history. He oversaw more than 400 employees and administered a budget of \$6.8 million. He introduced Presidents and heads of State and coordinated 71 Joint Sessions of Congress.

Regrettably, I did not have the honor of serving in the House of Representatives during Jim's tenure, but he was a friend and an endless source of help and advice. I have long been inspired in my own service by his strong commitment to this institution. In fact, numerous western New Yorkers were inspired to consider political careers thanks to Jim Molloy. It was well known that Jim had a particular affection for helping western New Yorkers visiting the Capitol and young Buffalonians looking for work in our Nation's Capitol as well.

Jim was recognized on numerous occasions for his service. He received the Outstanding Citizen Award from the New York State AFL-CIO, the President's Award from the New York State Federation of Police, and the United States Senate Youth Alumni Association Outstanding Service Award. He received an honorary Doctor of Law degree from Canisius College and was named Congressional Staffer of the Year by Roll Call. In 2005, I was a proud sponsor of legislation that was signed into law naming a post office on South Park Avenue in our shared neighborhood of South Buffalo after James T. Molloy.

The loss of Jim Molloy will be felt for many years to come by all who knew him. At this time, Mr. Speaker, I ask for a moment of silence in honor of a servant of this institution, James T. Molloy.

THE DEFAULT CRISIS AND ITS EFFECT ON AMERICAN JOBS

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a member of the Progressive Caucus to draw attention to the devastating effects that could be caused if the United States were to default on its debt. First, let's be clear that raising the debt ceiling will have no effect whatsoever on any new spending that the Congress might do. It's simply giving the government authority to pay its bills, to pay its bills for

obligations that the Congress has already authorized.

Second, while Republicans have attempted time and time again to pin the current deficit on President Obama, the facts cannot be denied: It was the policies of the Bush years that got us here. It was just a decade ago that President Clinton left office not with just a balanced budget but a surplus, and the Congressional Budget Office declared in 2001, "The outlook for the Federal budget over the next decade continues to be bright." That quote, of course, came before the 2001 Bush tax cuts were signed into law; two wars that weren't paid for, put on the credit card; two tax cuts that weren't paid for and that mainly benefited the wealthy; and a devastating recession that may have been prevented, had government regulators not turned a blind eye to Wall Street greed. The Bush policies ran up the bills. Those are the bills that our country is committed to pay, and those are the bills that need to be paid if the full faith and credit of the United States is to be protected.

So now this Republican-manufactured crisis could be solved in 5 minutes if we simply passed a clean debt ceiling increase, like we did seven, eight times during the Bush administration, 18 times under Ronald Reagan, and then turned our attention immediately to ways to put our fiscal house in order, focusing on the real crisis, which is the jobs crisis. Instead, Republicans are choosing to hold our Nation's financial standing hostage, with potentially devastating consequences.

Allowing a default on the debt would essentially be a tax on every American family. Interest rates on everything, from mortgages and auto loans to credit cards and small business loans, would immediately soar. A conservative estimate suggests that the effect of an increase in interest rates could cost a homeowner with a 30-year mortgage of \$172,000 an additional \$19,100 more over the life of the loan. A drop in the stock market would hit the savings and retirement accounts of middle class Americans, less available credit for small businesses and consumers, and lower economic growth that could cost hundreds of thousands of jobs.

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In addition, if the country can't pay its bills, an unthinkable scenario becomes a reality, having to choose between what aspects of the government to fund and what bills to pay.

Seventy million checks are due to go out next Wednesday. Those include Social Security and veterans and our military families, and these checks are threatened. That is the threat the Republicans are willing to make, holding the full faith and credit of the United States hostage in order to push for extreme policies that would gut Social Security and Medicare and Medicaid and devastate the economy and the middle class in order to protect hedge fund managers and corporations that