

United States is getting its fiscal house in order. And if we do that, we can bring stability to the shaky global economy. We can reassure skeptical business owners and encourage them to create jobs. And we can create a better financial future for our children and our grandchildren.

I believe our choice is clear. I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, when you reach for your voting cards today, first take a glance at the pictures in your wallets, of your children and your grandchildren.

We are not Republicans; we are not Democrats. We are Americans. Today, let's put the American people first.

FAMINE IN EASTERN AFRICA

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the catastrophic famine that continues to unfold in the Horn of Africa. Eastern Africa is currently in the grips of the worst drought in 60 years, affecting 11 million people in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya. According to the U.N., Somalia now faces the highest malnutrition rates in the world, and some 3 million Somalis are in desperate need of immediate emergency aid.

The U.N. estimates that tens of thousands of Somalis have died of drought-related causes in the past few months, and acute malnutrition rates in the country's southern region now exceed 30 percent.

Thousands more are fleeing areas controlled by the al Qaeda-affiliated militant group, Al-Shabaab which, even in the face of such large-scale human suffering, refuses to allow major humanitarian groups to deliver aid. Some 50,000 Somalis have returned to the capital, despite continued violence and instability, in search of food and medicine.

Others have sought refuge from hunger and warfare in neighboring countries. Nearly 400,000 Somalis have crowded into Kenya's Dadaab refugee camp, a complex designed to house only 90,000 people. Another 9,000 arrive in the camp each week, and thousands of other Somalis continue to flee Ethiopia in search of food. Many, particularly children and the elderly, do not survive the harsh trek.

The warning signs of impending disaster have been visible for months, but the international community has been slow to respond. Aid is slowly now beginning to trickle in, however. The U.N.'s World Food Program has begun an emergency airlift of food. The first flight arrived in Mogadishu yesterday, bringing 10 tons of nutritional supplements for children. The World Food Program says that is enough to treat 3,500 malnourished children for 1 month. Clearly, the need is far greater. The World Food Program plans to increase its efforts in hope of reaching

over 2 million people in Somalia's south.

Likewise, the United States has provided much assistance to 4.4 million drought-affected people in Eastern Africa. Since last October, our government has given \$383 million in life-saving aid, including 348,000 metric tons of food.

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Further, this week the Obama administration announced a further \$28 million in emergency assistance for famine relief in Somalia. This aid is critical, and I commend the President for these steps. However, the scale of the current crisis requires a much greater response, as well as creative solutions tailored to the unique threats posed by Somalia's persistent instability and violence. For example, because al Shabaab is a terrorist organization, we continue to impose restrictions on aid organizations delivering assistance to the hard-hit regions under its control. We need to work with these humanitarian groups to ensure that, despite Somalia's continuing warfare and lack of governance, desperately needed aid can reach the most vulnerable men, women, and children.

Mr. Speaker, we need to act quickly to fight famine and save lives. We also need to address the long-term underlying causes that have left Somalia's people so vulnerable to drought and malnutrition. Even before the most recent crisis, Somalia was locked in a cycle of warfare, lawlessness, and bitter poverty. One expert recently called Somalia's current plight a catastrophic failure of all the systems that people rely on to survive. That's why part of our response must be an investment in resilience and food security; part of our response must be an effort to address the long-standing violent conflict that has torn Somalia apart; part of our response must go toward long-term economic development and capacity building.

We need to act immediately to ensure that humanitarian aid can reach the millions of eastern Africans who face imminent malnutrition and starvation that we're watching every day on television. I urge the United States and the international community to immediately scale up efforts to deliver urgent assistance to children and other vulnerable individuals.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

MAKING PROGRESS AND HISTORY WITH THE BUDGET CONTROL ACT AND BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. PENCE. As America watches and the world watches from afar, Washington, D.C., debates a debt ceiling increase and debates various proposals for confronting it in a manner that is consistent with our commitment to this generation and the next.

For the past 10 years, I've been fighting runaway Federal spending, deficits, debt, and takeovers here in Washington, D.C., by both political parties. Now I recognize if you owe debts, pay debts. This Congress has an obligation to defend the full faith and credit of the United States of America and find a way to pay our bills. But this Congress also has an obligation to keep faith with this and future generations by restoring fiscal responsibility and discipline to our national Treasury.

I have come to the conclusion over the last decade that Washington, D.C., is not only broke; it's broken. As a colleague of mine said earlier this week, the American people don't just want a deal, they want a solution. And I rise to say that I believe a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States is that solution.

I told my colleagues earlier this week I did not want to vote for any increase in the debt ceiling unless this Congress did everything in its power to send a balanced budget amendment to the Senate and to the States. Earlier today, we learned that Speaker BOEHNER and Leader CANTOR had made a decision for this Friday to bring two separate balanced budget amendments to the floor, and I heartily support their decision.

The first balanced budget amendment will include spending limitations and require a supermajority on tax increases, and I support those measures. But the second balanced budget amendment hasn't seen action here on the House floor for 15 years. Fifteen years ago, what is commonly referred to as the "historic" or the "clean" balanced budget amendment received overwhelming and bipartisan support, some 300 votes on the floor of the House of Representatives and almost passed the Senate.

I believe that by bringing that historic balanced budget amendment to the floor of this Congress this week we are doing all we can to send the balanced budget amendment to the Senate and to the States. And with that, I inform my colleagues today that I will support the Boehner plan, I will support the Budget Control Act, and I urge all of my colleagues to join me in doing the same.

Now, the Budget Control Act has much to recommend it. It has no tax increases, and we have confirmed from the CBO dollar-for-dollar spending cuts to match any increase in the debt ceiling. And there are mechanisms for additional cuts and additional reforms. But the Budget Control Act also includes a requirement that the Senate vote between October and November of this year on a balanced budget amendment. Again, let me say, a balanced

budget amendment to the Constitution has not been considered in the Congress for 15 years, despite overwhelming public support across this country.

Now, I'm for the version of the balanced budget amendment with various limits, but I believe it's vitally important that Republican leadership has chosen to bring the bipartisan version to the floor, to play it straight and give us a fighting chance to get those two-thirds votes necessary to amend the Constitution.

So I rise to announce my support for the Budget Control Act. I rise to express gratitude to Speaker BOEHNER and Leader CANTOR, who listened to colleagues like myself who thought we could improve the circumstances of this vote by accelerating and improving our choices for a balanced budget amendment. And, frankly, I also rise to commend all of my colleagues who have held out for a better deal. I want to say from my heart, this is better.

History is often made in unexpected ways and at unexpected times. I believe, with the consideration of the Budget Control Act on the floor today, we have an opportunity to make progress toward restoring fiscal discipline to Washington, D.C.; but I believe with consideration of the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States tomorrow, we have an opportunity to make history.

So I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Budget Control Act on the floor today. But I also urge all of my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats alike, to join us as we make a good faith effort to send a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States to the Senate and to the States. Let us put into the national charter that this national government, for this generation and the next, must again live within our means.

POVERTY IN AMERICA

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

Ms. LEE. I rise today as a founding cochair of the 39-Member Out of Poverty Caucus to talk about the millions of people living in poverty in America.

Nearly 45 million Americans live in poverty, and one in five children are growing up in poverty. The recession may be over for big corporations and the superrich, but for far too many Americans the recession is actually a depression.

Yesterday, the Out of Poverty Caucus held a press conference with organizations working on the front lines with low-income and poor people. We heard stories of more homelessness, long lines at food pantries, and the desperation felt by so many. Our Nation's unemployment rate remains at an unacceptably high 9.2 percent. Millions of Americans who have lost their jobs are

finding it harder and harder to find a new one. These new ranks of the long-term unemployed and their families are facing the stark reality of life in poverty for the first time.

The ongoing impact of the recession on struggling families and those facing or living in poverty simply must not be ignored. But instead of working to improve the lives of millions of Americans in poverty, the Republican Party continues their drive to plunge our Nation into default and our economy over the brink.

Speaker BOEHNER has unveiled yet another Republican plan that fails to do what America needs. His plan fails to end the threat of default. His plan targets the programs aimed at America's most vulnerable—our seniors, our children, and our low-income families—for more draconian cuts.

Trying to balance the budget on the backs of the poor is morally wrong.

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We need a balanced approach that balances targeted cuts with the revenue that we need. We must make sure that we can pay the benefits that we owe to our seniors, protect Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security, and safeguard our most vulnerable communities.

Mr. Speaker, while the Nation's unemployment level remains unacceptably high, for some minority communities it was double digits even before the recession began. The unemployment rate for African Americans today is recorded at 16.2 percent and Latinos recorded at 11.2 percent. And what many of us have known for a long, long time now, African Americans and Latinos have lost 18 to 20 times their net worth, more so than white Americans due to structural inequalities where race is a factor. These numbers are horrific and speak to the larger crisis facing our Nation, the jobs crisis.

Let me share the story of one American who is looking for a job. Reverend David was laid off from his job as the successful director of a faith-based nonprofit that served the disadvantaged and worked to put people on a path to self-sufficiency. Now he is relying on the very safety net programs that he used to connect others to. He diligently job hunts week after week. David and his wife rely on unemployment benefits to make ends meet, and he is worried about what he will do when he reaches the 99-week limit of those benefits.

Reverend David is not alone. Forty-five million Americans worry about where they will sleep at night, if their children will eat, what will happen if they need medical attention, and when will they secure a living-wage job.

We must work together to help the millions of Americans who are still struggling to recover from the Great Recession.

As the first order of business, I call on the Speaker to bring my legislation, H.R. 589, to the floor for an up-or-down

vote immediately. It would add 14 weeks of retroactive emergency unemployment benefits to those long-term unemployed known as 99ers who continue to face uncertainty and hardships. Passing this extension will stimulate our economy, not to mention that it is our moral responsibility to help those in need.

But people really want to work. Instead of creating jobs, Republicans are holding our economy hostage, putting forth policies that will create more unemployment and more job loss. Instead of quickly passing a clean debt ceiling vote, the Republicans are marching lockstep to create this default.

Instead of supporting the vital human needs programs that will protect our most vulnerable, Republicans are trying to balance the budget on the backs of the poor while maintaining these tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires and Big Oil.

Mr. Speaker, there is no more time for these Republican games. The American people expect us to put partisanship aside to protect our economy and create jobs. The American Dream has been a nightmare for the 45 million living in poverty, and is turning quickly into a nightmare for millions who are falling from middle income into the ranks of the poor.

The bill put forth today by Republicans guarantees this tragic outcome.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2608. An act to provide for an additional temporary extension of programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958, and for other purposes.

LEGACY OF FREEDOM

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

Mr. NUNNELEE. Mr. Speaker, last week the remains of Corporal Judge C. Hellums of Paris, Mississippi, were returned from the Parroy Forest near Luneville, France, and given a proper burial in Arlington National Cemetery.

In the fall of 1944, following the Normandy invasion, Corporal Hellums' unit, the 773rd Tank Battalion, was fighting its way east through France toward the German border. The M-10 tank destroyer to which he was assigned was attacked. Two men survived with serious injuries, but Corporal Hellums, along with Private First Class Lawrence N. Harris of Elkins, West Virginia, and Private Donald D. Owens of Cleveland, Ohio, were killed in the attack. All evidence at the time indicated that their remains had been destroyed.