

I rise today, even though feeling a little bit under the weather with an obvious cold, to show my support for these free trade agreements, because we have worked hard from day one in this Congress to be a voice for what I believe to be true free and fair trade agreements that put us and America on an even playing field with other countries around the world.

South Korea, Colombia, and Panama represent 250,000 jobs. It can't be any simpler than that. I listened to the President come up and present his jobs speech to us as we sat in this Chamber, and I heard my colleagues talk about the length of delay it took to get these agreements up to this House. But I'm not going to look to the past. I'm going to look to the future. And I'm going to look at the areas where we can find common ground to advance the cause of the great American economic recovery that could start and will start with the passage of these free trade agreements.

I applaud the President for sending these agreements up here today. I'm very confident that after a thorough and loud debate on these issues, they will be passed, and we will move forward to a brighter day of an additional 250,000 jobs in America and \$13 billion worth of enhanced economic activity for the American market. Back in the 29th Congressional District that I am proud to represent, that is real money, those are real jobs, and what we're going to talk about are improvements in our agricultural industry, be it our grape growers, be it our wine producers, be it our apple growers, be it our dairy industry.

But we're also proud in the 29th Congressional District to represent some of the highest tech and manufacturing operations in the entire world. A little company in the city that I come from, Corning, Incorporated, in Corning, New York, has had a longstanding business relationship in South Korea, producing LCD glass and other high-tech materials and manufacturing components.

To me, these free trade agreements are fair agreements and they lead to job creation. That's what we were sent here to Congress to do, is to put America in a better economic condition so that generations of tomorrow will have the prosperity to call this great Nation home for many generations to come.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for yielding.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Again, I appreciate the gentleman from New York for his leadership on this key jobs issue.

With so many Americans out of work, the President was standing in this Chamber not too many days ago urging Republicans and Democrats to come together to create new jobs. Can you imagine if there was an issue that the White House and Congress both agreed on, that Republicans and Democrats across the spectrum supported, a bill that created jobs not by government spending but by allowing the free market to do its work, to granting eco-

nomie freedom to Americans to buy and sell and compete in key markets throughout the world?

Well, today we have that issue. It is the three pending sales agreements with Korea, Colombia, and Panama. As we have said tonight, they represent almost \$13 billion of new sales for American companies, because we know we have to seek and compete and win around the world for these new customers. We know, too, that these agreements have been delayed far too long. Colombia is an old and trusted friend who's made remarkable progress in the economy, in labor rights, in human rights, in environmental issues. Today we're on the cusp finally of passing a free trade agreement that recognizes our security relationship and our economic relationship. Today we have that opportunity.

I thank the President for sending these agreements to us. As late as they were, the fact of the matter is he has made each of them better, has helped increase and improve bipartisan support for all three, but each day we delay, we lose jobs in America. Each day we delay, Canada and Europe and China and others move ahead of us, take our customers and our jobs. It's time for the delays to end. It's time for Republicans and Democrats to come together and pass these three trade agreements for America.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA'S 2012 BUDGET REQUEST ACT—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 112-62)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to my constitutional authority and as contemplated by section 446 of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act as amended in 1989, I am transmitting the District of Columbia's 2012 Budget Request Act. This transmittal does not represent an endorsement of the contents of the D.C. government's requests.

The proposed 2012 Budget Request Act reflects the major programmatic objectives of the Mayor and the Council of the District of Columbia. For 2012, the District estimates total revenues and expenditures of \$10.9 billion.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, October 3, 2011.

□ 2020

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS HOUR

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BUCSHON). Under the Speaker's an-

nounced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Congressional Black Caucus is pleased, and we thank the Democratic leadership for allowing us, once again, to come to the floor for the Democratic hour.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. First of all, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to add extraneous material on the subject under discussion this evening.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands?

There was no objection.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. At this time, I am joined by two of my colleagues. I would like to yield to the gentlelady from Ohio, who, for 2 years religiously, had the responsibility in the last Congress to lead us in these Special Orders—with a lot of conviction and great information to share with the American people.

Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE of Ohio.

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Representative CHRISTENSEN for anchoring today's timely CBC Special Order on unemployment in the African American community and on job creation.

It is no secret that the unemployment rate for African Americans is almost twice that of the national unemployment rate. Studies show that 16.7 percent of all African Americans are unemployed. It's probably closer to 20 percent when you take into consideration those who have given up looking for jobs or who are severely underemployed. In some cities, it is nearly three times the national unemployment rate.

Mr. Speaker, the people I represent are not talking about budget cuts, and they're not talking about continuing resolutions. The people in my community are talking about being laid off, and they're talking about losing their homes while they're still trying to provide food for their families. We are in a crisis that will undoubtedly affect our children and our grandchildren as 11 percent of all American children have at least one parent who is unemployed.

What does that mean for them?

It means fewer opportunities, and it means fewer meals.

As a Nation, we have always prided ourselves on defining "success" as providing a better future for our children. That's why my colleagues and I are speaking out today. That's why it is absolutely essential that we begin to make changes that will help our people get back on their feet. We must do something to create jobs, and we must do it now. I hosted a telephone town hall on the economy a few weeks ago.

Seven thousand people from around my district joined the call to ask questions about resources for small businesses or how to find job training programs. These people, like so many others, are looking for a way out of this situation, and it must come now.

It's clear to me that we have settled for short-term solutions to a problem that demands a long-term strategic resolution. We need to retrain workers for the jobs of today. Surprisingly, there are millions of positions that go unfilled in an economy where Americans are unemployed. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that there were 3 million job openings on the last business day of May 2011, yet the unemployment rate at that same time was 9.2 percent. There were enough jobs available to employ just over 20 percent of all of these unemployed Americans. So there is an obvious disconnect.

Many people searching for work lack the job-specific skills they need to be competitive for many of the job vacancies. Technology is outpacing the Nation's current approach to job-related education and training. The difference between white collar and blue collar jobs is fading because, traditionally, blue collar jobs are more specialized than ever before.

As a solution, I've introduced H.R. 2742, the Hire, Train, Retain Act of 2011. This bill will give employers tax incentives for hiring unemployed Americans and providing job training to fill job vacancies specific to that employer. Employers will also receive a "hire retention tax credit" of up to \$1,000 for each qualified employee retained for 52 weeks.

Another proven way to get Americans working is through infrastructure projects. That is why I recently introduced the School Athletic Facilities Restoration Act of 2011. This bill authorizes the allocation of grants to local educational agencies for the construction, renovation, or repair of school facilities used for physical education. The funds will facilitate construction hiring while improving safe places for children to exercise and play.

In closing, I want to mention that every single member of the Congressional Black Caucus has sponsored job creation legislation. The best way to reduce our deficit is to create jobs. That's why, in August, the CBC took our message on the road and connected job seekers with employers at job fairs across the country, and we listened to the voices of our constituents during town hall meetings.

Mr. Speaker, I came to Congress to be a voice for struggling Americans. My number one priority is job creation and economic development. I am working hard to create jobs, and time is of the essence. This is not a time for political posturing and partisan bickering. The American people need help. They need our help and they need it now.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Thank you, Congresswoman FUDGE, for that legislation and for your leadership on so many issues that are important to the people of this country.

I would next like to yield such time as she might consume to the former chair of the Congressional Black Caucus—again a leader on many, many issues, whether it be health care, global health, AIDS, as well as developing our agenda that we've continued even into this Congress of creating pathways out of poverty—Congresswoman BARBARA LEE of Oakland, California.

Ms. LEE of California. Let me thank my colleague, Congresswoman CHRISTENSEN, for those kind remarks and also for leading this Special Order, once again, in order to sound the alarm about the jobs crisis in our country.

Also, Congresswoman CHRISTENSEN, I want to thank you for your leadership on so many issues, especially on health care. You remind us of the importance of health care reform, not only because people deserve affordable, accessible health care, but because of the many jobs that will be created in the health care sector as a result of these reforms. So thank you for continuing to remind us of that, because many, many jobs are going to be created as a result of the work that you did.

Under the leadership of our very brilliant and bold chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, Chairman EMANUEL CLEAVER, and of our jobs task force chair, Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS, the Congressional Black Caucus has been hitting the street about jobs for some time now. We held five "for the people" jobs initiatives around the country—in Cleveland, Miami, Atlanta, Detroit, and Los Angeles—bringing together employers who have jobs with people who need jobs. The response was overwhelming. Thousands of people showed up at each event, all wanting to share their stories, to learn how to interview or network or to just strictly apply for a job.

As we know, communities of color are feeling this Great Recession more than others. In fact, for communities of color, especially in the African American community, the Great Recession has been more like the Great Depression. While the national average unemployment rate is 9.1 percent, the unemployment rate for African Americans is 16.7 percent reported. For Latinos, it's 11.3 percent—and that is for those who are reporting they're out there looking for work. If we consider those who have essentially stopped looking or who have given up on getting a job, we can probably double these numbers. It's very, very tragic.

For the people's jobs initiative, this initiative highlighted what is taking place throughout the Nation. People are desperately looking for jobs. People want to work. We must pass the American Jobs Act as a first step in addressing the jobs crisis that is sweeping the Nation. Sadly, the jobs crisis moves hand in hand with poverty. The Census

released some staggering numbers last month in its report, "Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2010." For example, 2.6 million Americans fell into poverty in 2010.

□ 2030

That's about 7,118 people a day falling into poverty. Let me put it another way: It's like a small town falling into poverty each and every day.

The poverty rates in 2010 that the census revealed are as shocking and as staggering as the unemployment numbers. The poverty rate for whites, non-Hispanics, was 9.9 percent; for African Americans, the poverty rate was 27.4 percent; the poverty rate for Latinos was 26.6 percent; and for Asian-Pacific Islanders, 12.1 percent.

In 2010, 15.1 percent of Americans were living in poverty. Now, that's 46.2 million people, in the wealthiest and most powerful country in the world, 46 million people living in poverty, and 9.1 percent are unemployed. Creating jobs will improve our Nation's economy and provide people pathways out of poverty.

We need to target Federal programs to communities most in need, and we can do this by using particularly the data sets like those from the census to target programs with the highest unemployment rates and the highest poverty rates. We can extend and should extend the Emergency Unemployment Compensation program and the Extended Benefits Unemployment program, both of which expire early in 2012. If we don't, millions of unemployed Americans will no longer have a safety net until jobs are created. Remember, for every four unemployed workers seeking a job, only one job exists. That is a fact.

We also need to pass H.R. 589, which I introduced with a fellow CBC member, a good friend, a great leader, Congressman BOBBY SCOTT, which gives an additional 14 weeks of unemployment benefits to those eligible people who have exhausted their benefits and no longer receive this support.

We have no idea today how these people are surviving in these devastating times, and we can and must continue to support them while we work to create jobs. Speaker BOEHNER still will not move this bill to the floor for a vote and, once again, I am going to encourage the Republican leadership to bring H.R. 589 to the floor.

We also must restore the TANF emergency contingency fund and increase the amount of money going to this program, which directly supports needy families with the basics and creates jobs. We also should develop and implement various corps, similar to those implemented through the Work Projects Administration, the Public Land Corps, and the Civilian Conservation Corps aimed at programs and services needed in communities across this country, including health care corps, public safety corps, community corps, and teacher corps.

We should expand the Workforce Investment Act aimed at young people, particularly the 25 percent of teenagers and young people who are unemployed today—in the African American community over 40 percent, all losing hope for their futures.

We should extend and support the expansion of on-the-job training for unemployed workers, including those who are long-term unemployed and those who have exhausted their unemployment benefits, to help them refresh their job skills and ease their reentry into the workforce. We know that these initiatives will put people back to work, and that is what the Congressional Black Caucus continues to fight for.

We have to fight against the Republican opportunistic attacks on the environment and the regulations that protect the environment and public health which, of course, they are claiming as a jobs program.

It's no jobs program. In fact, turning back the clock on the Clean Air and Clean Water Act will simply destroy jobs across the country, along with destroying our precious, natural resources, while placing human health in danger.

It's completely misguided. It's a terrible move by the Republicans. They are turning a blind eye to the needs of Americans and the needs of our economy.

Now, the most effective anti-poverty program is an effective jobs program, and the CBC has been working to create jobs and connect people to jobs. We are not going to back down. And as the CBC has done for 40 years, we are going to continue to fight for jobs, justice, and equality. Our voice as the conscience of the Congress is needed now more than ever.

So I want to thank, again, Congresswoman DONNA CHRISTENSEN, Chairman EMANUEL CLEAVER, Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS and all of our CBC members for bringing us together to conduct this jobs tour, to speak out tonight, each and every day on this floor, in our communities on the critical issue of jobs, and to remind the Congress that people do want to work and we should hurry up and pass the American Jobs Act as a first start.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Thank you, Congresswoman LEE. You were the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus as we created and passed the Affordable Care Act. And without your determination, many of the important provisions that we felt were important to our communities and to communities across our country would not have been there. We thank you for that.

And thank you for reminding us that the Affordable Care Act is a jobs bill. It is reported that it may produce as many as 4 million jobs. And so it's not only a bill, an act, a law that would allow over 30 million people to finally become insured and provide access to quality health care for many people

who have never had it, but it will also create jobs.

It's interesting how health care is connected to so many of the other things that we are dealing with. Two of the most important things that have to be fixed, if we are to get out of this recession: We have to create jobs, and we have to fix the foreclosure crisis.

There was an article in *The New York Times* today by Craig E. Pollack and Julia F. Lynch that was entitled "Foreclosures Are Killing Us," and it caught my eye. I just want to read a little piece of it into the RECORD:

"A growing body of research shows that foreclosure itself harms the health of families and communities. In our 2008 survey of 250 people undergoing foreclosure in the Philadelphia area, 32 percent reported missing doctors' appointments and 48 percent said they let prescriptions go unfilled, significantly higher rates than others in their community. A paper released last month by the National Bureau of Economic Research found that people living in high-foreclosure areas in New Jersey, Arizona, California, and Florida were significantly more likely than those in less hard-hit neighborhoods to be hospitalized for conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart failure.

"More than one-third of homeowners in our study had symptoms of major depression." The N.B.E.R. study found significantly more suicides also.

So these issues and these problems that affect, in large part, minority, racial, and ethnic minority populations are responsible for some of the health disparities that we talk about.

Ms. LEE of California. Will the gentlelady yield?

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. I yield to the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. LEE of California. I am very pleased that you raised this article because the human toll, the physical and mental health impact of these horrific public policies that either have taken place over the last 8 years or that are not taking place that we should enact are really seen each and every day in our communities every day, and people are desperate, they are suffering. And for the life of me I don't understand why especially Tea Party Republicans don't get it, because their people are suffering also.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Absolutely, absolutely.

We have been joined by another former chair of the Congressional Black Caucus and the leader of our Health Care Task Force, Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS, and I would like to yield such time as she might consume to her.

Ms. WATERS. Thank you very much, Congresswoman DONNA CHRISTENSEN. I am very pleased that you took this time out this evening to give us an opportunity to continue to focus on our top priority in the Congressional Black Caucus. We are absolutely focused like a laser beam on the fact that jobs are needed so desperately in all of these communities that we represent.

We recognize that unemployment is unprecedented, at its highest levels perhaps since the 1980s across this country, with 9.1 percent being that of the country. But we also recognize that in minority communities it is so much higher; in the Latino community, 11.3 percent; in the African American community, 16.7 percent.

Why are we focused like a laser beam on this issue? Because we understand the pain that is going on. We understand the increasing desperation. We understand the growing hopelessness and, as public policymakers, we must do everything that we possibly can not only to do actual job creation, but to help people out there understand that we know what's going on. We feel their pain, and we are prepared to do everything possible to come to their aid.

□ 2040

So there are those who may get tired of us talking about it. There are those who wonder why we took our vacation time and traveled across this country in five cities with these job fairs and town halls that we did, but it is all because we understand, perhaps better than others, this pain and this desperation and this feeling of hopelessness; and that's not good for this country.

So you're absolutely correct. The Congressional Black Caucus went to Detroit. We went to Cleveland. We went to Miami. We went to Atlanta. And we went to California, Los Angeles. And what did we see? As it has been said over and over again, thousands upon thousands of people in line desperate to be able to talk with employers.

I must extend a big thank you to employers. They heard our call and they showed up. And they were at each of these meetings, these job fairs that we had; and people were able to fill out applications, to learn what the process is for that particular employer, to be able to talk with someone. And I had job seekers in Los Angeles who said to me: Ms. WATERS, you know, I may not get a job, but I appreciate the opportunity that the Congressional Black Caucus is affording me and others to be able to take a shot at it, to be able to talk with someone.

So in Los Angeles, in my own community, 10,000 people showed up. We organized it in ways that they wouldn't have to stand in line for long periods of time; and thanks to the Crenshaw Christian Center that has the Faith Dome that holds 10,000 people, we were able to get people off that sidewalk through that dome and to those employers where we set up tents for 170 employers who came behind the dome, and it worked very well.

Congresswoman, I want you to know this past weekend, as I traveled throughout the area, people came up to me and said: Ms. WATERS, I got a job. I can't tell you how great that made me feel. And, of course, it was only a small number of people that I encountered. But just to have them say, thank you,

I received a job, was extremely impressive and inspiring and made me feel so very, very good. We are going to follow up with the employers and have them feed us back the information about how many people they were able to hire so that we can give a report on that.

But in all of this, I am so worried that the unemployment in the African American community may reach as high as 20 percent. Our communities have been hit hard. I heard you allude to the foreclosures that we're experiencing in our communities. Our communities were targeted. They were targeted by financial institutions because they saw that people were eager to have homes. They understood that if you gave people an opportunity, that they would take advantage of it. But what they didn't say was that they were coming up with all of these exotic products, products that literally got people into homes, but it could not be sustained because of the way these products were organized.

You had people who were told: you don't have to pay anything down; you just have to pay a little down. Don't worry about the resets; don't worry about what will happen 2 years from now. And these exotic products were products that had the devil in the details. And so people entered into mortgages they certainly could not afford down the road; and so our communities are overwhelmed with foreclosures, the loss of wealth, the loss of the only wealth that many of our families certainly had and could ever have for years to come.

I just want to share with you, in addition to the joblessness and the foreclosures and the loss of homes, the median wealth of white households is 20 times that of black households and 18 times that of Hispanic households, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of newly available government data from 2009.

These lopsided wealth ratios are the largest since the government began publishing such data in 1984, and roughly twice the size of the ratios that had prevailed between these three groups for the two decades prior to the Great Recession that ended in 2009. The median wealth of United States households in 2009 was \$113,149 compared to \$5,677 for blacks and \$6,325 for Hispanics. The percentage of African Americans with no wealth has increased. About 35 percent of black households and 31 percent of Hispanic households have zero or negative net worth in 2009 compared with 15 percent of white households.

Basically, just looking at the joblessness and the lack of wealth, the decreasing wealth tells the story. No communities can survive under these conditions. Everybody must be concerned about unemployment in general, but specifically these communities that are so bad off under the situation and the environment that we're living in at this time. So we support

the jobs bill. We want to create jobs in our infrastructure. This country needs to repair its roads and its bridges and its water systems, and we believe that creating those jobs will help all of our communities, not only get jobs but put money back into the economy.

The economy needs stimulating. You stimulate the economy not by cut, cut, cuts, but by investing in the economy, both the private sector and the public sector. So we've got to fight for it. We've got to stand up. We've got to resist any Tea Party efforts that say that they came to Congress to dismantle government and they want to cut, cut, cut. They will not support anything that will raise revenues, or even maintain revenues in some instances. We've got to push back on that. We've got to be strong. We've got to say to our colleagues: the facts are clear; they are in front of you. Nobody can deny these facts, and we're asking you to join with us in making sure that not only we deal with the most vulnerable in our society, but we pay attention to all of those who are suffering and the families that are suffering.

I want to tell you, I have witnessed that some of our friends on the opposite side of the aisle who represent very poor communities don't seem to be able to rise to the occasion to offer them support. It seems to me that they can basically talk about and inflame issues that have nothing to do with the economic well-being of their constituents. And so we have to keep reminding them that this is for everybody. This is for your constituents that you're not really representing, those poor people in rural communities who don't have health care clinics, those poor people who don't have jobs, those poor people who don't have the kind of education that they should have.

So thank you for bringing us to the floor this evening to once again put the focus on jobs, jobs, jobs.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Thank you, Congresswoman WATERS, and thank you for the work that you've done to ensure that our financial regulatory agencies have women and minorities on their boards, for the work that you've done to help homeowners stay in their homes and address the mortgage crisis, and for all that you do.

You know, even though many of the people who came to those fairs didn't get a job, they got hope, and many of them had given up. I'm sure that re-energized them to go out and keep looking. If they didn't get a job then, they will get one. Thank you so much for your leadership on that.

I'd like to yield now to the gentleman from Michigan, Congressman HANSEN CLARKE. Thank you for joining the ladies this evening.

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. You're very welcome, Representative CHRISTENSEN. What I wanted to do was, on behalf of all metro Detroiters, I wanted to thank the Congressional Black Caucus and, in particular, our chairperson, Representative MAXINE

WATERS, the head of our Jobs Task Force, for coming to Detroit and giving folks in Detroit some chance of getting a job and definitely some hope that they have a future for themselves.

This was so important for me because years ago back in the 1980s when we had our last big recession, I was one of those guys who was unemployed. What happened was I did give up hope for a moment there, and it was devastating for me after I lost my income and then my food stamps were cut off. When you give someone the dignity that they realize they have something to offer themselves, their family and their city, it doesn't matter if they don't get a job at that interview. They will have then the drive to fight for themselves and not to give up. That's why our people are still here thriving because we didn't give up. But that jobs session did show that there are a lot of folks in Detroit who still need a job.

□ 2050

And I have introduced legislation to help provide those jobs opportunities to Detroiters. And if I could, I wanted to share with you and then share with our public how that would work. When you visited Detroit, Representative WATERS, you may have noticed we had all these big parcels of vacant land with just nothing on it or maybe some burnt-down houses or buildings. We could actually build plants on those properties as we built plants back decades ago in World War II that housed the arsenal of democracy that saved this world from fascism and helped us win World War II, those same plants that built those great American-made automobiles that put Detroiters to work but also put millions of Americans back to work.

So in the same way, we have the land to attract these new plants. We also have roads that have all these potholes in them that need to be filled. We have bridges, we have water systems that need to be repaired, we have a plan for a transit system that could connect Detroit with the suburbs, help people get to jobs in the suburbs, help folks in the suburbs come to Detroit and enjoy themselves; but we need matching money to be able to do that.

What businesses have told me and what families have told me is that they moved out of Detroit for a couple of simple reasons. Number one, they didn't feel safe in the city. So it didn't matter how many economic development incentives we provided businesses; few businesses would take those incentives if they felt that their office would be broken into or their employees would be robbed.

Similarly, businesses that had to hire a large number of people, folks that they didn't know, they were concerned that the Detroit public schools really didn't graduate folks that had the ability to work on the job, that had the ability to read and write adequately to be able to do a good job if they were hired.

And then, finally, because Detroit had overspent a lot of its money and they had to finance that deficit with bonds and then pay off those bonds by raising the property tax, a lot of businesses said, look, for the services I'm getting, the taxes are too high. On top of it, many of their employees, even if they lived in the suburbs, had to pay a city income tax, definitely the residents had to do that.

So I said, look, the taxes are too high. If the perception is that the city is dangerous, I'm not sure if we are going to hire qualified people. They decided to leave the city. Safe streets, good schools, low taxes. If we could have those pieces in place, we could attract all the business. And I'll tell you why we could, because in spite of all of our challenges in Detroit, we still have the best manufacturing know-how in this country and in this world. We have the trained workforce to put our State back to work and our country back to work. But we just need the money to hire the police officers, to hire the school teachers, to pay off our debt and cut our taxes.

Now, this Congress says we don't have the money. But I say we do. It's in the very Federal taxes that Detroit individuals and Detroit businesses pay every year; \$2 billion a year Detroiters pay to the Federal Government, to the IRS in Washington. My bill, House bill 2920, would ask this Congress to say this: instead of sending Detroit tax dollars to Washington, D.C., let's redirect that money to Detroit, place it in a trust fund where it can't be touched, only to go to projects that will create jobs, to retire our debt, to hire police officers, to hire school teachers to keep our school buildings open longer, high-quality schools, and, yes, to cut taxes to eliminate our city income tax and reduce our property taxes. That would attract jobs back.

And then we would have the money to fix up those roads, repair the deteriorating water system, and train people for jobs and then possibly even create a job program like the CETA job program that I got hired into that saved me, that saved me from a life that my friends ended up in—prison, incarcerated, on drugs, or dead. Those programs that this Congress stood for 30 years ago helped save my life, and it can help save this country.

So I want to thank you for giving me this time to speak before the body. Detroit, we've got the money to put our people back to work. We pay it to the IRS every year. I'm asking this Congress to allow us to keep our money for 5 years, to put our people back to work as a pilot basis, and to show this country what Detroit can do for itself and for America. Thank you so much, and God bless you.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Thank you, Congressman CLARKE. Your passion is clear, and Detroit doesn't have a stronger advocate than you, and we are pleased to be a co-sponsor of your bill. Thank you for joining us.

As you've heard, the Congressional Black Caucus is here this evening. We're still waiting for the first jobs bill to pass this Congress. And as you've heard from my colleagues, we need to begin with the American JOBS Act which was proposed by our President Barack Obama. And just to be clear, while we're advocates for the African American community, we are advocates for everyone; and this bill is good for everyone, everyone who lives in this country, and it is a good bill for our country.

We happen to feel that putting people back to work in this country now is more important than fighting over an election that is more than a year away. The American JOBS Act provides tax cuts that will help businesses grow and create jobs, it will help provide incentives to hire the long-term unemployed, and it will keep teachers and other essential workers like police and firefighters in their jobs where we need them to be; and it will strengthen, repair, and build needed and faulty infrastructure and in doing so will create even more jobs; and it will give people a decent job which will allow them to take care of their families, to buy what we make here in America, and it will stimulate economic growth.

It would give every American worker and their family a tax cut through extending the tax payroll tax holiday and do more to fix the mortgage crisis that got us here in the first place by allowing more refinancing of mortgages. It would help our fellow Americans take better care of their families, putting their children in better schools, supporting small businesses, building consumer confidence and spurring the spending that our economy needs to get back on track. This is what this Congress ought to be doing, not focusing on the solitary goal of making President Obama a one-term President. That is a losing proposition anyway.

No one should be willing to let our fellow Americans suffer, fall into and become mired in poverty, remain unemployed, lose homes and to cause our economy to crumble further just because they have political and whatever other differences with our President.

Mr. Speaker, the Republican leadership, led by the Tea Party extremists, are taking this country in the absolute wrong direction by insisting on cutting and cutting and cutting important programs and services like the Women, Infants and Children program, Maternal and Child Health and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance programs at a time when there are more people and more children in poverty, by working to deny the opportunity for health care to the over 30 million people who we worked so hard to get insured, including sick children, and people who would otherwise go bankrupt because of catastrophic illnesses over which they had no control, people who are already getting care because of the Affordable Care Act that is being so wrongly maligned.

I agree with some of the posters I saw in the newspaper this weekend calling for jobs, not cuts; jobs, not cuts. That is what we have been saying all year, including here on the floor of the House every Monday that we've been in session. If our leadership listened instead of talk, talk, talk, I believe that is what they will hear the American people at large are saying: jobs, not cuts.

And we have a golden opportunity to listen to them. For over the last 2 weeks, there has been an "occupation of Wall Street" because while homeowners and pensioners and many people have suffered because of their meltdown, we have not seen the kind of remedies for the folks on Main Street, the side streets or the rural roads that would make them whole. They are speaking loudly and effectively on their and on our behalf.

And then right here in Washington, D.C. today and for the next 3 days the Take Back the American Dream conference is here. They will be on the Hill on Wednesday calling on us to end the nightmare that the dream is turning into for far too many people and to restore the American Dream access which has been the hallmark and the pride of this country.

What is happening at this conference and the one in New York is that Americans are saying enough is enough. And they are fighting back against the cuts that are making it hard for far too many people in this country to survive.

□ 2100

They're fighting back against attempts to repeal health care reform, fighting back against proposals that would weaken Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, and fighting back against voter suppression laws. They're fighting for jobs, for a future for our children, and they're fighting for our democracy.

It is so very interesting this talk about President Obama and Democrats waging class warfare all because we want everyone in this country to do their part to help this country recover from a deep recession, all because we want to let tax cuts that were only supposed to be around for 10 years that have now been extended to 12 years finally expire like they were supposed to. Come on, colleagues, let's be honest. They were never meant to be permanent.

And how many jobs have these tax cuts created as was loudly touted they would do? In 2001, at the end of the Clinton administration, he handed over this government with an over \$2 trillion surplus. Now, after those tax cuts enacted in 2001, after almost 12 years of them, we are in record deficits and the worst recession since the Great Depression. And President Obama did not create that; he inherited it.

The poverty rate is at the second highest in 45 years, and it is hitting, as you've heard, African Americans and Latino Americans hardest. The share

of Americans in deep poverty, with incomes below half of the poverty line, is at the highest level ever recorded. And African Americans are more likely to be in extreme poverty.

While we hear a lot about how much of a share of taxes the richest 1 percent or the richest 10 percent pay, let me remind everyone that white Americans' wealth is 20 times—and you heard it earlier, but it bears repeating—20 times that of African Americans and 18 times that of Latinos. And that between 2000 and 2007, not 10 percent, not 20 percent, not 40 percent, but 100 percent, all of the increase in wealth went to the top 10 percent in this country—all, the top 10 percent. The gap between rich and poor got wider. The rich got richer; the poor got poorer. That's a very dangerous trend for the future of this country.

And then unemployment has reached record highs as well. You don't hear about it much. You hear it from us. But in far too many places, our rural and our urban areas, communities of color, unemployment remains in double digits. African American unemployment nationally is over 16 percent, but as you've heard, we know that it is higher than that in many parts of our country.

So if we want to talk honestly about class warfare, class warfare is what too many people in this country have been experiencing since 2001. And now that we have a President who wants to end it, he is being accused of class warfare. If we really want to end class warfare, my colleagues, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle should be supporting rather than opposing him. Let's get real.

In all of our 40 years, the Congressional Black Caucus has always been a caucus of action. Our agenda has been consistent, and we've pushed every Congress and every President. And so we resent anyone trying to put a wedge between us and our President to further their own agenda, one which is clearly not ours.

But we continue to be the conscience of the Congress, as MAXINE WATERS coined when she was chair, the "fairness cops of our Nation." That is why, when we could see none of our 40 job-creating bills come to the floor under the leadership of our chairman, EMANUEL CLEAVER, and the Jobs Task Force chair and former CBC chair, MAXINE WATERS, we called on the private sector as well as government agencies to come with us across the country to get people working again. And that is why we worked so hard with our Hispanic and Asian colleagues to get the Affordable Care Act passed. And we will work just as hard to see that it gets implemented. We are not going to sit quietly and let a vital door that is just opening for many to be slammed shut in our communities and communities like ours who need it most.

Many scholarly reports have shown that just eliminating health disparities could save \$1.24 trillion in just over 4

years in indirect and direct costs, in addition to saving lives. So if we really wanted a deficit reduction, eliminating health disparities and achieving health equity is deficit reduction at its best.

And that's why we will continue to work relentlessly as a caucus to save homes, to build and equip better schools, to support regulations that protect our families and all families from the health and other effects of pollution. We have also worked together on budgets. And because we know that our country can invest where needed in health care, education, green energy, and job creation and reduce the deficit at the same time, we are preparing to send our recommendation to the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction. It will likely be based on our proposed 2012 budget. And it will end class warfare by allowing the high-end Bush tax cuts to expire while strengthening the middle class, continuing to create pathways out of poverty for our fellow Americans, and protecting Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

This country, Mr. Speaker, is fortunate to have a Congressional Black Caucus fighting on its behalf. And it is not only our duty, but it's our honor and privilege to do so.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, the American people made it abundantly clear what they expected from the 112th Congress. They expect us to stop fighting each other and to do the right thing for the country.

However, instead of doing that, the Republican majority has done the exact opposite by engaging in partisan political games that cost the U.S. our triple-A credit rating, resulted in several near government shutdowns and nearly led to the first national default in our history.

These actions don't reflect the American people's will, but rather the priorities of the Republican leadership of the House. The American people have done everything they can to make it clear, but Mr. Speaker, allow me to repeat their refrain: Jobs!

Last month, President Obama unveiled his vision for job creation in the United States. While I would like to see a bit more with regards to direct job creation, it is a good start to addressing our nation's high unemployment, a rate that hovers around 16 percent for African American communities.

Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Black Caucus has been at the forefront of the call for jobs legislation in the 112th Congress. The CBC put together a nationwide jobs fair to not only bring attention to the appalling unemployment numbers in the black community and help bring those seeking jobs together with employers, but to turn up the volume on a national crisis that has taken a back seat to the majority's favored approach of simply cutting our way to prosperity.

Would you believe Mr. Speaker, that just today, the Majority Leader said that the House would not be holding a vote on the American Jobs Act; saying that voting on the complete package was "unreasonable".

Mr. Speaker, what Americans find "unreasonable" is that the Republican majority is, once again, going to allow the American peo-

ple to continue to suffer through our national jobs nightmare and continue in their insistence to not bring a single jobs bill to the floor.

What, Mr. Speaker, is the majority afraid of? Are they afraid that the American people, recognizing that this could be the start toward resolving our national unemployment tragedy? Is the Republican leadership so afraid of the tea party that they are willing to allow continued national misery to satisfy a minority of their caucus?

Regardless, as Members of Congress we represent the concerns of our constituents and I know what my constituents are telling me. They are telling me that Congress needs to get its act together and start focusing on the priorities of the American people and not those of a tiny, radical fringe of the majority.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, for the past 40 years the Congressional Black Caucus, has earned the reputation as the conscience of the Congress by providing a voice for the voiceless and fighting for the forgotten. This summer, we worked diligently to live up to and maintain our reputation.

To address unemployment and the need for job creation solutions in underserved communities, the Congressional Black Caucus called upon private and public sector partners to immediately remedy the crisis by going into communities with legitimate, immediate employment opportunities for the underserved with the "For the People" Jobs Initiative—which included nationwide town halls and job fairs.

During the month of August, nearly half of the Congressional Black Caucus traveled the country and saw firsthand how unemployment continues to devastate our communities during the "For the People" Jobs Initiative.

Nearly 30,000 people from all walks of life attended CBC Jobs Initiative events in Cleveland, Detroit, Atlanta, Miami, and Los Angeles.

Given the substantial coverage of the events, our nation's citizens will have great difficulty saying they were unaware of the suffering of millions of unemployed Americans.

Like us, they too saw the lines wrapped around city blocks with hopeful citizens searching for a job opportunity to provide economic security for themselves and their families.

We all know that job fairs and town halls are not sufficient to address the jobs crisis; however, it is a small step in the right direction.

The unemployment numbers released in August demonstrate that there is a significant hemorrhage in the African American community that is not being addressed, which has resulted in extremely high job loss.

Overall unemployment remains stagnant at 9.1 percent while unemployment in the African American community has risen dramatically from 15.9 percent to 16.7 percent.

Well into the 112th Congress, the Congressional Black Caucus continues to urge the Republican Leadership to address unemployment in any meaningful way.

We cannot afford to watch a segment of our community suffer from depression level unemployment, hoping that overall solutions will trickle down and fix the problem. It is clear that method will not work.

Therefore, the Members of the CBC unanimously co-sponsored and introduced the Congressional Black Caucus "For the People" Jobs Initiative Resolution (H. Res. 348) to urge the House of Representatives to immediately consider and pass critical jobs legislation.

Additionally, CBC members have introduced over fifty job creation bills since the beginning of the 112th Congress, launched a national jobs initiative, and provided nine job creation proposals targeting our nation's most vulnerable communities in this document.

We believe that through Creating, Protecting, and Rebuilding those who have suffered relentlessly from our country's great recession would be granted another chance at perusing the American dream.

We stand at a critical point in our nation's history. The time for bold action on jobs is now.

Every American has the right to be gainfully employed and CBC Members will not rest until there is equality in access to jobs and economic opportunity.

CURRENT EVENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I know my friend from the Virgin Islands and I have differences on political issues, but she was very gracious to me personally and I will always be grateful, very grateful. Thank you.

We do differ on some of the issues. And hearing my friend across the aisle from Michigan (Mr. CLARKE), he wants what's best for his constituents. He wants them to have jobs. He wants them to have less taxes. He wants them to be able to revitalize their city. And that is what people want on both sides of the aisle. We just have a difference of opinion on the best way to go about it.

My friend from California said that the Tea Party really didn't want anything that will raise revenues. And I know she believes that, but the contrary is actually true. And what we have seen historically is, when you create jobs, even if the tax rate is lowered, if you do something that creates jobs, then the tax rate increases.

Some people have tried to vilify me because I'm advocating getting rid of a rather insidious—I sometimes think it is the most insidious tax we have because it has convinced rank-and-file folks across America that they don't have to pay this tax, some greedy, nasty corporation will pay the corporate tax, when the truth is the corporations are nothing but collection agents. If they don't collect the tax by adding on price to the cost of their product, to the price of their services, they don't stay in business. They're a collection agent. So the fact is, if you were to drop that tariff that we lay on our own products—it's a 35 percent tax. It's really a tariff. You eliminate that and jobs come rushing back into America.

The number one reason you get when you travel around the world—whether it's Africa, China. Others tell me from South America, Hey, we had to move because America has the highest cor-

porate tax of any country in the world, 35 percent. China is 17 percent. So you lower that tariff that corporations have to collect on their goods, jobs would come flooding back, and we could see Detroit become the car capital that it once was and that it should be. We would see those jobs come back.

In first questioning CEOs overseas, the number one answer I would get on why they moved was too much regulation. Well, that was a problem. Difficulty in dealing with unions or too high wages compared to what people get around the world, that was a problem.

□ 2110

It wasn't the number one problem. The number one problem was the 35 percent corporate tax, a tariff we put on all American-made goods.

I've had people who, apparently, with degrees, are educated beyond their abilities, say, but if you lowered or got rid of the corporate tax, where would all that tax money come from? Because they don't understand how jobs are created. They think that money, it's a zero sum balance. It just would go away, and there would be no more tax. We'd lose that much tax.

And, in fact, the liberal Congress that existed in 1974 when they set up CBO and set up their rules for scoring bills does not allow the Congressional Budget Office to score based on reality. They are forced to score under archaic, unrealistic rules that are not allowed to take into consideration past history in calculating future performance. Huge mistake. But the Democrats in charge in 1974 knew what they were doing.

So you drop that tax. And, like I've said, the American Jobs Act is my bill. After the President beat up on us for 6 days, and it became very obvious he was more concerned about making speeches about American Jobs Act than he was actually getting one filed and getting one pushed through, then I felt like, if he's going to criticize me and our friends here for not passing the American Jobs Act, by golly, there ought to be one. So I did file one, and that's what it does.

I'm negotiable. If the President would like to come up zero in corporate tax, I'm flexible. But the fact is, jobs would come rushing back into this country if the manufacturers, if the companies knew no corporate tariff is put on those products. They could compete around the world; we would retake the world.

I know there are people in this country, good folks, smart folks, that think we are better off as a service-oriented society in America, rather than a manufacturing society. The trouble with that is, and as I heard from people in West Africa last year, we're their hope for freedom. If we don't remain strong, as one elderly gentleman told me, they have no chance of enjoying freedom in this life.

Well, you can't be an international power and protect freedom, not here,

not anywhere, unless you can produce the things that are needed in the event of war. That's why I'm an advocate for natural gas being used to power cars. We need to make sure it's safe, but it's cleaner burning.

Some people say, no, we've got to get cars that run on electricity. They don't apparently realize that electricity has to be generated somewhere, and it's obvious that Solyndra's not going to be producing it for us. Maybe if we give them several trillion dollars instead of just 600 billion, maybe eventually they could come up with a product that would compete, but that hasn't happened.

So mistakes have been made. Mistakes get made on both sides of the aisle. Republicans made a mistake in '05 and '06, my freshman term here, and I have to say that our friends across the aisle rightfully beat up on us back in 2006 for spending \$160 billion more than we took in. We shouldn't have done that. And they promised they would get spending down under control and would not run a deficit like that if they were simply given the majority. They were for 4 years, and the spending went through the roof.

Republicans made a mistake by spending more than was coming in by \$160 billion. And then our friends across the aisle made a mistake over the last 4 years as they got that spending up over \$1 trillion, \$1.5 trillion more than we were bringing in. Major mistake.

But I want to spend the remainder of my time tonight in talking about another problem that we've had here in the United States and with the Federal Government. There's been a lot of talk the last few days about the death of Anwar al-Awlaki. And it is important to note the things that we were told in past years about Mr. Awlaki.

Pajamas Medium, that's a funny name, but Patrick Poole has done a good job doing some research on some of the old articles. For example, back in November of 2001 The Washington Post—let's see, I think they're going after our Governor from Texas right now.

Well, that same Washington Post had a wonderful blog back in November of 2001 and featured none other than Imam Anwar al-Awlaki. And he was allowed to use The Washington Post to try to convince people of what a man of peace he was. And you get the impression, certainly, The Washington Post said he was a good guy.

You can look back, again, November 19, 2001. And I printed this off of the Internet from The Washington Post. Understanding Ramadan, the Muslim month of fasting. And they featured Imam Anwar al-Awlaki.

Now, obviously, The Washington Post doesn't care much for the Governor of Texas, but they certainly had a great appreciation for the man that was killed recently, featuring him in their publication to explain things for us. And they featured him explaining