

the public safety broad band authority or corporation.

I bet a lot of folks don't know about the short time compensation program. It's a new program, never created before, but it's in the President's bill. The participation, it says, is involuntary. But if an employer under this program reduces hours worked by employees instead of laying them off, and that's anybody who has been reduced by at least 10 percent, then it says they're eligible for unemployment compensation. It gives out the terms for that. I bet the President doesn't know that's in there.

Now I have to agree with him, it is a jobs bill for plaintiff's lawyers because we have seen over and over a lot of states doing tort reform. It's more and more difficult to sue people. So we have got a new program here that will help with lawyers that are out of work because here in the bill, we've created a new class of protected individuals. So if you're unemployed and you get laid off, you ought to see a lawyer if you feel like you weren't hired because you're unemployed, because you can sue. You can file a claim, at least, against the employer that didn't hire you.

Now, a practical look at that provision, allowing employers to be sued if they fail to hire someone who is unemployed, would make employers—I've already heard from them—if that ends up in the law, I'm not going to be hiring anybody. I can't take a chance on being sued or having claims filed against me. If five people unemployed come in, four of them don't get the job and they all four file claims against me, I can't afford that.

So I think once the President ever gets to look at his bill, then he'll understand this is not what he's thinking it is.

And, of course, he's promised America we're going after major oil companies. There is no way this President could know that page 151–154, the part that goes after oil companies, will not affect his friends at British Petroleum, Exxon, Shell. They won't be affected because the most important deductions that are repealed here are only for smaller producers, the independent producers who drill 94 percent of all the oil and gas wells on the land of the continental U.S. There's no way he could know that, even if he read this, unless he really understood the oil and gas industry.

So what he'll do, he drives up the capital for companies trying to drill wells, and this will be a disaster unless you're a major oil company, in which case you'll make more profit than you've ever made because you kill off all of the independent competition. That's what his bill does, and I'm sure he doesn't know that.

Now, they have also been out there blaming Republicans for increasing the debt. This was in an article. We've got it up on the House Web site so people can really see what has happened. It's

a great article from the Atlanta Journal Constitution. This is one of the diagrams. It shows who really increased the debt. We know from the Constitution that it is the Congress that holds the purse strings. So really the one responsible, most responsible, is the Congress. And who's most responsible, the biggest, most powerful body is controlled by the Speaker; you, Mr. Speaker—that is while you're pro tempore. This shows the increase in debt as a percentage of GDP. And we see what happened under Speaker O'Neill. We see what happened under Speaker Jim Wright. Didn't really increase much in debt as a percentage of GDP. Under Speaker Foley, it increased a great deal. And actually under Speaker Gingrich and Speaker Hastert, debt as a percentage of GDP, it went way down. And then we got the last 4 years with Speaker PELOSI, and it went through the roof like has never happened in this country's history.

Well, I hope I have provided an adequate defense to those who would say that the President is misrepresented because I think I've got proof. The President didn't lie about any of this stuff. He hasn't had time to read it. He doesn't know what's in it. I hope and pray that he'll take the time to do that so he can accurately represent the saving Obama's job bill, and I appreciate the President's support for the American Jobs Act, which bill is mine.

I yield back the balance of my time.

FLOODS DEVASTATE PENNSYLVANIA

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

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, on September 7, 8, and 9, the Susquehanna River and some of its tributaries, swollen by the remnants of Tropical Storm Lee, overflowed their banks. This happened shortly after northeastern Pennsylvania was soaked by Hurricane Irene, which brought local rivers and creeks to their banks. So when Tropical Storm Lee moved in over my district, the results were catastrophic. In some communities, the floodwaters came quickly. Creeks raged out of control. Homes were swept off their foundations and toppled into muddy pits. Roads were washed away.

In other communities, the water rose more slowly, but it did no less damage. I was there in the town of Duryea, Pennsylvania, when the Lackawanna River topped the small levee and began flooding homes. It was like watching someone fill an aquarium, although this was much, much more destructive.

I spent many days in September traveling across my district to see firsthand the devastation caused by this flooding. It's hard to describe exactly what it looks like. Think of everything you have on the first floor of your home—your couch, reclining chairs,

your refrigerator, your stove, your dishwasher, your television. Maybe you have a bedroom on the first floor—your mattress, your dresser. Then think of everything you have in your basement—a washer, a drier, your furnace, your hot water heater, your winter clothing. Now imagine all of that on the sidewalk ready for a dumpster because it is soaked with river water. It's dirty with river mud. And it's contaminated by whatever else flowed into the river when the water rose.

But go beyond these possessions. Think of photographs on your walls and on your end tables. Think of your children's toys in the basement. Think of the mementos, family treasures handed down to you by your parents and your grandparents. Now imagine all of that on the sidewalk, too. But it's not just your house. It's your neighbor's house next door and the house across the street, and all of those houses up and down your street. Imagine entire neighborhoods—block after block of destruction. And imagine the smell of it—wet fabric, spoiled food, spilled fuel oil, raw sewage, and mud. Mud 2 feet deep in basements and covering lawns and filling swimming pools.

That is what I experienced. That is what my constituents experienced. It's what they're continuing to cope with as they try to rebuild.

I will never forget standing in a ruined living room with a woman in West Nanticoke. Most of her belongings were piled on the street in front of her home. She wept as she told me that both her husband and son died in the last 6 months. During this flooding, she lost almost everything she owned. Think about that. She lost her husband. She lost her son. She lost most of her belongings. She lost her home. All in 6 months. The loss is just incredible.

I've seen children console their parents, saying, Mommy, don't cry.

In Shickshinny, a mother pointed to a leather jacket and remembered the first time her daughter wore it. She broke down as she told me she hoped her grandchild would wear it some day. It, too, was ruined and had to be thrown away.

□ 1650

An old black-and-white photograph of a woman sat on a pile of belongings in front of a home in West Pittston. The surface of the photo was covered in muddy streaks as the owner tried to save it. But she couldn't save it from the mud. It had to be thrown away. Another memory lost.

In Bloomsburg, a family stayed in their home to try to move their possessions to an upper floor, but Fishing Creek rose too quickly. The house next to theirs was knocked from its foundation. Water started gushing through their front windows as they called for help. They had to be saved by a helicopter. The woman there told me that she could never live in that home again.

A woman near Orangeville cried as she told me her neighbor's house, carried by the same raging creek, smashed into hers, demolishing a lifetime of memories.

An elderly man in Duryea broke down as he told me how much time and money he put into making his house a home for his family only to see it all ruined by high water.

In Exeter, borough officials made a gut-wrenching decision. They hauled in 200 truckloads of dirt and created a makeshift dyke right down the middle of a residential street. Several dozen homes were saved, but dozens more were ruined.

Scenes like these were repeated hundreds, thousands of times in town after town in northeastern Pennsylvania.

If all of these damaged homes and businesses were in one city, it would make the evening news every day. But the damage sustained by my constituents is spread out over miles of the Susquehanna River basin. The scope of this damage goes far beyond what the local and State governments can fix on their own. The Federal Government must step in.

Mr. Speaker, I ask, What are we going to do to make these people's lives whole again?

Officials from the Federal Emergency Management Agency have told my constituents what they will receive for their losses. It's about what it costs for an American family to buy a decent car nowadays. That's for all of their furniture. That's for all of their clothes, for all of their treasured belongings. For many of my constituents, it's not nearly enough.

I remember standing in front of one family's home which had river water flowing more than a foot deep up on its second floor. Most of this family's possessions were piled on to the sidewalk. Some were dripping wet. The mother looked at her children's toys ruined by the flood. She pointed to one little toy and said, How can the government put a price on that? My son played with that. Those are memories. How can you put a price on that?

She's right. We cannot put a price tag on memories. But the Federal Government can and should do more for our neighbors. I know that in these budget-conscious times we worry about offsets to increases in any other spending. I also know we can find some duplicative program, some excessive spending, some additional funding somewhere in the vast Federal budget and provide more help for flood victims.

The United States of America is one of the most generous and compassionate countries when it comes to providing global aid. This government has no problem sending money overseas to build roads, bridges, hospitals, and schools in foreign countries. When disaster strikes anywhere in the world, the United States is the first country to help rebuild. But now that a disaster occurred right here in our own back-

yard, we need to start rebuilding here first. Let's help Americans first.

We must restore American lives, save American businesses, and protect American jobs. At a time when we're so focused on creating jobs and helping businesses, the United States Small Businesses Administration will offer disaster recovery loans at 6 percent—that's right, 6 percent—and that rate is if the business owners can get credit elsewhere. That is not acceptable.

I talked to dozens of business owners in Luzerne and Columbia Counties who have lost everything: their shops, their inventories, their fixtures, and their equipment. A small business owner in Jenkins Township said he's not sure he can recover after suffering more than \$7 million in flood losses. He doesn't know if he's going to rebuild and reopen or maybe close his doors forever. I don't know any business owner in my district who thinks a 6 percent government disaster recovery loan will help them get back on their feet.

My district has one of the highest unemployment rates in the State and a rate higher than the national average. The people of the Eleventh District in northeastern Pennsylvania need their jobs. We can't afford for these businesses to close. For the SBA to offer a ridiculously high interest rate in the name of disaster relief to these business owners is downright insulting. What rate do we charge foreign countries when we rebuild their infrastructure? The answer is zero. We don't charge foreign countries any interest. The money they receive from the United States is a giveaway.

This government gave 215 million interest-free dollars for flood relief to Pakistan, a country that harbored Osama bin Laden, and it's charging American homeowners and American business owners interest rates on loans they're using to rebuild. That's wrong.

We must take a serious look at how the interest rate for SBA disaster recovery loans are calculated. That's why I introduced the Disaster Loan Fairness Act of 2011, H.R. 3042. This bill would set the interest rate for all recovery loans—home disaster loans, business physical disaster loans, and economic injury disaster loans—at 1 percent for the life of the loan up to 30 years. The rate would be effective for Presidentially declared major disasters, and the 1 percent interest rate is retained merely to pay administrative costs for the program.

This bill would not cause the government to spend any additional money. It would mean the Federal Government takes in less in interest from disaster recovery loans. But can anyone honestly say that providing disaster recovery loans for American homeowners and American businesses should be a moneymaking operation?

I strongly encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 3042, the Disaster Loan Forgiveness Act. Give Americans a low interest rate and help them recover.

While my neighbors in northeastern Pennsylvania recover and rebuild,

they're also asking what steps are being taken to protect them in the future. This is the role of the Federal Government. We must make sure disaster of this scale does not happen to these people again.

First, the Army Corps of Engineers must complete a comprehensive study of the Susquehanna River basin in my district. After the flooding caused by Hurricane Agnes in 1972, the Corps built massive levees to protect the most populated areas of the Eleventh District. Those levees protected thousands of homes and businesses. But many people believe they also funneled walls of floodwater into unprotected areas upriver and downriver. Some of those residents were told they didn't need to buy flood insurance because they don't live in a floodplain. As these people struggle to rebuild their lives today, they want to know if the floodplain has changed.

My constituents deserve to know what role, if any, these new flood walls played during this event. What is known is that some communities were devastated because they lacked adequate flood protection. For 40 years, the town of Bloomsburg has been asking for flood protection. There is a plan to provide it, but the Corps of Engineers will not fund it because it does not meet an arbitrary benefit-to-cost ratio, the BCR. Now, because of the lack of adequate flood protection in Bloomsburg, 1,000 jobs are on the verge of being lost.

Two of Columbia County's largest employers sit in the floodplain. When Fishing Creek and the Susquehanna River flood, these employers not only have to shut down production, but they also have to move equipment. That costs them hundreds of thousands of dollars. During this flood event, more than 6 feet of water poured through their shops, destroying equipment and inventory. At a time when we're talking about how to create jobs, we're not doing enough to protect these.

□ 1700

What is the negative benefit-to-cost ratio of the Bloomsburg Flood Protection project if we lose these jobs? What happens to this town, this county, and my district if we lose 1,000 jobs? That's just one component to the Bloomsburg project.

This year, about one-third of the buildings in that town were flooded, one-third of an entire town. Worse, the Bloomsburg Fair—one of the largest economic drivers for the town, the county, and dozens of community and charity groups—had to be canceled for the first time since the Civil War due to the epic flooding.

What happened to Bloomsburg could have been prevented. The Federal Government dropped the ball. It failed to protect homes and businesses. We need to make sure that it doesn't happen again, not to Bloomsburg, and not to other communities along the Susquehanna that need protection.

Sadly, for some of the people I've spoken with, flood protection will come too late. Some of my constituents have told me that they will not move back into their homes. The great flood of 2011 was just the latest in a long line of floods that they've had to endure. They're tired of picking up the pieces of their shattered lives. Some in fact were in the process of being bought out by the government when this flood hit. Now they're in limbo, unsure of whether to accept Federal aid or if accepting help would jeopardize their pending buyouts.

This Congress needs to look at the buyout process. I fear it is too confusing, it takes too long, and it discourages people from trying to receive the help they need.

Mr. Speaker, over the last several weeks, I have seen terrible destruction and hardship endured by my constituents. But I've also seen tremendous good, as neighbors help stricken neighbors, community groups banded together, charities mobilized quickly and effectively. In Plymouth Township, I met Red Cross volunteers from Michigan who made the trip to northeastern Pennsylvania to help people that they had never met.

In Bloomsburg, I visited AGAPE, a local ministry that provided flood victims with everything from cleanup buckets to hot meals. Church groups, scout troops, college clubs, sports teams, people from all across northeastern Pennsylvania and beyond came together to support each other. The recent flood was a terrible disaster, but it also brought out the best in our people.

As I was driving through West Pittston, a small borough that was absolutely devastated by flooding, I saw a sign on a front porch: "The Valley with a Heart. Thank You."

My constituents were knocked down, but not out. The people of northeastern Pennsylvania are strong and resilient, but they need help from the Federal Government; and the Federal Government needs to help them. If they get that help, my neighbors will come back stronger and better than before.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CRENSHAW (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for Monday on account of attending a family funeral.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 4 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, October 5, 2011, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

3329. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Atrazine, Chloroneb, Chlorpyrifos, Clofencent, Endosulfan, et al; Tolerance Actions [EPA-HQ-OPP-2011-0104; FRL-8883-9] received September 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

3330. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Sulfur Dioxide; Pesticide Tolerances for Emergency Exemptions [EPA-HQ-OPP-2011-0684; FRL-8887-2] received September 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

3331. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — 2,4-D; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2010-0905; FRL-8881-7] received September 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

3332. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Chromobacterium subsugae strain PRAA4-1T; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2010-0054; FRL-8887-4] received September 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

3333. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Dicamba; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2010-0496; FRL-8881-6] received September 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

3334. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Flubendiamide; Pesticide Tolerances; Technical Amendment [EPA-HQ-OPP-2007-0099; FRL-8870-8] received September 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

3335. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Lipase, Triacylglycerol; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2010-0271; FRL-8882-4] received September 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

3336. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Mandipropamid; Pesticide Tolerances for Emergency Exemptions [EPA-HQ-OPP-2011-0639; FRL-8886-8] received September 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

3337. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Novaluron; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2010-0466; FRL-8882-1] received September 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

3338. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental

Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — National Priorities List, Final Rule No. 52 [EPA-HQ-SFUND-2002-0001; EPA-HQ-SFUND-2010-0640 and 0641, EPA-HQ-SFUND-2011-0057, 0058, 0061, 0062, 0065, 0066, 0070, 0072, 0074, 0076, 0077, and 0078, FRL-9464-6] (RIN: 2050-AD75) received September 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3339. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Revisions to Permits by Rule and Regulations for Control of Air Pollution by Permits for New Construction or Modification [EPA-R06-OAR-2011-0426; FRL-9463-6] received September 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3340. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Ohio and West Virginia; Determinations of Attainment of the 1997 Annual Fine Particle Standard for Four Nonattainment Areas [EPA-R05-OAR-2010-0393; FRL-9463-1] received September 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3341. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; West Virginia; Revised Motor Vehicle Emission Budgets for the Charleston, Huntington, Parkersburg, Weirton, and Wheeling 8-Hour Ozone Maintenance Areas [EPA-R03-OAR-2011-0511; FRL-9462-6] received September 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3342. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plan; Utah; Maintenance Plan for the 1-Hour Ozone Standard for Salt Lake County and Davis County [EPA-R08-OAR-2011-0719; FRL-9460-6] received September 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3343. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Designation of Hazardous Substances; Designation, Reportable Quantities, and Notification [EPA-HQ-SFUND-2011-0565; FRL-9460-9] received September 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3344. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Findings of Failure to Submit a Complete State Implementation Plan for Section 110(a) Pertaining to the 2006 Fine Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}) NAAQS [EPA-HQ-OAR-2011-0747; FRL-9460-4] received September 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3345. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Interim Final Determination to Stay and Defer Sanctions, San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District [EPA-R09-OAR-2011-0733; FRL-9462-1] received September 12, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3346. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental