

This pipeline application is a jobs plan. Five major labor unions have endorsed this project, and there would be 20,000 construction jobs. As refineries expand, there's an estimated 100,000 new jobs as a whole. This Keystone XL pipeline is supported by the AFL-CIO and several other organized labor groups. In fact, they have started to run ads today in support of the pipeline and encouraging the Obama administration to approve it. Canadian oil sands are already creating jobs in my district in southern Illinois.

Caterpillar, which my friend JOE WILSON is going to talk about too—you'll see a larger mock than this. This is one of their major pickup trucks, lightly said. It's about four stories tall. The major place that this goes to is the oil sands in Canada. The tires, themselves, are two stories tall. The Caterpillar 797 is the largest truck they make. It's partially assembled in Decatur, Illinois. The truck is so large, final assembly must be done at the delivery site. The largest concentration of these Caterpillar trucks are in Alberta, Canada. These are manufactured in the good old U.S.A. These are great Midwestern manufacturing jobs that are directly tied to the oil sands development.

At my last stop on Monday to the ConocoPhillips refinery, I just posed this basic question to the reporters who attended the press conference: Would you rather have the oil being refined in Wood River, Illinois, come from Venezuela, Saudi Arabia, the Middle East, or Africa, or would you have that oil rather come from Canada? I think the answer is simple. So this administration must approve the Keystone XL pipeline.

POVERTY

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

Ms. LEE of California. I rise again today, as I've been doing every week, to sound the alarm on poverty in America. Twelve Members of Congress are or will be participating in the food stamp challenge, which is a nationwide effort to bring attention to the needs of the 45 million Americans who are receiving food benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or food stamps. For 1 week, we lived on the food budget of the average food stamp recipient, or \$31.50 a week, \$4.50 a day, which means I spent on average \$1.50 a meal. This is for 1 week.

Let me thank Congresswoman DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, TIM RYAN, JOE COURTNEY, JAN SCHAKOWSKY, DONNA CHRISTENSEN, ALCEE HASTINGS, KEITH ELLISON, JIM MORAN, JACKIE SPEIER, TED DEUTCH, MARCIA FUDGE, and ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON for their participation and their commitment to drawing attention to the struggle of millions of hardworking families to put food on the table during very difficult economic times.

We faced limited food choices, lacked access to fresh and healthy foods, and were repeatedly exposed to unhealthy and inadequate food choices that promote poor health, obesity, and hypertension. But of course, our week will end.

I hope that every Member of Congress will stop for at least a moment and consider the millions of American families who will face these challenges each and every day until they can find a good job with a real living wage.

Now, I'm a former food stamp recipient, and let me tell you that I was deeply thankful for my fellow Americans who were there for me and my children during a difficult time in our lives. The benefits that were extended to us were a critical help and provided a vital bridge over troubled waters when we needed them the most. But we didn't want to stay on food stamps forever, and we got off as soon as we could.

Let me also say that now is not the time to gut these critical human needs programs. We are facing record poverty levels and unacceptably high unemployment rates, and it is simply unconscionable to attempt to balance the budgets on the backs of the most vulnerable and the neediest Americans.

We must create what is being called a circle of protection around these core programs that keep American families from suffering the worst impacts of living in poverty.

But we must do more than just minimize the cuts to programs. We must make bold, targeted investments that will lift those families up and off of food stamps. We must improve and extend programs that create jobs and provide ladders of opportunity for all. We must commit ourselves to removing barriers, and they're many, to opportunity like poverty and hunger so that we can reignite the American Dream.

Mr. Speaker, on January 22, 2008, the House unanimously passed a resolution that I authored which committed Congress to the goal of cutting poverty in America in half in a decade. Now it's time to put that commitment to the test.

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An estimated 46 million Americans were living in poverty in 2010; and according to the latest Census figures, the official poverty rate in 2010 is now 15.1 percent.

It is simply unconscionable that the richest and most powerful Nation in the world can allow so many of its fellow Americans to fall to the wayside and be left with little hope and few opportunities to reach the American Dream. It's clear that our policies and programs addressing poverty have not kept pace with the growing needs of millions of Americans. It's time we make the commitment to confront poverty head on, create pathways out of poverty, and provide opportunities for all.

I've introduced H.R. 3300, the Half in Ten Act of 2011. This bill would establish a Federal interagency working group on reducing poverty. The working group will be tasked with developing and implementing a national plan to reduce poverty in half in 10 years. We really should be talking about eliminating poverty.

It would also work to eliminate child poverty, extreme poverty and finally put an end to the historic and ongoing disparity in poverty rates in communities of color. It's simply unacceptable that communities of color continue to face disturbingly high rates of poverty, with 27.4 percent of African Americans and 26.5 percent of Hispanics living in poverty, compared to their white counterparts, who have a poverty rate of just under 10 percent.

It's time to work together to dramatically improve access to opportunities for low-income Americans so that they can climb up the economic ladder and reignite the fire of the American Dream.

We must put partisanship aside to preserve and extend the vital human needs programs that protect our most vulnerable communities. We cannot and we must not seek to balance the budget on the backs of America's poor, her children and an entire generation of young people, who are really now taking to the streets to protest the fact that they are afraid that theirs will be the first generation in America's history to be less well off than the one before.

JOBS FOR ALBERTA, JOBS FOR AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Two weeks ago, I traveled to Fort McMurray in the province of Alberta, in Canada, with subcommittee chairman JOHN SHIMKUS of Illinois and Congressman BOB LATTA of Ohio of the Energy and Commerce Committee. We were accompanied by the Honorable Cal Dallas, the Minister of Intergovernmental, International and Aboriginal Relations for Alberta. We were welcomed to Edmonton by the Honorable Alison Redford, the newly inaugurated Premier of Alberta.

The purpose of this visit was to see firsthand the development of Canadian oil sands and to fully understand the positive impact this exploration has for the American people. We were briefed on the Keystone pipeline and how this project creates jobs. We saw the environmental stewardship where development is subject to environmental standards that are among the most stringent in the world. The Government of Alberta requires that companies remediate and reclaim 100 percent of the land after the oil has been extracted.

This project will connect a growing supply of Canadian oil with the largest

refining markets in the United States and will significantly reduce America's reliance on oil from overseas as new jobs are created in Canada and America. As oil sands production grows in the next 4 years, the industry is expected to generate 340,000 new jobs. This is in addition to the 110,000 jobs currently provided. There are more than 900 American businesses that supply goods and services for the Canadian oil sands development.

In my home State of South Carolina, oil sands development will add up to \$128 million per year to the State's economy, and it will support nearly 2,000 jobs per year. Companies in South Carolina supply equipment, parts and services used in the oil sands projects and pipelines.

In this picture, we are standing in front of a 12-foot-high tire made by Michelin in Lexington County, South Carolina. Each tire is valued at \$60,000. The Michelin plants in Lexington currently employ over 500 people in the Earth-mover division. The tire manufacturer also has facilities in the upcountry of our State, with their North American headquarters in Greenville.

There are also over 100 large mine haul trucks operating in the oil sands, powered by MTU engines. The engines are produced in Aiken County, South Carolina. By next year, the plant in Graniteville will be producing MTU's largest engine for the haul truck market. When MTU announced last year that Aiken County was to be its home for its new manufacturing facility, the company pledged to invest \$45 million and to create 250 new jobs over 4 years. However, last month, plant officials said MTU is already employing 250 people and will achieve its investment goal by the end of this year.

It's very simple. If Canadian families do well, American families do well. For every dollar the U.S. spends on imports from Canada, 90 cents is returned to the American economy, paying for equipment and services. Developing the oil sands is clearly more jobs for Canada and more jobs for America. We all know our country needs to be less dependent on oil from overseas. Canada's oil sands are clearly mutually beneficial to Canada and America and the security of North America.

Very significantly, Canada's enormous deposits of 175.2 billion barrels of proven reserves of oil place it third in the world, and 170 billion of these barrels are in the oil sands. These deposits place Canada as one of the central sources of production growth in the coming decades. It represents about 60 percent of the world's accessible oil, which is right here in our neighborhood. I am grateful that Canada is our largest trading partner and the largest supplier of oil to America. Canada contributes 22 percent of the total oil imports for America's daily use of 19.1 million barrels.

Congress has indicated its support for oil sands. In July, we passed the North

American-Made Energy Security Act. This bill urges the President to approve the pipeline. I appreciate jobs for Alberta which produce jobs for America.

VOTER SUPPRESSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Before I start, Mr. Speaker, let me just take a moment to comment about one of the previous speakers this morning, my dear friend, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE from the State of California.

Congresswoman LEE has been an advocate for low-income families for as long as I can remember; and especially since I first came to Congress some 7½ years ago, she has been tenacious on this issue. I just want to publicly thank her for her advocacy. I represent a low-income/low-wealth district in eastern North Carolina. My district is the fourth poorest district in the Nation, so I understand full well the challenges that she has confronted, and I thank her so very much.

Mr. Speaker, I've come to the floor this morning to talk about voter suppression—yes, voter suppression—across the country. Republicans are tightening the restrictions on who can vote and on how Americans can vote. During next year's elections, there will be millions of Americans who will find that since 2008 there are now new barriers that could prevent them from voting.

The number of States with laws requiring voters to show government-issued photo identification has quadrupled. Mr. Speaker, it has quadrupled in the last 4 years. Actually, over the last year, it has quadrupled. In fact, at least 34 States have now introduced legislation that would require voters to show photo identification in order to vote. Seven States—Alabama, Kansas, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Wisconsin—have already signed photo identification bills into law. Before this legislative session, only two States had ever imposed strict photo identification. Under the guise of eliminating voter fraud, 21 million American citizens, or 11 percent of Americans, could be prevented from voting—all because they do not possess government-issued photo identification.

Republicans are also seeking to put an end to early voting—a hugely popular voting method that is used by millions of Americans. At least nine States have introduced bills to reduce their early voting periods. Four States have tried to reduce absentee voting opportunities, and two States have reversed early reforms. Once again, it has disenfranchised thousands of taxpaying citizens who have past criminal convictions while a number of other States have made it much more difficult for citizens to register to vote. These new

restrictions will undoubtedly disenfranchise young voters, minority voters, low-income voters, and voters with disabilities—all of whom, as we know, traditionally vote with the Democratic Party.

In my home State of North Carolina, Republicans have mounted two strong efforts to suppress low-income and African American voters—House bill 351, for example, a voter ID bill which passed our State House and Senate earlier this year. It was vetoed by Governor Beverly Perdue, and we thank her for being strong in vetoing that legislation.

□ 1040

Senate bill 47, which would reduce the early voting period by 1 week, eliminates Sunday voting, and eliminates same-day voter registration. This bill is currently pending now in our legislature.

The right to vote, Mr. Speaker, is protected. It is dearly protected by more constitutional amendments—the 1st Amendment and the 14th Amendment, 15th, 19th, 24th, and even the 26th Amendments—than any other right we enjoy as Americans. We must continue to inform our constituents that their fundamental right in this democracy is being infringed and urge them to fight back against this voter suppression epidemic.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, it is obvious to me that any objective observer who is looking at this will know the real motive of this effort. It is specifically intended to diminish voter participation of some in our society who support progressive movements and who support the Democratic Party.

HONORING DR. MILTON A. GORDON

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

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to honor Dr. Milton A. Gordon for his distinguished career. Dr. Gordon has served for over two decades as president of California State University, Fullerton.

I first met Milt Gordon more than 20 years ago when he was in his first year as president of my alma mater, Cal State Fullerton. As State senator then and a Member of Congress now, I have met countless community leaders, including university presidents, and I have enjoyed a good working relationship with them. Very few, however, have I come to admire and respect more than Milt Gordon. Very few do I call my very good friend.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Gordon's impressive achievements and commitment to education were evident long before he became the president of Cal State Fullerton. As our country was undergoing the civil rights movement, Milt Gordon was breaking through longstanding racial barriers. He obtained a bachelor of science in mathematics and secondary education at Xavier University of Louisiana in 1957, a master of arts in mathematics at the University of Detroit in