

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PITTS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

TRAFFICKING GRANT

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, The Washington Post uncovered astonishing evidence that political appointees at the Department of Health and Human Services meddled with a grant to help victims of human trafficking. For 5 years, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has provided these services. Now The Post has revealed that the grant renewal was denied over the objections of career staff and despite the recommendation of an independent review board that rated the Catholic program as the best agency to do the work. In fact, some career staff within HHS refused to sign the documents awarding the new grants. It cannot be a coincidence that the ACLU is suing to force the Catholic bishops to offer abortion services with this grant money.

It is outrageous that the administration appears to be letting the ACLU dictate policy and interfere with a grantee that is doing good work. Victims of trafficking will now face a reduced level of service because of political meddling.

A complaint has been referred to the HHS inspector general. I hope there will be a thorough investigation determining whether religious bigotry played a role in this grant decision.

THE SUPERCOMMITTEE AND JOBS

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, this week the partisan chairs of the previous deficit reduction commissions admonished the supercommittee to "go big" with a package that includes a

balance of cuts and revenues. Unfortunately, I think they will "go small," and that would be a tragic lost opportunity. It would also be a lost opportunity if the supercommittee's legislation does not include job-creating measures, because the best way to reduce deficits is to create jobs.

Just ten years ago, the debate in this country was over the implications of repaying our debt in its entirety. We had that debate because, under President Clinton, 22 million jobs were created and record deficits were turned into record surpluses.

Mr. Speaker, the supercommittee should be bold and include a major investment in infrastructure. With interest rates at historic lows, it will never be cheaper to finance the massive backlog of improvements that we need to make in order to stay competitive.

Optimistically, economic growth over the next 2 years is not expected to be enough to sustain the current employment levels. That means unemployment will increase unless we act to create jobs.

I urge the supercommittee to do the right thing—go big. The American people need to work, and much work needs to be done.

POLL SHOWS SMALL BUSINESSES FEAR REGULATIONS

(Mr. HULTGREN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, last week I was astounded to read a new Gallup Poll on small business owners' concerns; and as you can imagine, in an economy like this, they have many concerns. But the issue that they said was the most important concern for small business owners was complying with government regulation.

You know what? I didn't need a Gallup Poll to tell me what I've heard from dozens of small business owners across my district. They feel threatened by the Obama administration's avalanche of needless red tape.

In the House, we've worked hard to cut that red tape, provide a pro-growth, pro-jobs environment here. We've passed more than 15 bills to cut red tape, most of them with bipartisan support. You can see all of them at jobs.gop.gov. Unfortunately, they now languish over in the cul-de-sac at the other end of this building called the "do-nothing" Senate.

So I urge the Senate to listen to American small business owners, listen to their concerns. Pass the forgotten 15. Get Washington off the backs of small business and get Americans working again.

ACT NOW TO PUT AMERICANS BACK TO WORK

(Ms. TSONGAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, 10 months ago this week, Republicans took control of the House of Representatives. Since then, we have not seen one comprehensive jobs bill to help put Americans back to work. Our GOP-led House must show urgency, where now they show indifference, in helping the millions of workers who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own.

The American Jobs Act will help create those jobs by investing in infrastructure and incentivizing businesses to hire new workers.

I have also proposed a plan to help put people back to work; and many others in this Chamber, both Republican and Democrat, have other great ideas to support job creation. But the majority has thus far refused to allow any such measures to come to the floor for consideration. They are common-sense and traditionally bipartisan steps that we should take today.

People need jobs, they need them now, and Congress must not delay any further.

DEFENSE CUTS INCREASING UNEMPLOYMENT BY 1 PERCENT

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta recently warned Congress that if the deficit reduction process does not succeed, the Department of Defense could be cut by \$1 trillion. These cuts will threaten the effectiveness of the world's greatest Armed Forces which provide peace through strength. According to Secretary Panetta, these cuts would increase America's unemployment rate by 1 percent, nearly 1.5 million workers. Drastic cuts will limit advanced equipment that is essential to protect our servicemembers who are defeating terrorists overseas.

For the United States to successfully continue to protect its families, Congress should not further cut the defense budget, which destroys jobs and undermines our manufacturing base. Yesterday in Roll Call, Army Secretary John McHugh, our former colleague, advised, "We can't break faith with the men and women who fought for us during the past decade."

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

VOTER SUPPRESSION

(Ms. FUDGE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the right of every American, and that is the right to vote.

Republicans across this Nation are attempting to suppress certain predetermined populations of eligible voters. In Ohio, they are trying to limit voting by mail, which greatly affects seniors, the disabled, and students.

In 2009, in the county in which I live, Cuyahoga County, we eliminated 26 percent of all of our precincts because of the effectiveness of our vote-by-mail operation. We saved more than \$1.2 million on voting machines alone. And with fewer precincts, we save at least \$800,000 for each countywide election by having people vote by mail. Yet Republicans passed legislation that would restrict counties from mailing ballots. As a consequence, this year alone, early voting is down by one-third from last year.

With such an efficient vote-by-mail system, why would Republicans seek to eliminate mail ballots or to confuse voters? Why are Republicans pushing policies that seem to have no other objective than to disenfranchise our citizens?

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SENATE NEEDS TO ACT ON FORGOTTEN 15

(Ms. HAYWORTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, in response to the President's jobs plan, Linda Shevchuk from Carmel, New York, in my own 19th district, sent the following letter to me: "The government's first priority should be to make sure that existing programs and agencies are operating efficiently and effectively. I can't fathom how the President can ask for more revenue when there is so much waste in our government. Government needs to act more like a business. In order to succeed, a business has to operate efficiently and effectively, be innovative, set a reasonable budget, and operate within that budget."

Ms. Shevchuk, you're absolutely right. In fact, on our list of the forgotten 15 bills that we need the Senate to act on right away, there is the budget for fiscal year 2012. It has now been 918 days since the American people received a budget for the Federal Government because our Senate has not yet acted.

Please call your Senators across the country—and, Ms. Shevchuk, call our Senators from New York—and ask them to act on the forgotten 15, including the budget for fiscal year 2012, so that we can free our economy, free our hardworking American taxpayers, and get us all back to work.

WAKE UP, AMERICA

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I spoke yesterday with a very well-known

Cleveland talk show host, Mike Trivisonno, who told me he and his listeners, who are many, are concerned that an al Qaeda flag is flying over the courthouse in Benghazi, Libya. It was put there by the same group that we helped to oust the Qadhafi regime.

Trivisonno is right. U.S. soldiers died fighting al Qaeda in Afghanistan, but in Libya we enabled al Qaeda to raise their flag? Will al Qaeda now have access to Libya's oil wealth thanks to the U.S.-led invasion?

Months ago I raised this question about elements of al Qaeda reportedly being involved with so-called rebels. This administration looked the other way. Why? What are we doing?

Our international policies are a diversion from our disastrous domestic policies: 14 million unemployed, millions of small businesses at risk, millions of homes at risk, Social Security at risk.

Wake up, America. The administration just helped elements of al Qaeda knock off one of the world's leading oil producers. Their flag flies over Benghazi. It's time for us to get out of these foreign adventures and start taking care of things here at home.

SONGWRITERS' TAX LEGISLATION

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak about legislation I'm introducing dealing with tax options for songwriters and music publishers. The Songwriters Tax Simplification Reauthorization Act reinstates the ability of American music publishers and self-published songwriters to elect to use a 5 year, 20 percent per year amortization schedule. We had this tax option from 2005 to 2010. Inadvertently, it wasn't reauthorized.

Under current law, tax options available to songwriters and publishers are unworkable, obsolete, and cost-prohibitive. This creates a disincentive to new investment at a time when the music industry is under assault from illegal piracy online and as they are fighting to retain and create jobs.

A 16-year-old singer-songwriter named Bonner Black from Hot Rock, Tennessee, came to Washington last month to build support for this idea. Her dream is the American dream—to write songs that inspire and entertain us. We need this legislation to make certain songwriting remains a part of the American dream.

THE PRESIDENT'S AMERICAN JOBS ACT AND SMALL BUSINESS

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of the President's American Jobs Act because America's

small businesses need this legislation now to grow and hire new workers. Creating jobs and strengthening the economy is my highest priority, and I strongly urge this Congress to remain focused on these goals because they are the most pressing challenges facing Americans today.

The President's American Jobs Act will cut the payroll tax in half for 98 percent of small businesses. The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that cutting of the payroll tax is one of the most effective job-creating measures. In addition, the President's proposal will completely eliminate payroll taxes for businesses that add new workers. This incentive is directly targeted to encourage small businesses to hire new workers.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to put partisan politics aside and pass this legislation now because American families and small businesses are in need of jobs now.

THE FORGOTTEN 15

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Well, with a national government seemingly incapable of confronting a mountain range of debt and a national media preoccupied with politics, I have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, as I travel across the State of Indiana, one thing is clear: In the city or on the farm, Hoosier families are hurting. Unemployment in the State of Indiana is a heartbreaking 8.9 percent, and Hoosiers want action on jobs.

Now, the President is traveling around the country talking about his legislation. He says that the American people can't wait to take action on jobs, and let me just say, I couldn't agree more. The good news is House Republicans have a plan, and House Republicans have taken action.

Since the first of this year, House Republicans have passed no less than 15 different pieces of legislation to create jobs in America. These are common-sense, bipartisan bills that have passed the House of Representatives and are now languishing in the Senate. We call them the forgotten 15. Among the forgotten 15 is legislation to increase domestic energy production, reduce the harmful Federal regulatory burden on jobs, help unemployed veterans, and the rest.

I urge my colleagues in the other body to take action on the forgotten 15. We can't wait. Let's take the measures necessary to put Americans back to work.

END CHINESE CURRENCY MANIPULATION

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I recently visited two factories in my district in Woonsocket, Rhode Island—a