

end to this practice. The STOCK Act that I rise and encourage my colleagues to join us on would stop trading on congressional knowledge. It would put Congress on the same playing field of every teacher, firefighter, small business owner, and investor. Then we can get down to the business of making America right—by creating jobs. I encourage my colleagues to join me.

□ 1220

BREAK THE CYCLE OF RECKLESS SPENDING

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in favor of House Joint Resolution 2 and sending a balanced budget amendment to the United States Senate and to the States. Congress has nobly, yet unexpectedly, tried seven times to stop the increasingly massive growth in our national debt. At the first attempt in 1985, with the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act, our national debt was \$2 trillion, or \$8,700 for every American. Today our national debt is \$15 trillion, \$48,500 for every American, higher than it has ever been in American history. Our current spending environment has failed to create jobs and is threatening our standard of living and our national security.

While the Founding Fathers could not foresee a nation this stricken with debt, they did recognize the danger to our prosperity and instilled a constitutional process that gives us the flexibility to deal with this crisis. As Thomas Jefferson said: I place economy among the first and most important republican virtues, and public debt as the greatest of dangers to be feared.

Congress has a rare opportunity to break the cycle of reckless spending that has taken us to this current fiscal breaking point and ensure the fiscal financial stability and prosperity for our children and our grandchildren. I urge adoption of the resolution.

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY VETERAN TREATMENT COURT

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

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the opening of Santa Barbara County's first veteran treatment court. Last week our country came together to remember and pay respect to our veterans, and I was humbled and honored to participate in memorial services honoring our veterans, 50,000 of whom live on California's central coast. Their sacrifice is never forgotten, just as our work to support them is never finished. And that's why I support this new innovative and collaborative treatment court in my congress-

sional district, which will better serve our veterans, especially those struggling with substance abuse, mental health issues, or other disorders. This veterans court fills a critical gap in care for our veterans by helping former servicemembers who are struggling and in pain.

Mr. Speaker, it's our duty to serve those who have served us so gallantly. Our veterans have sacrificed and shown their unquestioning commitment to this country; and veteran treatment courts, like the one in Santa Maria, provide another straightforward way for us to better serve them. So I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing Santa Barbara County for taking this critical step in supporting our veterans by establishing this veteran treatment court.

THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

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

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, every month Americans sit down at kitchen tables or computers to balance their checkbooks and bank accounts to ensure their spending doesn't overwhelm their way of living. I've been at that kitchen table for those discussions. Now the United States Congress is finally coming to the table to have a similar discussion with the American people.

By passing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, we tell the American people we are serious about putting our financial house in order. No longer will we overpromise and overspend at the expense of trillions of dollars and our children's future.

This week I will stand with my colleagues to support a notion that seems foreign within the beltway, that we cannot spend more than we take in. The fact that this is a radical concept in Washington, D.C., demonstrates just how out of touch this town has become and how far we have to go. But getting to where we need to be won't occur without the critical step we take this week to pass a balanced budget amendment. This action puts us in line towards economic recovery, sustainability, and, above all else, with the needs and priorities of the American people.

I urge my colleagues to support the balanced budget amendment.

WELCOMING ESPN TO HOUSTON

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome ESPN's College GameDay to the campus of the University of Houston. This is the first time in the history of that show that the University of Houston and the city of Houston has been given this honor.

The University of Houston Cougars, led by Heisman hopeful Case Keenum, is the highlighted game, as the 10-0 Cougars face the SMU Mustangs this Saturday. The Cougars will push for an undefeated season and potential at-large BCS bowl opportunity.

The University of Houston has a long, storied tradition of athletic success, including 55 NCAA individual championships and 17 NCAA team titles, 19 college football bowl appearances, five NCAA men's basketball Final Fours, and a trip to the College World Series.

The University of Houston has received the Tier-One research university distinction from the Carnegie Foundation. The University of Houston is one of only three Carnegie-designated Tier-One public research universities in Texas.

The University of Houston is also known as a first-generation school, for many of the students are the first in their families to attend college. Our undergraduates choose from 120 majors and minors. The University of Houston also offers 139 master's, 54 doctoral, and three professional degree programs.

The University of Houston is the second most ethnically diverse major research university in the United States. Students come from as many as 137 nations and from across the Nation.

As a proud alumnus of the University of Houston, I salute the successes of the athletic and academic programs and welcome ESPN to our campus today.

JOBS FAIR

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

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, we've heard some of the partisan comments this morning, and I think America is tired of that. America needs jobs now, and they're looking at us to work together.

There's been a lot of discussion and debate around job creation and economic recovery—rightly so. But I believe we all want to put America back to work, Democrats and Republicans together. We all want that. We must work together now to make that happen. Just because we have different ideas doesn't mean we can't work together.

ADAM SMITH and I, both from Washington State, in fact, next week will be putting together a jobs fair that we call Helping Identify Real Employment in America. We're going to do that together, a Democrat and a Republican. There will be 75-plus different vendors, different businesses who have jobs, actually have jobs waiting. We're going to match employees with employers, bring them together so they can find jobs. And our hope is that before Christmas, before Thanksgiving, ADAM SMITH and I can get some people back

to work and energize their families and help energize our community.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of us in this House to do the same—work together to identify jobs.

BIPARTISAN JOB FAIR IN WASHINGTON STATE

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. I rise in support of a bipartisan effort to create jobs.

Just as Congressman REICHERT said, he and I are hosting a job fair next week. At a time when unemployment is over 9 percent in this country, when our economy desperately needs to put people back to work, I think this is the way we need to do it, in a bipartisan manner. At the end of the day, we're not going to have any job creation bills that aren't bipartisan because of the nature of Congress.

I applaud Congressman REICHERT for working with me on this idea, and it's really a very good idea in terms of job creation.

Yes, there's huge unemployment, but less well known is there are actually employers out there that have jobs that are trying to find people to fill them. Matching the skills necessary with those jobs is critical. And that's what the HIRE America job fair that we're going to do next week in Kent is all about—bringing in 75 employers that actually have jobs available, with unemployed people looking for work, to match them up, to try to put people to work to get this economy moving again. It's a great idea.

I thank Congressman REICHERT for working with me to do this. It's bipartisan. And it's focused on the number one most important issue this country faces, getting Americans back to work and getting our economy moving.

NATIONAL DEBT HITS \$15 TRILLION

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday was another landmark day in Washington's borrow-and-spend legacy. The national debt now stands at a staggering \$15 trillion. This comes at a time when our economy is struggling, the unemployment rate is high, and Americans are tightening their belts and doing more with less. It remains clear that the Washington theory of borrowing and spending to create wealth and grow jobs simply is a fraud on the American people.

Both political parties know that this staggering debt is a cancer on the future of our Nation and something we can no longer ignore. I ask my colleagues to join together and save the future of this country, to stop the suffocating debt and spending. Let's pass

a constitutional amendment that requires a balanced budget, that prohibits Congress from borrowing from the future, and let's pass a legacy of prosperity and wealth to the next generation.

INCOME TAX RETURN IDENTITY THEFT

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

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, there is a growing problem across America involving identity theft and tax fraud. This new kind of criminal will steal Social Security numbers and then file for a fraudulent tax return.

The City of Tampa Police Department recently uncovered a multi-million-dollar fraud scheme, lost monies to the taxpayers. So Congressman RICH NUGENT and I, a Republican colleague from Florida, have been working together to tackle this problem.

I intend to file a bill this week that would, one, give local law enforcement the tools it needs to be an effective participant with the IRS in these tax fraud investigations. Right now Federal law doesn't allow local law enforcement to be an active participant. And, two, for folks that have their identities stolen, often months and months and months go by before the IRS is able to fix their return and their credit, and we've got to do that. It's leaving them hanging for months.

So I encourage my colleagues to join in our efforts to tackle tax fraud and this criminal enterprise.

□ 1230

LISTEN TO AMERICA'S JOB CREATORS

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, if the Obama administration is serious about helping create jobs for the American people, then it should start by listening to America's job creators. House Republicans understand the importance of freeing our Nation's businessmen and entrepreneurs from the confidence-killing threat of higher taxes and more regulations so that they can invest, grow, and hire again.

This means protecting job creators from needless tax burdens. This means reforming Federal spending. This means supporting a fairer, flatter and simpler Tax Code. This means stopping job-killing regulations that constrain employers from hiring more workers.

On each of these issues, House Republicans have already acted. Following our Plan for America's Job Creators, we've passed more than 20 job-creation bills so far this year.

The path to new jobs has been paved by House Republicans. It's long past time for Senate Democrats and President Obama to follow our lead and enact these jobs bills.

GETTING AMERICANS BACK TO WORK

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, in the past few days, many Americans have contacted me through Facebook and Twitter with their thoughts, and their message was very clear: They want jobs, and they want them now. On behalf of these Americans, I urge the leaders of the House to respond by passing major legislation that will create high-paying jobs.

They write to me: "I hope you mean living-wage jobs that are meaningful, filled with dignity, and generated locally."

"Job creation begins at home. Close the loopholes that send jobs overseas and make it tougher to bring the profits and products back here."

"An additional suggestion would be to fund a Works Program Administration modeled after the first one implemented by Franklin Roosevelt, a new deal for the new millennium."

"We need to stop the manufacturing drain going out of the country, revisit the WPA to jump-start the economy, and fix our aging infrastructure."

"Heck, we need someone to clean weeds out of sidewalks. We need an energy policy and concrete plans to accelerate the use of renewables. Too much of our fuel costs end up in our trade imbalance."

These are the words from my constituents that I'm glad to share with you as we work very hard to get Americans back to work at meaningful jobs.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2112, CONSOLIDATED AND FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 467 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 467

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2112) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the conference report to its adoption without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate; and (2) one motion to recommit if applicable.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from North Carolina is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending which I yield myself such time as I