

□ 1800

THE AMERICAN ECONOMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. KAPTUR. I thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

I am very pleased to join my colleagues this evening, including JOHN GARAMENDI of California, to talk a little bit about the standoff that appears to be happening in discussions between the Senate and the House and the seemingly irresolvable issue of whether or not average American families are going to be able to maintain a tax benefit on their payroll tax deduction relating to Social Security contributions for the average family, which is about \$1,000 a year; or whether that money is going to be taken away from them and, instead, tax breaks given to multimillionaires and billionaires in our country.

It appears that the Republican Party is quite averse to having everybody in this country pay their fair share, so I just want to go on record as saying, at this point in our economic recovery, nothing could be more important than keeping that tax benefit in the hands and pockets of America's families. They're the ones who actually take those dollars every month and buy essentials, not extravagant purchases. They make their car payments if they're fortunate enough to have cars; they buy enough food for their families; they buy clothing; my golly, during the holiday season, they might even be able to buy a little bit extra—something special—for their holiday dinners; and they pay down some of the debt their kids have in trying to pay their college or after-high school training bills.

It's really amazing to me that in the richest and most powerful country in the world that we continue to have this tremendous friction here in the Congress to do something that is so reasonable—that is just so eminently reasonable—and would contribute to economic growth. We know that consumer spending is the most powerful instrument to help lift this economy out of its doldrums.

We see the automotive industry recover, this industry that the Obama administration and certain Members of this Congress worked so hard to fight for the recovery of; and we got more signs of that today in Ohio with a wonderful announcement by Ford that it is moving its truck line from Mexico back up to Avon Lake, Ohio, and that it's making over a \$128 million investment there. We see car sales increasing, and that's because people have spendable income.

So why at this point in our history would you want to allow those who have the most not to pay their fair share and take away \$1,000 a year, on

average, from middle class families who would spend those dollars in helping to propel economic growth?

I can guarantee you that at firms that I represent, like Chrysler, Jeep, Fiat, that the Wrangler, that the Cherokee, that the Liberty are selling very well and that General Motors' Cruze vehicle, which is largely a northern Ohio-made car, is selling like hotcakes because people are able to make those monthly payments. So that particular part of the discussion here in Washington makes such eminent sense.

Why in the world would you want to penalize middle class families because you want to just take care of the top 1 percent? It simply isn't fair. It simply isn't fair.

It would seem to me, in the holiday spirit, that the tax-writing committees of both Chambers should get together and figure out a solution that is fair to all families. It's pretty clear to me what that is, and it's pretty clear to me that with corporate profits at all-time highs and with those who run these corporations and sit on their boards that they have been doing quite well, thank you, and it's time for them to do something for the Republic.

It's not that big a deal. Who is going to miss an eighth home or a seventh yacht? But the average family is having trouble meeting its credit card debt, paying its children's bills, having enough, as prices go up, to pay for food on the table, and taking care of elderly relatives sometimes who need extra medications.

So I would urge those in both Chambers who are on these budget and tax-writing committees to spend the time that's necessary and not burden the American people with unnecessary delay. Instead, give the economy the boost that it needs by maintaining the middle class payroll tax cut and by making those in the top 1 percent pay their fair share.

Many, many years ago, they paid a lot more percentage-wise than they do today, and we had lots of job creation in this country. It simply eludes me why those at the very top of the income scale, who have taken most of the benefit of growth in the last 20 years and who are doing so well, are so averse to helping our country and to making sure that everyone has a chance to prosper because, when everyone prospers, so does the top 1 percent. That's where this consumer spending injection from the middle class payroll tax cut plays such a significant role in the economy.

Now, as we buy for the holiday season, nothing could be more important than buying "made in the USA" goods. Why is that important? It's important because, when you see that label, "made in the USA," you know that those dollars flow back to that company and to those workers and that you actually help build wealth in this country.

Last weekend, when we were doing some shopping for the holidays, we

went in one store. I kept looking at labels, and it was China, China, China; and I'd put them back on the shelf. It was actually staggering what percentage of those goods—a majority of the goods on the shelves—were actually made someplace else. I made a point of going to a craft fair in our region and was able to buy several Christmas gifts that were handmade. I felt really good about that because I knew that those were people who had taken their artistic abilities and that they had created tableware, table linens and other items. There was jewelry that was handmade. I knew the profits would benefit those families and that they would go to the communities that they came from. It shouldn't be so hard to find "made in the USA" goods on the shelves of our major retailers.

So I would just urge our citizens—and I know sometimes it's hard—as you're doing your holiday shopping to really try to look for that label "made in the USA" and to help your own community. Find small businesses and find products in your community that are made here so that those dollars recirculate over and over and over again and so they help to build the real wealth of our Nation that made America great.

I would urge you to look at candy-makers in your region, at those who are making cookies, at those who are small entrepreneurs of different kinds, making scarves. I was able to go to one potter in our region, and I ordered several items for this holiday season. That's a local artist who has her own shop and makes her own goods right there. She exports out of that shop, and I know that that's going to help our region grow. So we can do a lot in our own lives and in the way that we spend those precious dollars to really help job creation in our regions, in our country, at a time when we really need it.

I see that some of our other colleagues have joined us here on the floor. I want to thank Congressman PAUL TONKO of the great State of New York for joining us this evening. He is such an outstanding and really relentless voice on job creation and economic recovery in our country.

Mr. TONKO. I thank the gentlewoman from Ohio. Thank you very much for kicking us off on a wonderful hour of discussion as to a plan to revitalize our economy and to grow the opportunities for our working families across this country.

President Obama has ushered forward a wonderful package called the American Jobs Act that will enable us as an American society to respond to the crisis for jobs and to the crisis for economic recovery, all of which are incredibly valuable to the future of this country.

□ 1810

We need to invest, I believe, in a way that allows us to provide the tools that are essential for a modern-day economy and modern-day manufacturing.

This proposal stands in sharp contrast to the work done a decade and a half ago, a decade ago.

What was done then is this spending frenzy that paid for tax cuts for millionaires and paid for tax cuts for billionaires and bought wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and offered a pharmaceutical plan for the Medicare program, all without having a payment mechanism.

And so this spending frenzy, which was tremendous, it was a huge bill for the American public, had been done off budget and had no funding sources. There were no pay-fors, as they are addressed today.

The contrast here with the President's proposal, with President Obama's proposal, is that there is an offering for relief for America's working families, for her middle class strata, with a payroll tax reduction extension, and that enables both employers and employees to realize the savings that then allow us to put together a balanced approach on assisting the economic revitalization of our working families and middle class, and on providing the investments that are essential in going forward, automating our manufacturing concepts in providing an inducement for an ideas economy into the equation of success for this country.

That all requires investment. And so as we look at this plan that is very balanced and paid for, we know that we can compete in that global market if we're given the appropriate revenues to invest in a modern manufacturing concept. Keep in mind, certain sectors were totally avoided by the Bush administration. No focus on agriculture, no focus on manufacturing, a focus on the service sector of the economy, but they are narrowly on the financial services.

We all know the saga there. We know the scenario all too well, that avoidance of a watchdog, turning our back so that there could be this laissez faire approach that brought America's economy to its knees, and we saw the displacement of 8.2 million jobs.

That was painful and impacted people in tremendously profound measure, and people lost their lifetime savings through those failures. Housing values went down. They plummeted and, again, 8.2 million jobs were lost.

So we have an opportunity, Representative KAPTUR, as you've talked about an extension of the payroll tax holiday, we have an opportunity here to not only provide for savings, for our families, but for investments in a modern world manufacturing model that enables us to, again, utilize the strength of research, the strength of technology, the strength of ideas that can then bridge into a new threshold of manufacturing opportunities in this Nation, and then, of course, the investment in the human infrastructure where we train and retrain workers for that automated phase that comes in manufacturing.

So, I thank you for bringing the focus tonight on the floor of the House of Representatives to what we call in our caucus a progressive agenda for revitalizing the economy, and emphasizing, underscoring the concept of making it in the USA, making it in America, putting a focus, again, onto the manufacturing base.

I represent a host of communities dubbed mill towns. They were the economic engine for an industrial revolution. They were the epicenters of invention and innovation that led to this westward movement that enabled us to impact not only the growth of this Nation in favorable measure, but to impact the quality of life in peoples around the world simply by our spirit of pioneer, which is within our DNA to make a difference in the product delivery, in the quality of life that's addressed by that product line.

I'm filled with optimism. I'm filled with optimism if we move to go forward in a way that invests in the American worker, invests in the American business, small business, and invests in our ingenuity and our innovation.

Thank you so much for the discussion.

Ms. KAPTUR. Congressman TONKO, I want to thank you so much for coming to the floor tonight to again express your deep and abiding passion for jobs in our country. And I wanted to follow on something you said.

This is actually a chart which shows our trade deficit with China. Like your community, our communities are just loaded with goods that are coming in here from China. And if we just look back at the last decade, the enormous rise in those goods on our shelves, when you really put the math of it on a chart, it looks like an avalanche. It is just crowding all this money—in 2010, over \$273 billion of hard-earned American money was actually used to purchase Chinese goods, and that money then went back to, not the United States, but to China.

And you think about the displacement of production in this country, for everything from tableware to sometimes food products now, and I had an experience over the weekend because I like to work with small businesses, and I ran into a woman who was blending coffee, she's called a master roaster, and her product is called Bea's Blends, Bea's Blends from Toledo, Ohio.

And she was asking me, I want to expand my company but I need a very small loan, and I don't want to go into debt and, oh, gosh, what should I do next? And I told her I would try to put her in touch with the Small Business Administration.

But it was really, when you said the optimism that you have, I'm meeting companies all the time that are inventing new products—incidentally very good products—and trying to counter this trend of more imports versus our exports. And her product is a product that can be sold locally, it can be sold

interstate, and ultimately it can be sold internationally because it's vacuum packed.

And I was thinking about the creativity of this individual American trying to make it in a very tough economy. And then a couple of days later I was over at a coffee shop in Lakewood, Ohio, and I happened to tell the owner of that shop—also a woman—that I had met this master roaster. And she said to me, well, you know, Congresswoman, it's interesting you should say that. I'm trying to bring together all these master roasters across the coast.

I said, gosh, we have coastal roasters or roaster coastals? But the point was people were thinking, they were creative, they were bringing something new to the market, beautifully labeled, an excellent product, and trying to counter these trends.

And because small business is located in our communities, it's interesting to look at the last several years as well, which conform to the rise of Chinese imports and other imports into our country. And look at the distribution of income of people in our country. And what's happening is what the American people obviously know, which is why we need to maintain the payroll tax holiday and to make those in the top 1 percent pay their fair share.

The divergence between people who are in the lower income spectrum and the upper has just exploded. It is just that before, those who had much and those who had just enough and those who had little were not so far apart. But the gap has just widened to a level where the American people know something is fundamentally wrong, and that the ship of State is very out of balance, and that somehow we have to begin to make sure that all boats are lifted in this society and not just some boats get lifted.

And we know that job creation, business growth, business startups, business expansion of American-made products are essential; products that can be exported, that can help to close the trade gap but also then begin to narrow the income gap that we see as we allow more income to be earned by those who are in the middle class and who are in some of the categories of income where they're stretching just to make it every day, every week, to put enough food on the table.

This is really almost un-American. This looks more like an old, stratified society from times past that was very, very undemocratic, places where we wouldn't want to live, the kinds of places that our relatives fled because they couldn't get enough to eat, because they didn't have a chance to earn a fair day's wage.

□ 1820

We are joined this evening by Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE from the great State of Texas, such a hard-working and able Member who is such a voice for citizens across our country and our world every day.

We thank you so much for joining us this evening.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Congresswoman KAPTUR, thank you for allowing me to join you and to join the distinguished gentleman from New York. We are on the floor often, but it is very special to come here tonight as I listen to you discussing the issues not only of Make It In America, but something you have been on—and, in fact, we have known Ohio to be the center point of manufacturing, the center point of production of what we call the raw materials, overlapping with our friends in the Midwest on steel production. We call Ohio the true salt of the earth and the underpinnings of America's economy.

Again, they are very fortunate to have a Member such as MARCY KAPTUR, who has never stepped away from the morality and the moral compass of allowing constituents to work and to fight for them having the opportunity to work and to create opportunities and jobs and manufacturing in Ohio. We thank you. We are joined, of course, by Mr. TONKO, who has never wavered from assisting his constituents, particularly facing the hurricane they had.

I want to join you and pick up the populist chord, if I can. The President went to—I guess he listened to us, listened to you and went to Kansas and went to the place where Teddy Roosevelt, the man with the big stick, went. I think we need a big stick around here. I don't believe in violence, but if I might just get one quote in that I really like: This country succeeds when everyone gets a fair shot, when everyone does their fair share, when everyone plays by the same rules.

This is what we've been speaking about. This is what the public has been asking us. This is what the coffee maker or the small businesses have been asking for: Give us an even playing field.

I want to briefly speak, as I participate in this Special Order, on one or two points, and that is these go hand in hand.

We know there are people who are unemployed. We know there are working people who will benefit from the extension of the payroll tax cut. We also know that we have great respect for our colleagues, but that we have not been tending to the people's business for the last 3 weeks. We have been passing legislation which has been job killers. We could have had a reasonable discussion on how we get to a point. And I don't mind doing things in a bipartisan way. I've never seen you reject bipartisanship. I have never seen Mr. TONKO reject bipartisanship, or Mr. GARAMENDI do so. We are eager to move this country forward.

I'm going to give the other body a compliment because I know they were stuck on the plan of the payroll tax, but I kind of like the idea of a 1.9 percent surtax applied in 2013—not even in 2012—to millionaires over a 10-year pe-

riod. An additional \$31.8 billion would be generated by increasing fees on mortgage lenders paid to Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac; and those may have to be reviewed by this body, but it is seeking a way to ensure that everyone gets a piece. Let me tell you what the response is.

The hostage-taking comes when one Senator of our friends on the other side in the other body, a Republican Senator says: Okay, we don't want the Bush tax cuts to ever expire. That's their response.

So I just want to say to my colleagues that the olive branch has been extended. If we do not do this, I will tell you the GOP will be risking 160 million Americans who will not be protected and will be subjected to this massive, if you will, tax increase. If we do it, it will give 160 million Americans relief. 300,000 people making more than \$1 million a year will give a little bit of sacrifice to give a fair shot, a Teddy Roosevelt fair shot, to the American people of \$1,000 to \$1,500.

Let me speak briefly about the unemployment circumstance here. Six million Americans lost their jobs. And I want to speak briefly, and I want to show this picture of a happy family. You've got manufacturing and I've got the Houston port. We've got stevedores. Obviously, when the international economy slows down, what happens to the guys who load and unload ships? My guy who is in this family that's in need, he's been off work for a month or two months. He's got these beautiful children and a wife. They've got some medical problems. He's had to have surgery. These are the kinds of people that we are castigating, the salt of the earth in Ohio that had jobs in manufacturing and were laid off or they were slowed down.

This headline says: "Illness and budget cuts fail to diminish family's good cheer," but they are the recipients of charitable aid here in Houston, Texas. And you see their three lovely children. If this gentleman does not get unemployment, if, for example, he continues to be laid off, then we are talking about a family that is not on public assistance. We are talking about a family that in fact worked, which is what unemployment insurance is, car insurance, fire insurance. They worked, and they've come upon hard times. New Yorkers worked, and they've come upon hard times. Californians worked, and they've come upon hard times, as have those in Ohio. So I would just, in the spirit of bipartisanship, say to my good friends, find a way to repay the American workers who have come upon hard times, the children who have watched their parents get up every day and work.

Here is my swan song on this point. I wanted to show this picture because I have been plagued over the weekend by the words of one of our national figures who indicated that poor children have no role models; no one in the poor communities ever goes to work; no one who

happens to be poor watches any family member get up and go to work unless they're doing illegal activities.

So a solution is we watch the janitors in the schools—let's make sure the poor children, pluck them out of the pre-K and first grade and sixth grade, let them do the janitorial work of an adult who is providing for his family. In my day, janitorial work, the sanitation department, that was good, hard work for individuals who were providing for their families, and maybe they educated a whole generation of children by being a janitor. Or someone who was housekeeping or someone who was cleaning facilities or office buildings. We are not suggesting that these individuals are not looking for greater aspirations. Maybe somebody went and got a GED or went to a community college.

But to suggest that poor children in Appalachia, where Robert Kennedy went and said he saw the worst poverty he had ever seen, or in places such as inner-city Houston or rural America don't have role models because they are impoverished and the only thing that they are able to see is illegal activity is an insult to the American spirit and is a reflection on what we have come to in this body when we can't give to the working class, this wonderful family that is on the front pages of our paper, indicating they're only in this predicament, they only can't see daddy go to work because he is a stevedore without work and then getting back surgery, so compounded not because they are poor and in a family where nobody gets up and goes to work.

We've got to do better than this. We have to take the Teddy Roosevelt spirit. I'm glad the President was in Kansas and has taken on this kind of hard talk in order to provide for the working families of America.

Ms. KAPTUR. I want to thank you so much for bringing this family's plight to light here in the Congress on behalf of all of America's families who are suffering at this holiday season.

Isn't it an indictment on the legislative branch of this country at the national level that when people need unemployment benefits, we have to run out the clock right to the bitter end, right to the bitter end for benefits that have been earned—earned.

In church on Sunday, a couple came up to me and the husband asked: Congresswoman, if you know of any other jobs, please let me know. What's going to happen with unemployment benefits? This was a family that obviously needed help, a family that had spent their entire life, the man and wife, both working.

□ 1830

He didn't want to ask about the unemployment benefits; but he knew that for that family, maybe it was all that would be there in the near term.

I'll give you a couple of figures I would like to put on the record this

evening. One, I called the head of one of our major railroads the other day because I was trying to get the word out across my region—not everybody is plugged into the Internet—that there were 4,000 jobs that CSX was offering around the country. I wanted to make sure that people in our region knew that they were available. The chief executive officer of the company said, Well, you know, we've had 500,000 applications for 4,000 jobs.

The American people want to work. It is not that they do not want to work, as some of our friends on the other side infer. No, no. They're looking every day. They're just not finding the jobs that existed in past generations. And we know that those jobs have been displaced by imports from places like China. And company after company that used to be located in our neighborhoods aren't there anymore.

So it's harder to find jobs. We have to create new jobs. But the new ones aren't coming on stream fast enough. The level of desire to work in our country is so much higher. Millions more people want to work than there are jobs available right now. And so for many families, unemployment insurance is all that's left for them. Again, this Congress is just waiting to the bitter moment rather than acting responsibly to help families who have literally built this country and who have a very good work ethic and want to work.

So I want to thank the gentlelady from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for bringing this subject up and putting a human face on what this unemployment really looks like out in the country. If anyone has any doubt, come to Ohio. Come meet these families who want to work and are looking every day.

Of course, the way it works, you can't go into a company. They tell you, Well, we might have a hundred jobs but apply to us through the Internet. It's like you go into this faceless system where you can't really find a human being.

They're trying out there in the country. All the economic figures show us—and the last thing I will say here for this segment—Mark Zandi from Moody's has classified every single expenditure that one can make that gives the economy more than a dollar for every dollar expended. Would you believe that if one looks at things like unemployment insurance and payments to the unemployed, that produces the biggest bang to the economy? Well over \$1.35 for every dollar invested as opposed to, let's say, tax credits or something like that, these arcane tax provisions, where less than 30 cents is actually reinvested in the economy.

So unemployment insurance extensions also make sense for economic growth at this very tender time because the people who receive those benefits spend them on essentials that drive the economy.

I yield to the gentlelady.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I want to follow up and put two more numbers on the record, as you did. You made a very valid point that here we are at the last minute. You would think that we would be sensitive enough to know that families are gathering. Families want to have a holiday for the children. They're trying to be the Santa that they know that the children believe in. They're trying to make preparations. Families are trying to find ways to be with loved ones. It may be gasoline that they may need to drive a car. If we don't do this unemployment insurance, we are poised—unlike if we did it and we get bang for our buck—to lose 200,000 jobs. Compound that with not extending the payroll tax cut and we'd lose 400,000 jobs. That is almost 600,000 jobs.

I finish by saying the tragedy of your point about China—and I want to make it very clear that we love all people. We wish the best for the people of China. It is the policies, the currencies. But not only do we have this in the backdrop; we have to fix our own house so that we're not building a bridge in California that has drawn steel and workers and designers and accountants from way across the ocean in China. We've got to get our house in order.

And so 600,000—if the payroll tax cut extension doesn't go forward, we're losing 400,000 jobs. And if unemployment insurance doesn't go forward, we're losing 200,000 jobs. Is this the way to welcome the most sacred season for many faiths and many families of the year of giving, where we teach our children to give? Is this what we should be doing to the American people? Is this what we should be doing to our soldiers who will be coming home by the end of December? I think not.

I thank the gentlelady for allowing me to share these thoughts. I'm only looking forward to getting our house in order and getting our holiday house in order and reflecting on the needs of the American people and not special interests.

Ms. KAPTUR. I want to thank the gentlelady for those very profound comments tonight and just place on the record that just in our church last weekend the priest informed us that compared to last year he was asking for people to dig deeper because the number of baskets and the number of "asks" was up well over 125. I think just for our church it's over 360 now for this year. For a small congregation, that's a bit of a struggle. That's just one place, just one corner in America, repeated in 50 States, in every hamlet.

I appreciate what the gentlelady said about the spirit of this particular season of light and of giving and that the people who are out of work have earned these benefits. They're not asking for any handout. They're asking for the insurance that they earned as a condition of work in order to help have a merry Christmas and a happy Chanukah and very Eid greeting season. They're not asking for anything they haven't earned.

I thank the gentlelady for coming down tonight.

Our leader, Congressman JOHN GARAMENDI of California, is with us tonight. We thank him so much for reserving this Special Order and for the incredible leadership that he has exhibited each and every week that we have been in session. Just a powerful and sustaining voice on Making It in America and creating jobs here.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Ms. KAPTUR, you've gone too far. Thank you so very, very much for picking up.

Tonight is a very special night for California. We lit the holiday tree in front of the Capitol. It was a tree that came from a community very close to where I was raised in California. I was out there with the choir from Summer-ville High School in Tuolumne County, an area that I represented for some 20 years, and then others around the area. A beautiful, beautiful tree from the Stanislaus National Forest in California.

There really is much to celebrate and much to be concerned about in America. We are still a very great country. We're the strongest, wealthiest place on this Earth. We have incredible opportunity and potential. I saw it in those kids that were singing in front of the Nation's Capitol this evening. Yet there's so much pain, as was pointed out by you and our colleague from Houston earlier.

Americans care about each other. They deeply are concerned about what's going on in our communities, and they want solutions to the problem. That's our task. There's 435 of us here and over in the Senate another 100. And, of course, the President. It's our task to find the solutions. The President has put forth a very powerful program called the American Jobs Act. One piece of it has, fortunately, passed. It was passed just a few days after Veterans Day when I guess we were out at the parades, and we made promises to take care of the veterans. Fortunately, a piece of legislation did pass. Only one part of the American Jobs Act, though there's much more to do.

My colleagues, Ms. KAPTUR, and the gentlelady from Houston, we're talking about a piece of it. The veterans piece provides employers a very powerful incentive to hire a veteran. A very, very powerful incentive. You can reduce your taxes by \$2,600 to hire a veteran that's been unemployed; a long-term unemployed veteran, \$5,600 reduction in your taxes; and in addition to that, the President proposed that if it is a veteran who is disabled as a result of their service, a \$9,600 reduction in taxes.

□ 1840

That's right off the tax line. So we've got to get the message out to employers: Hire, put people back to work, the veterans. It's one of the elements the President has proposed in his American Jobs Act.

And you were so powerfully putting forward just a moment ago the issue of

the payroll tax deduction. It's going to end. There will be a tax increase for every American who is earning up to \$106,000, a tax increase average of \$1,500 across this Nation. We want to keep that tax reduction in place. We Democrats do not want a tax increase on the working middle class, no.

But again, as was pointed out just a moment ago, our Republican friends are saying, Well, that's a good idea, but where are you going to get the money? You can't get the money from those whose annual income is more than \$1 million; \$1 million a year annual income, you can't tax them. That's not fair to tax those people. They're the job creators.

Baloney. They're not the job creators any more than any other small business in the community who doesn't even come close to having an annual income of \$1 million.

So let's be fair about this. They've had an enormous tax break over the last decade. It's time for them to come forward and to share in the burden of America and put Americans back to work. The American Jobs Act works.

Let me now turn to my colleague from New York.

Well, Ms. KAPTUR, you're running this operation, so, please.

Ms. KAPTUR. I am going to yield the time to you, Congressman GARAMENDI, but I did want to say for the listening audience that this is a coast-to-coast operation. I'm looking at you from California, Congressman TONKO from New York, Congresswoman JACKSON LEE from Texas, and myself from the heartland. That's a pretty broad variety of opinion from across our country, from very significant States.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I thank my colleague from the great State of New York, picking up the east-west program once again.

Mr. TONKO. Representative GARAMENDI, thank you again for bringing us together with this request for a Special Order.

If Representative KAPTUR could just take us back to that second chart that she shared with us earlier this evening and the measurement or the depiction of real average after-tax income.

Now, you talk about the unfairness out there or the inability to go forward and tax fairly. When you look at that graphic, to see the injustice that's displayed just in simple line graph format, that flatlining of America's middle class from 1979 forward, that flatlining contrasted with that steep climb upward for those in the upper income brackets tells us the whole story.

And people have said across this country, when I go home to the district, people say to me that they're concerned, they're upset. They've been taught, rightfully so, they've learned along the way that if you play fair, you roll up your sleeves and you abide by the rules that you should be able to have within your grasp that American Dream. The American Dream, one that allows for working families to climb

the ladder. They don't feel that that's within their grasp today.

And it's not only the injustice here that is measured on a chart—and be mindful, they don't reject the notion of working hard and scoring big, making money. They're not concerned about that. They honor that. What they're concerned about is the undue influence that the powerful have, those sitting perched high on the income ladder, the power they have with the process and the policy outcomes. And the fact that we would avoid fairness in revenues and not invest in the American Dream, not invest in opportunity, not invest in the prosperity of this Nation is what bothers them. They don't want to be ignored that way. They want to know that a process out there, there's a government working to create policies that initiate a comeback, that enable people to have within their grasp the American Dream. That's what they want to know is alive and well here in Washington.

And now it's a fight. It's a fight for the Democrats in this House to score a victory for the middle class. We want that victory. We want people to be able to know that there's a fairness out there. Look at it, \$1,800, \$1,500, whatever your strata would produce as a favorable outcome is something for them. Month to month they will score some victory here where the essentials, as Representative KAPTUR labeled them, are available to them with these savings. Contrasted with opportunities that we see here that find this group that's rising to the top exponentially just won't share the prosperity in that way.

And I think it's the avoidance of sound progressive policy that's really the struggle right now. And people are expressing their anger and their frustration, and rightfully so, because we need to be more fair.

Mr. GARAMENDI. If I might just interrupt you, Mr. TONKO.

You mentioned sound progressive policies. We've all been back home over Thanksgiving. I've talked to a couple of those people that are on that blue line way up there, and they're willing to pay a little more for fairness. But I also have heard from some who say, well, we can't do anything until you control Medicare. And what do they recommend in Medicare? They recommend extending the age from 65 to 67. And I'm going, What sense does that make?

When you consider that Medicare was started in 1964, 51 percent of those men and women over 65 had no health insurance. Today, virtually everyone over 65 has health insurance. It's Medicare. It is one of the solid bedrock programs that keeps people—seniors—from falling into poverty.

Back in 1964, 30 percent of the seniors were in poverty. Without Medicare, they would be in poverty again today. And yet our Republican colleagues want to terminate Medicare, literally turn Medicare over to the private in-

surance companies who I know, as a previous insurance commissioner, will not provide a reasonably priced policy or benefit to somebody who is 65 because those are the people that get sick.

Similarly, they have said repeatedly since the 1930s that they want to terminate Social Security. We hear that. We hear the background buzz around this building. They want to terminate Social Security. These are the programs that give American seniors the dignity and the opportunity not only to live a good life, but to even live, to stay alive.

Mr. TONKO. Let me just talk about a point of clarification, too, to add to that discussion.

On this whole tax fairness, people have approached me. They've said, Now, explain to me—because they hear different scenarios. They were imagining that there would be this tax, this surcharge on \$1.2 million. For instance, if you're over that \$1 million threshold and you have an annual income of \$1.2 million, the people are now reminded that it's on that \$200,000 over and above the first \$1 million upon which the surcharge is levied. You know, that's an important fact that is sometimes lost in the discussion. So now people are saying, Well, wait a minute; so the first million dollars isn't taxed.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Same tax rate, doesn't change at all.

Mr. TONKO. Right. And so they're saying, Well, whoa, we've been flatlined for so long, and this exponential rise for the highest in the income ladder's outcome.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Surcharge is only on the amount over \$1 million.

Mr. TONKO. So now there is more determination by America's middle class families to have it fixed and done correctly.

And the other thing is, I'm reminded, every time I go home, by middle class Americans, modest household incomes, that: We're job creators. My children needed my attention at home. I opened a childcare in my home. I charge. I have a small business.

Many small business people tell me, as an idea came to mind, they now wanted to turn that into a product. They're small business owners. They're the engine. They're connected to the community. They're tethered to the small community.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Can I interrupt for just a second?

The American Jobs Act, which we're trying to push through this Congress to get men and women back to work, provides a tax reduction for the employer on wages less than \$50 million. So for your childcare provider, for the small business person, the carpenter out there in the small business, they also get a 50 percent reduction in their payroll tax. So instead of 6.2, it goes to 3.1. So this isn't just for the wage earner. This is also for the business person.

Mr. TONKO. Exactly.

Mr. GARAMENDI. So why don't they support this?

Mr. TONKO. You know, this is a statement of underpinning of support for middle class, for working families, for small business. It's the engine that's making it happen.

□ 1850

Small business, the investment we can make, not only the tax cut we can provide here, but the investments that are required for the ideas to move along. We're in a challenging time. We're there competing in a global economy. We invest in the intellectual capacity of this Nation, and how foolish of us not to take that investment, that product of that investment and put it into working order. That's what we're asking for here.

Give small business the tools, give working class families the opportunity, and we will have a comeback story that is glorious, and we should be filled with optimism if we do the things that are so logical, and that polls across America, individual polls from all sectors, all angles, all different groups that measure, they're saying this is what America wants. And how come they can't get it delivered by their government?

They're speaking to us loud and clear through their opinion surveys. We want this progressive schedule. We want this agenda. Make it happen. We're trying here as the Democratic Caucus in the House of Representatives, Representative KAPTUR, to make it happen, and I think we can if we put our minds to working together in a very, very bipartisan, bicameral way, executive branch working with the legislative branch, vice versa, and making a progressive agenda happen.

Ms. KAPTUR. If the gentleman would just yield, I'd like to add that I agree with you completely. Every small business that I walk into tells me, MARCY, bring me customers. Customers are a function of having spendable income.

There are no more important decisions we could make as a country, right now, as we finish the month of December, than to make sure that middle class families have spendable income by not raising their taxes; middle class families, who've been holding the line here without real additional spending power over the last decade, and to make sure that we extend unemployment benefits to those who've earned those benefits because that has the maximum bang inside the economy when people spend those dollars on basics, on essentials.

Those are two practical decisions from an economic standpoint no rational human being would disagree with. And they contribute to economic growth. They contribute to keeping us on an upward path as we move forward here in our country after coming out of this deep, deep, deep recession.

Mr. GARAMENDI. If I might, Ms. KAPTUR, a fascinating piece of information came across my desk today, and it had to do with the Affordable Care Act,

which our Republicans like to call ObamaCare. Hey guys, it's working. It's working.

You just talked about spendable income. Let's see here: 2.65 million seniors, because of the Affordable Care Act, had an average of \$569 additional in their pocket as a result of the discount drug benefit program. Wow. It was incredible. It actually, the 50 percent discount on brand name drugs, saved \$1.5 billion for 2,650,000 seniors. Saved \$1.5 billion, an average of \$569 per senior.

It's working. It's working. And also, very interesting, these kinds of statistics come across, and normally we ignore them. But the annual wellness program, 1,931,927 seniors were able to take advantage of the annual wellness program that is in the Affordable Care Act; 24,175,608 seniors took advantage of the free service program in the Affordable Care Act.

So when folks are out there and they're putting down ObamaCare, be careful. It's not a negative. It's a very, very strong positive.

And you'll like this one, Ms. KAPTUR. Hang on a second. Ohio. One million, let's see here, 1,864,243 seniors took advantage of the affordable care and 50,178 seniors in Ohio took advantage of the discount, the drug discount. It's working. That's exciting.

This is legislation that we passed that's actually helping the seniors and the economy by putting money back in their pockets, rather than in the pockets of the pharmaceutical companies.

Ms. KAPTUR. If I could say, Congressman GARAMENDI, with those seniors, I know the first place they're going to spend those extra dollars, after they pay for food, will be on their grandchildren. And all I hope is that they don't buy Chinese toys this Christmas. I hope they find a way to buy little outfits that are made at your local craft fair, or they find ways to find candy that's made by a local firm, they find ways to spend those dollars wisely, because if we do that, if we spend every dollar as wisely as we can, we really lift the economy of this country, and we put those dollars back into businesses that actually are conducting business on our shores.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Excuse me for getting back into this, but Mr. TONKO gave me that look that says what about New York? 1,410,533 New York seniors were able to get free medical services, and 127,691 were able to take advantage of the 50 percent drug discount. Good for you. You voted for that act. I voted for that act, and I didn't even talk about California. Should I?

Mr. TONKO. You should share it for your home State.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Yes. 1,962,809 seniors in California were able to get free medical services and 139,396 were able to take advantage of the 50 percent drug discount. \$569 average savings for seniors. It's working. The Affordable Care program is working for seniors, and it's putting money back into our economy to grow this economy.

Ms. KAPTUR. I was just going to say, very quickly, that sounds to me very life-giving, Congressman GARAMENDI. It doesn't sound like there are death panels. It doesn't sound anything like some of the opponents were saying when that bill was first passed. In fact, seniors have a greater chance to live now because they can get the medicine they need and they can get the check-ups they need, and to me, that's very life-affirming. I just wanted to put that on the record.

Mr. GARAMENDI. We also know that there are—I don't know the exact number—I think it's about 20-some million young men and women, age 21 to 26, are now back on to health insurance, their parents health insurance as a result of this law. We'll pick up that statistic as soon as I get my hands on it, but I think that's the number, over 20 million.

Mr. TONKO. So many of these programs, including the longstanding Medicare program, are looked at sometimes in dollars and cents and argued about how they're improved or not improved. But sometimes lost in the whole discussion is the value added, the whole underpinning of support that is offered the senior community.

Prior to the inception of Medicare in 1965, families that retired were probably going to see their economic well-being dip precipitously. And what they had here, with the Medicare Foundation, was that their economic stability, their dignity factor, was addressed in tremendously strong and powerful ways so that they were able to move forward in those retirement years with that sense of dignity, with the quality of life, with economic stability.

These are facts that need to be maintained in the front of any discussion; that to undo Medicare would be a tragedy for American families, for our seniors. And certainly, let's go forward, as we have said, with optimism. Let's invest in Medicare. Let's invest in Social Security, and let's invest in an economic recovery where we cut where we can, belt tighten, but invest where we must so we can compete effectively.

And to my colleagues on the floor here tonight, Representative KAPTUR, Representative GARAMENDI, I join with you in being a powerful voice in promoting optimism as we go forward, and wanting to have progressive change.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I thank you so very much.

MARCY KAPTUR, thank you for grabbing the microphone early on. I was down with that Christmas tree and the lighting ceremony from California. I got here just in time to pick up a couple of these issues.

We know we can put men and women back to work. We have the tools. The question is whether this House has the will to do so and not increase our deficit. We can actually do this and not increase the deficit, take people that are not paying taxes now, put them back to work.

The Affordable Care Act is working. And we know that we can continue the

unemployment benefits, and there's a way of paying for it. You show it there on that. The super wealthy, it's time for them to pick up their fair share.

Thank you so very much for this wonderful evening and telling the story of the prosperous America that we can have once again. This is America. This is a great country. We have within our power to get back on our feet and to charge forward, and we really appreciate all that you're doing to make that happen in the great Midwest and in New York and in Houston.

Ms. KAPTUR. I really have enjoyed sharing this hour with Congressman TONKO of New York and Congressman GARAMENDI of California, speaking out for 100 percent—the 99 percent that are often forgotten, the 1 percent that we don't forget but know that your patriotism really will come to shine in this holiday season—and to urge our colleagues in the House and Senate to do what's right, to make the decisions on extending the payroll tax holiday for the middle class, making sure we extend unemployment benefits which are earned benefits, and that we stand up for all of America because we're all in this together.

I thank my colleagues very much, the listening audience, and those who are out there helping us to move the ship of state in a direction so that we create jobs in this country and we keep this economy on an upward roll.

Mr. GARAMENDI. It's for the 99 percent.

Ms. KAPTUR. For the 99 percent as well.

Mr. GARAMENDI. And 100 percent of Americans moving forward.

Ms. KAPTUR. That is right.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. MARINO (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of a family medical emergency.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today and December 7 on account of official business.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 2192. An act to exempt for an additional 4-year period, from the application of the means-test presumption of abuse under chapter 7, qualifying members of reserve components of the Armed Forces and members of the National Guard who, after September 11, 2001, are called to active duty or to perform a homeland defense activity for not less than 90 days.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until to-

morrow, Wednesday, December 7, 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:

4146. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the System's final rule — Resolution Plans Required (RIN: 3064-AD77) received November 15, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4147. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the System's final rule — Regulations G, O, W, BB, LL, MM, Rules regarding availability of information, Rules of Procedure, Rules of Practice for hearings, and Post-employment restrictions for senior examiners [Docket No.: R-1429] (RIN No.: 7100 AD-80) received November 15, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4148. A letter from the General Counsel, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Remittance Transfers (RIN: 3133-AD94) received November 15, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4149. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Addition of Certain Persons to the Entity List; and Implementation of Entity List Annual Review Changes [Docket No.: 110930606-1640-01] (RIN: 0694-AF40) received November 18, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4150. A letter from the Chief Acquisition Officer, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Small Disadvantaged Business Self-Certification [FAC 2005-54; FAR Case 2009-019; Item III; Docket 2010-0108; Sequence 1] (RIN: 9000-AL77) received November 4, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4151. A letter from the Chief Acquisition Officer, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Notification of Employee Rights Under the National Labor Relations Act [FAC 2005-54; FAR Case 2010-006; Item I; Docket 2010-0106; Sequence 1] (RIN: 9000-AL76) received November 4, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4152. A letter from the Chief, Border Security Regulations Branch, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Civil Monetary Penalties Inflation Adjustment [CBP Dec. No. 11-23] (RIN: 1651-AA91) received November 21, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4153. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class D Airspace; Denton, TX [Docket No.: FAA-2010-1327; Airspace Docket No. 10-ASW-19] received November 21, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4154. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Harrisonville, MO [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0251; Airspace Docket No. 11-ACE-5] received November 21, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4155. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Removal of Class D Airspace; Willow Grove, PA [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0355; Airspace Docket No. 11-AEA-8] received November 21, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4156. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Mobridge, SD [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0134; Airspace Docket No. 11-AGL-3] received November 21, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4157. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; El Dorado, KS [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0231; Airspace Docket No. 11-ACE-4] received November 21, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4158. A letter from the Regulatory Ombudsman, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Commercial Driver's License Information System State Procedures Manual, Release 5.2.0 [Docket No.: FMCSA-2011-0039] (RIN: 2126-AB33) received November 10, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4159. A letter from the Deputy Assistant General Counsel for the Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Enhancing Airline Passenger Protections: Limited Delay of Effective Date for Certain Provisions [Docket No.: DOT-OST-2010-0140] (RIN: 2105-AD92) received November 10, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4160. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Model 767 Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2010-0033; Directorate Identifier 2009-NM-099-AD; Amendment 39-16737; AD 2011-14-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received November 3, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4161. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A330 B2-1C, A300 B2-203, A300 B2K-3C, A300-B4-103, A300 B4-203, and A300 B4-2C Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0000; Directorate Identifier 2007-NM-189-AD; Amendment 39-16769; AD 2011-17-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received November 3, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4162. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Aviointeriors S.p.a. Passenger Seat 12M Series, Installed on but not Limited to ATR Model ATR42 Airplanes and Model ATR72 Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2011-1000; Directorate Identifier 2011-NM-048-AD; Amendment 39-16828; AD 2011-21-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received November 3, 2011, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4163. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Model A330-243F Airplanes Equipped with Rolls Royce Trent 700 Series Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2011-0999; Directorate Identifier 2010-NM-235-AD; Amendment 39-16825; AD 2011-21-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64)