

create private sector jobs. The President's new plan will reduce the deficit by \$4 trillion over 12 years. He does that by reducing spending by \$2 trillion but raising taxes by \$1 trillion, and, thus, lowering interest payments by \$1 trillion. The President has again failed to realize that we don't have a revenue problem, we have a spending problem.

At least a couple times since I have been in the Senate, I have heard this argument: Let's increase taxes \$1, and we will reduce expenditures \$2 or \$3 or \$4—sometimes it is \$2, sometimes \$3, and sometimes \$4 behind those ideas. That sounds very good, doesn't it? But here is why it doesn't work and why bringing in \$1 in new taxes actually leads to spending of \$1.17. I often quote Professor Dave Vedder of Ohio University, who has studied tax increases and spending for a long period of time. In fact, you increase taxes until you decide to do something else with the taxes. But appropriations are reviewed annually and, for some reason or other, after that first year, appropriations tend to creep up and up and up. Consequently, the well-intentioned raising of taxes \$1 and reducing expenditures by \$3 or \$4—as well intended as it is, it gradually is eroded on the expenditure side—that half of that proposition—so you end up not reducing expenditures as you have originally indicated.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, may I address the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator is recognized.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, we have come through a crisis. It is not over yet because we don't have a law that has been passed by both Houses averting the shutdown of the government, and once it has passed both Houses—which we anticipate tomorrow—then it will be signed into law by the President, and we will avert the shutdown.

Had there been a shutdown or, in the alternative, had a law proposed in the House of Representatives, H.R. 1, been law, what we would have seen is a number of the hunger programs we have been savaged. There would have been a huge savaging of the feeding programs around the world—USAID, an arm of the State Department, which saves untold thousands, if not millions, of lives, particularly of children. They have a program right now in Africa, for example, of just providing mosquito netting, which cuts malaria by 30 percent. But also, USAID uses a lot of American agriculture to help feed hungry populations. Those programs would have

been cut significantly had H.R. 1, the House of Representatives' appropriations bill, been the final decision.

Fortunately, it wasn't and, fortunately, for the hunger programs, both abroad and at home, the least among us will not have to suffer those cutbacks to the budget for the duration of this fiscal year—for the next 6 months.

Even so, there were some significant cuts in what has been agreed to in the funding for hunger programs here in America. There was a \$500 million cut in the Women, Infants, and Children Program, otherwise known as WIC, the Federal health and nutrition program for women, infants, and children. We will have to deal with this, as we are now putting together the mathematics in building the next budget for 2012.

I decided to come over and talk because I wish to talk about one of my closest personal friends, former Congressman and former Ambassador, Tony Hall of Ohio, who started a fast 16 days ago. That fast he is going to continue, only having water. He is going all the way through Easter, which is another week and a half away. The duration of that fast will be somewhere around a month.

You can imagine what happens to your body when you don't take in any nourishment other than water for 30 days. That is what Tony Hall is doing. It is very interesting that people are joining him. Some 35,000 people nationwide have joined Tony in a fast. It may not be a complete fast such as he is doing, with only water, and it may be just that they are doing a fast 1 day a week. It is interesting that 30 Members of the House of Representatives have joined their former colleague, Congressman Tony Hall, in this fast, and that includes—as just announced—14 U.S. women lawmakers who plan to protest the deep cuts in the programs that help the poor and battle hunger in the United States and overseas.

In conclusion, you can tell a great nation by how it takes care of the least of those among us. It is certainly a part of our Judeo-Christian heritage, throughout the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament, that, over and over, the most referenced part of the Scriptures is the obligation of a society to take care of the least privileged among us.

Back in the old days, some 2,000 years ago—and even before—they had a social security system in that agricultural economy of the time called gleanings. Those who owned the wheat fields would go in and reap the wheat, but it was the standard practice of the day that they would leave enough wheat on the stalks so the poor could come in and glean the fields in order that they would have sustenance. That was their social security system of the day. Our systems of aiding the poor are much more sophisticated and include the programs of USAID, and here at home a lot through the Department of Agriculture. But as we have to cut the budget, we must constantly remind

ourselves, as Ambassador Tony Hall is reminding us right now with his fast for a month, that it is an obligation of all of us to take care of the least among us.

I will close by quoting that passage from Matthew 25: When you did it for the least of these, my brothers and sisters, you were doing it for me.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNETT). The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Before my friend leaves the floor, I had the good fortune to serve in the House, as my friend did, with Tony Hall, a very dedicated, thoughtful man. I wasn't aware of his doing this fast. That is a real fast. It shows how strongly he feels and has felt for many years about this. So it is nice my friend from Florida brought this to the attention of the American people.

#### EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the period of morning business for debate only be extended until 7 p.m. tonight, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, and that at 7 p.m. I be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that on Thursday, April 14, following any leader remarks, the Senate proceed to a period of morning business for debate only with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each until the Senate receives the papers from the House with respect to the following items:

H.R. 1473, the Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2011; H. Con. Res. 35, a correcting resolution relative to a prohibition of Federal funds for health care reform; and H. Con. Res. 36, a correcting resolution relative to a prohibition of Federal funds for Planned Parenthood; that when the Senate receives the papers from the House, the Senate proceed to votes on the two concurrent resolutions and passage of the bill in the following order: H. Con. Res. 35, H. Con. Res. 36, and H.R. 1473; that there be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to each vote; that there be no amendment in order to the bill or the concurrent resolutions prior to the votes; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the correcting resolutions and the bill be subject to a 60-vote threshold; that the only points of order and motions in order be budget points of order and the applicable motions to waive; further,

that the Secretary of the Senate immediately notify the House of Representatives of the results of the Senate's action on the House measures.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

I withhold that. My friend from Rhode Island is here. I apologize.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

#### CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, later this week, we will consider a spending measure to fund the United States Government through the remaining 6 months of this fiscal year. While the majority leader is on the Senate floor, I want to thank him, as well as Appropriations Chairman INOUE and Senator PATTY MURRAY, for their hard work in negotiating an end to the budget stalemate and preventing the threatened government shutdown.

The battle over that spending measure brightly illuminated the contrast between the priorities of the two parties. The priorities of the House Republicans, I believe, are completely upside-down. In the debate over the spending bill, they fought to cut programs that helped the middle class and for extreme tea party policy riders that had nothing to do with the budget. These included a prohibition on funding for women's health and eliminating the Environmental Protection Agency's ability to protect us against carbon and other pollution.

At the same time, the House Republicans refused to even consider raising revenue by closing tax loopholes, for instance—not one. They refused to entertain ending even one corporate tax giveaway or one special treatment for wealthy taxpayers.

If that debate didn't make the contrast between the two parties crystal clear, the House Republican budget for 2012—the so-called Ryan budget—sure did. In his budget, Congressman RYAN proposes privatizing Medicare and requiring seniors to pay the majority of their health expenses with their own money. They would get a voucher, which actually would go to the insurance company, and the difference would be up to them. In the same document in which Congressman RYAN would decimate Medicare, he would cut taxes for millionaires and billionaires by trillions of dollars.

Now, one major factor that contributed to our budget deficit is the economic crisis that we recently weathered. It is amazing the amnesia we can have in Washington. We are not even through the recession that has been so painful for so many families in Rhode Island, and yet we seem to have forgotten that economic crisis. Well, those of us who were here ought to remember the desperate urgency that was displayed by Treasury Secretary Hank

Paulson and Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke as they, having looked into the economic abyss, came to this building—to the LBJ Room right here in the Senate—to plead with us for help to save the world economy. These are not two easy men to frighten, and they were very frightened.

We are now past the worst depths of the financial and economic crises, and as this chart shows, the economic recovery measured in jobs is proceeding, although all too tentatively and all too slowly in Rhode Island. We are still at 12 percent unemployment in the Providence metropolitan area and over 11 percent statewide. Now that we are finally creating jobs—but very few compared to the job losses of the crisis—now that we are finally at least on the good side of the equation, House Republicans have proposed yanking government support for the recovery and jeopardizing many of the jobs that are on this chart.

Their spending proposal, H.R. 1, would have cut spending so severely that former McCain Presidential campaign economic adviser Mark Zandi estimated it would cost as many as 700,000 jobs.

Just look at our job gains: For February, 222,000; for January, 68,000; for December, 167,000; and for November, 128,000. We would wipe out months and months of job gains with a 700,000 job loss.

Goldman Sachs, the Wall Street investment bank, said this bill—H.R. 1—could reduce the growth in our annual gross domestic product by two full percentage points over the rest of the year. We were only expecting about three percentage points of growth, so to knock off two of them is a big hit on jobs.

So I will begin by pointing out that as we deal with the debt and deficit, we cannot forget about jobs. It is growth, ultimately, and a recovering economy that will help reduce our national debt.

As you will recall, the Republicans also resisted any efforts to close any corporate tax loopholes. Corporations, our Republican friends contend, are overtaxed, and any closing of a loophole would amount to an unacceptable tax hike. So let's look for a minute at the actual state of things. Let's look at the facts for a minute.

This is the actual state of corporate tax payments in America. In 1935, for every \$1 an American individual contributed to our revenues, American corporations also contributed \$1. By 1948, American individuals were contributing \$2 for every \$1 that corporate America contributed. By 1971, it broke through 3 to 1. In 1981, it broke through 4 to 1. And in 2009, we broke through 6 to 1, with American individual taxpayers contributing every year to our annual revenues six times as much as American corporations.

So we have gone, in a lot of people's lifetimes—you have to be pretty old, but there are plenty of people who remember 1935—from, basically, even-

Steven between corporate America and individual Americans, with individual Americans carrying six times the tax burden of corporate America. So when people say how overtaxed corporate America is, it is worth looking at this history of ever-diminishing corporate contributions to our Nation's revenues.

Let's look now at one of the factors that is driving the erosion of corporate tax revenues. This is an interesting house—a building located down in the Cayman Islands. It is not particularly large, kind of nondescript. Our Budget Committee chairman, KENT CONRAD, uses this photograph quite often.

This building may not look like a beehive of economic activity, but over 18,000 corporations claim they are doing business in this building. That is correct; 18,000 corporations claim to be doing business in that little building. It gives a whole new meaning to the phrase "small business" when you think of trying to pack 18,000 corporations into that little structure.

Well, as Chairman CONRAD has pointed out, the only business being done in that building is funny business or monkey business with the Tax Code. Tax gimmickry. This nonsense is estimated to cost America as much as \$100 billion every year. For every one of those dollars lost to the tax cheaters, honest taxpaying Americans and honest taxpaying corporations have to pay an extra dollar or more to make up the difference.

Now, let's go to another building that has a tax story to tell. This is the Helmsley Building in New York City. It is a nice-looking place. The building is big enough to have its own Zip Code. That means the IRS reports of tax information by Zip Code can tell us a lot about this building. Here is what this building tells us from actual tax filings and actual tax payments.

The well-off and very successful, indeed, admirable occupants of that building paid a lower tax rate than the average New York City janitor. The average tax rate of a New York City janitor is 24.9 percent. The average tax rate of a New York City security guard—I am sure the Helmsley Building has security guards—is 23.8 percent. But the average tax rate actually paid by the occupants, the successful, capable, but well-compensated occupants of that building, is 14.7 percent, about three-fifths of the rate that their janitors and security guards are likely paying.

So that seems as though it must be extraordinary, but, believe it or not, that is no fluke. The IRS reports the tax rate that is actually paid by the highest earning 400 Americans. They have to go back a few years to do the calculations, but here is their most recent information, and the story is the same. The highest earning 400 Americans each earned on average more than \$344 million—more than \$1/3 billion in 1 year—and the average tax rate those 400 high-income earners actually paid was 16.7 percent.