

We're told that 70 percent of Americans, adults, believe that their children will not have as much opportunity and freedom as they've had. That's why I ran for Congress. That should not happen. We can change that.

But I'm mystified when I think about the record spending in 2007 that was followed by additional record spending in 2008, under the guidance of Speaker PELOSI and Leader REID, because we know all spending originates in Congress. This is where budgets are passed. It's where appropriations are passed. If money is appropriated, it has to be appropriated from here.

In 2007, 2008, I never heard anybody, Democrat or Republican, complain that those budgets didn't spend enough money, each year going beyond what we had spent the year before. And so, then to have a new President come in in 2009, and with Speaker PELOSI and Leader REID still at the reins, jump up spending an extra trillion dollars, and then come before Congress and the country and say, look, you're just going to have to raise taxes to get up to where this extra trillion dollars is that I've already spent.

Why couldn't we just say, Nobody complained in 2007 or 2008 about too little money being spent. Let's go back to the Pelosi-Reid budget that was so much more than the Republican budgets of 2005 and 2006. We'll go back to those. It means we drop \$1 trillion in spending. Boom, there you go. We didn't need a supercommittee. There you are.

Another easy solution that isn't talked about enough, but this House voted to cut our own legislative budget 5 percent last year and 6.4 percent the year we're in. That amount of money, though significant to most of us, is a drop in the bucket when you look at the overall Federal budget. And the way that that should be used to make a difference is for this House, since we've done it to ourselves, now having the moral authority to say to every Federal department, every agency, we cut ourselves 5 percent last year, you're cutting yourself 5 percent next year.

□ 1750

And the year after that, since we've already done it, you're cutting yourself another 6.4 percent; an 11 percent cut. And there you are. We didn't need a supercommittee. You've got your cuts.

I am so grateful to Chairman PAUL RYAN. We had a good discussion back in July. Since he's been in Congress like I have, the four terms I have been in Congress, each time I filed a zero-baseline budget bill that says no more automatic increases for every Department. No automatic increases. It ought to be an easy concept.

But we're living under the rules that were established for CBO back in 1974, a very, very liberal Congress that ended our participation in Southeast Asia. We should have ended it because we had not given our soldiers, sailors,

airmen—we had not given them the go-ahead to win that war. We had tied their hands.

When I hear some people say we ought to remember the lessons from Vietnam—and then it turns out they didn't get the lesson. The lesson is that unless you are willing to commit 100 percent of the resources and give the rules of engagement that allow our military to win, they should never be sent. It is outrageous to have our military in foreign countries with rules of engagement that don't allow them to adequately protect themselves. That's the lesson that should have been learned from Vietnam. We could have won the war.

SAM JOHNSON can tell you, the leaders in Hanoi, as the POWs were taken out, one was laughing: You stupid Americans. If you had just bombed us one more week—like the 2 weeks they had before—we would have had to surrender unconditionally. They could have done that years before, saved thousands and thousands of American lives in Vietnam, but we didn't commit to win it.

We shouldn't send anybody anywhere unless we're committed to win. It costs too much money. But even more than that, it costs the greatest American treasure, and that's American lives.

We are in an economic crisis; and as Peter Marshall as chaplain of the U.S. Senate prayed in the 1940s: What we call crises, God sees as opportunities.

It turns out, those of us in the House, those of us in the Senate, even the President, have an incredible opportunity. We'll never be called the greatest generation; but 100 years from now, if we bring spending down under control, people can look back and say: Wow, they had about 60 years, 65 years of uncontrolled spending. It grew and grew and grew. And the people that were in government then did something that most have never been able to do when they get to that point, when nearly 50 percent are getting more back than they are paying in. They were able to restrain their spending, get control of their financial destiny, and we got another 200 years of the greatest Nation in history.

The other is possible. They could look back and say: Wow, the United States followed the tried-and-true path to the dustbin of history. They spent more than they had. People found that they could get Congress to vote them money out of the Treasury. And once again, that socialist concept failed, and the Nation failed. The Nation that provided for that brief time of Camelot, a time of hope, relative peace, evolving toward more perfect freedom, was lost because of financial irresponsibility.

People have heard me so many times quote Ben Franklin. But it's easy to see from Proverbs, it's easy to see from speeches of people like Ben Franklin, our problem is a selfish problem—anytime we spend more money than we have with complete and utter disregard, gross negligent disregard, even

intentional disregard for the future of our children and one day their children and one day their children, complete disregard, we want to spend it on ourselves now.

It's time to tell Greece, to tell everyone, let's hold hands and do this together, not jump over the cliff by spending good money after bad. Let's do it by not spending money we don't have. And there's no way a country would not be upgraded when S&P and the world see, these people are really serious about not spending more than they have coming in.

This is a brave country. They know how to make commitments. And that would get us back to having true freedom and not having the American citizens have to come begging to Congress. Please, please, throw us more morsels. Instead, Congress would be a body that inspired greatness and inspired potential again and wouldn't lure young women into the rut of having children out of wedlock because they're bored with high school. It would, instead, give them incentives and encouragement: Reach your potential; finish high school; go to college.

Let's have incentives not to stay out of work. Let's have incentives to get back to work. Let's have incentives to sell our products around the world. You do that by decreasing the tariff that we put on American-made goods by every American company. That would help get us on the road back to financial independence.

One other thing: When you have been blessed as the greatest country in the world when it comes to having your own energy, we ought to use it. We have it. We've been blessed with it. It's time to use it. And I would humbly suggest that this President get out of the way, stop preventing us from using our own energy, and allow us to become an independent and great Nation again.

With that, Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 6, 2011.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, U.S. Capitol, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on December 6, 2011 at 2:04 p.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 384.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

□ 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.