

campaign to raise awareness and money to stage the parade and a veterans' resource event to follow. The January 28 Group is partnering with St. Louis-based veterans service organizations, including The Mission Continues, which works to help veterans transfer their military leadership skills to civilian life.

They say Missouri is the "Show-Me" State, but this time the compassionate and patriotic people of St. Louis are showing the Nation just how quickly you can mobilize to give back to those who have given so much to our Nation.

I salute you all, and wish you success for the returning heroes parade at noon this coming Saturday, January 28, in downtown St. Louis.

CONSEQUENCES OF NOT HAVING A BUDGET

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, there are consequences of not having a budget. One of them is you don't make proper plans. How else can you explain the Obama administration going so long and crying so loudly, Gee, we can't find \$10 billion to cut, much less \$100 billion? We certainly aren't going to cut a trillion even though we increase spending by a trillion.

And we find out last week from the Obama OMB that there is \$687 billion sitting in accounts that's been appropriated. It's unobligated. It's unspent, sitting there, and they're still demanding more and more money.

America can't afford it. It's time to claw back the money before it's spent on other Solyndras and to give us a budget at the other end of the building.

CLEAN ENERGY IN MAINE

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

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk for a minute about some exciting developments in clean energy in my State of Maine.

Last week, Energy Secretary Chu released a report detailing the enormous potential for tidal energy off of U.S. coasts. There is enough there to meet up to one-third of our needs, and he singled out Maine, saying, "These resources can create new industries and new jobs in America."

He's right, and we're proving it. The Ocean Renewable Power Company of Portland is building a tidal power project in Maine that, if all goes as planned, will start producing clean, American-made electricity as early as this summer.

Meanwhile, we're welcoming one of the biggest energy companies in the world to our State. Statoil from Norway is considering a pilot project of large-scale wind turbines that would produce clean electricity while floating out of view off our coast. Experts say

up to 15,000 jobs can be created in my State by offshore wind, good-paying American jobs that will help us regain our energy independence.

This is good news off our coast, Mr. Speaker, for Maine and our country.

VISION OF AN AMERICA BUILT TO LAST

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

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, the President will deliver the State of the Union tonight. I expect to hear his vision of an America built to last.

Mr. Speaker, let's listen together. Let's remember together. We must remember how and why we are the greatest Nation in the world. We must remember those American values that built this Nation. We must remember how, in building this Nation, the middle class emerged and how they are our backbone and how they are our foundation.

Hard work, pride, and being a just and fair Nation is what makes us great. Let us look to the past. Remember its lessons to build the future.

FUTURE OF MIDDLE CLASS

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, the State of the Union address tonight is going to be very important, and I agree with President Obama that this is a make-or-break moment for the middle class and those trying to reach it.

And what's at stake is the very survival of the basic American promise that if you work hard, you can do well enough to raise a family, own a home, and put a little bit away for retirement. We can either settle for a country where a shrinking number of people do really well while more Americans barely get by, or we can build a Nation where everyone gets a fair shot, he says, everyone does their fair share and everyone plays by the same rules.

We found out today that, especially when it comes to taxes, there really are different rules for the rich. Mitt Romney released his taxes. He made \$42 million over the last 2 years and paid at about a 14.5 percent rate because most of his income is in capital gains.

Look at the tax brackets. If you make \$8,500 as a single person, you're in a 15-percent tax bracket. Is that fair? I don't think so.

AMERICANS LIVING ON EDGE TODAY

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

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Too many of our fellow Americans are living on the

edge today and have been for far too long. The last thing they need is another showdown at the Not-OK Corral.

They need jobs. They need to save or go back into their homes. And for those who have been living in poverty or those who used to be in the middle class but are now struggling to survive below the poverty level, they need us to help provide the opportunity to help lift them and their families out of poverty and to a better life. Our President is coming to us tonight to again offer us some opportunities to do all of these things and more and to restore our country's economic health.

So let's not put our fellow Americans through another cliffhanger on things that are important to their well-being. Let us pass the payroll and unemployment insurance extension, fix the Medicare payment issue without drama, and come together to work on the bipartisan measures that the President will ask us to pass for our people and our country.

INCLUDE PUERTO RICO IN SSI PROGRAM

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

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced legislation that would extend the SSI program to Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, and Guam.

SSI provides cash assistance to blind, disabled, or elderly individuals who have limited or no income. Although SSI applies in the States, it does not apply in Puerto Rico, which instead receives a block grant to assist its most vulnerable residents.

Of all the disparities that Puerto Rico faces because of its territory status, this is perhaps the most harmful. Puerto Rico's annual grant is about \$35 million. By contrast, the Nation's poorest State, with almost 1 million fewer residents, received over \$740 million in SSI funding in 2010.

While in the States beneficiaries receive about \$500 each month, Puerto Rico residents receive only \$70. Residents of Puerto Rico are American citizens, but when it comes to SSI, their citizenship is second class.

I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will support this bill.

□ 1230

RETURN "SESAME STREET" TO PALESTINIAN AIRWAVES

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I brought a friend to the floor with me today. As we all know, this is Elmo. This guy taught us our 1, 2, 3s, but he also taught us tolerance and understanding. For the past several years, he's been doing the same thing for children in the Palestinian territories. Because of "Sesame Street" in Palestine,

Palestinian kids grow up with the same positive role models as we did.

But recently, “Sesame Street” has been off the air. Now Palestinian kids are left watching Farfour. This is Farfour right here. He’s a mouse who is the main character of a Hamas TV show. Instead of tolerance and understanding, Farfour promotes violence and anti-Semitism.

This Congress approved funding for “Sesame Street” in Palestine last year, but because of the position of certain individuals in Congress, that means the money is being held up. There’s no Elmo, but there is Farfour, trafficking and teaching extremism.

I’m not the only one who wants Congress to release the funding. Even the Israeli Government wants it released. Let’s get good funding to the people of Palestine so that they can grow and strengthen their own society. Let the funding flow and give something for Farfour to compete with—Elmo.

CHALLENGING US TO DO OUR BEST

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome our colleague, Congresswoman GABRIELLE GIFFORDS, GABBY GIFFORDS, back home to this House, a place that she served ably and is serving ably today, to thank her for her courage and to thank her for accepting the challenge of what an American hero is. Many have called her that; for in the course of this enormous tragedy, she stood tall and still continues to do that today.

I want to thank the medical professionals, the emergency medical professionals, and many in Houston, Texas, TIRR, one of the best renowned rehabilitation hospitals in the world.

But most of all, as Congresswoman GIFFORDS comes back, let us give as a gift, both on behalf of the American people and this Congress, that we can work together to improve the lives of all Americans. That I believe would be her challenge, and that would be her call. As she comes back today, serving the people of Arizona and serving the American people, we want to say: Thank you, Congresswoman, for your courage and for being a model for the American people and challenging us to do the best.

IMPROVING OUR ECONOMY

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

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, in 9 hours the President will stand on this podium behind me to deliver the State of the Union address. I remember the first time he did that. I sat in this Chamber as one of our colleagues called the new President a liar. And that was not the low mark in the partisanship that has earned this institution its historically

low approval ratings by the American public.

We’ll be sitting in bipartisan fashion today, and I guess that’s good; but let’s make it something more than symbolic. Let’s think in our responses to this speech what is in this speech that we can find common ground to get done.

I have a suggestion. I don’t care if you’re a Republican or Democrat, northern or southern, rich or poor, you need roads. You need railways, you need a good electrical grid for your economy to flourish. We’re going to invest the money in those things at some point to fix them to be world leaders. Why not do it soon? Why not do it soon when it would help our economy and help millions of out-of-work Americans go to work with dignity. Improving our infrastructure is the way to improve our economy.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL PRAYER ACT OF 2011

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2070) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to install in the area of the World War II Memorial in the District of Columbia a suitable plaque or an inscription with the words that President Franklin D. Roosevelt prayed with the Nation on June 6, 1944, the morning of D-day, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2070

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “World War II Memorial Prayer Act of 2011”.

SEC. 2. PLACEMENT OF PLAQUE OR INSCRIPTION AT WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL.

The Secretary of the Interior—

(1) shall install in the area of the World War II Memorial in the District of Columbia a suitable plaque or an inscription with the words that President Franklin D. Roosevelt prayed with the Nation on June 6, 1944, the morning of D-Day;

(2) shall design, procure, prepare, and install the plaque or inscription referred to in paragraph (1); and

(3) may not use Federal funds to prepare or install the plaque or inscription referred to in paragraph (1), but may accept and expend private contributions for this purpose.

SEC. 3. COMMEMORATIVE WORKS ACT.

Chapter 89 of title 40, United States Code, (commonly known as the “Commemorative Works Act”) shall not apply to this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON) and the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Today, I rise in support of legislation that I sponsored, the World War II Memorial Prayer Act of 2011.

This legislation directs the Secretary of the Interior to install at the World War II Memorial a suitable plaque or an inscription with the words that President Franklin Roosevelt prayed with the Nation on the morning of the D-day invasion.

This prayer, which has been entitled “Let Our Hearts Be Stout,” gave solace, comfort and strength to our Nation and our brave warriors as we fought against tyranny and oppression. The memorial was built to honor the 16 million who served in the Armed Forces of the United States during World War II and the more than 400,000 who died during the war.

Prior to introducing the legislation, I spoke to many World War II veterans in Ohio and asked them if they thought putting this prayer on the memorial would be appropriate. The answer was a resounding yes.

Furthermore, the Nation’s largest service organization, the American Legion, is supportive of this legislation. The American Legion in a support letter said that this legislation would bolster the meaning of the memorial and would also give strength and encouragement to future generations.

It seems to me that if the remaining veterans of World War II are supportive of the prayer being added, we as a country should honor that request.

Unfortunately, the administration and the Department of the Interior don’t think it’s that easy. Last year, the Department of the Interior testified before the Natural Resources Committee that this legislation would “necessarily dilute the central message of the memorial.” Now, I don’t know how the administration came to this position because I don’t see how a non-denominational prayer that gave solace and comfort and strength to our Nation during one of the most pivotal days of World War II and one of the most memorable days in our Nation’s history would dilute the central message of the memorial. In fact, I think it would do exactly the opposite and