

dead, that at least one party in Washington and a majority of the country still believe that the Constitution means what it says, and that there are limits on the power of Congress and of the executive branch.

I'm energized and hopeful for the future of this great Republic as I see these events unfold this week, and I'm reminded of the observation of President Reagan:

I hope we once again have reminded people that man is not free unless government is limited. There's a clear cause and effect here that is as neat and predictable as a law of physics: as government expands, liberty contracts.

THE HOUSE REPUBLICAN BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today the clock is ticking here in Congress and especially on the floor of the House where people around the country would like to be preparing for the next construction season. Indeed, the most important action for the economy, for job creation, and for strengthening the livability of our communities might well be enacting the Surface Transportation Act. Sadly, so far, the news has not been good.

Later today, we debate the House Republican budget, which would slash infrastructure funding to a level less than is required simply to meet obligations for contracts that we've already entered into with people that are building roads, bridges, and transit systems. And we have an obligation to them. They're down that path and the budget sadly would not even allow the Federal Government to meet its partnership obligation.

There's more bad news as we see the Republican leadership can't come to grips with what would be required to move the transportation authorization bill forward. Last month, they offered up what has been characterized as the worst transportation bill in history. It was partisan, and it was unbalanced. It would have overturned two decades of transportation reform, undercut transit and the vital enhancement programs that communities have used to improve the quality of life and stretch their transportation resources. It even attacked bike and pedestrian programs, eliminating Safe Routes to School for our children.

Well, luckily, it collapsed under its own weight. They were afraid to even have a hearing on it before it came to the floor, and then they found out that there wasn't an opportunity to pass it. The support wasn't there in the face of united opposition around the country from people who care about transportation. At the same time, the Senate has given us a balanced and bipartisan bill. Seventy-four Members of the other body voted for it and passed it over to us.

I would hope that there is time for us to stop playing partisan ideological games with this vital transportation bill. The headlines that the Republican maneuvering has done is an embarrassment to Speaker BOEHNER and to Chairman MICA. But not just to the Republican leadership; it's an embarrassment to the House.

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I'm sorry that my Republican friends and colleagues can't seem to agree amongst themselves about a path forward. They cannot get 218 Republican votes for any bill, even the Speaker's proposal. The good news is they don't have to. There are 435 Members of the House. If they would work in a bipartisan basis, as we have done in the past, we can stop this short-term roulette; we can give the construction industry, local government, and people in the private and public sector the certainty they need for not just this construction cycle, but the next construction cycle. We can put tens of thousands of people to work, bolster the economy, and do what Congress needs to do, what Congress has done always until this point.

I hope the Republican leadership, before we leave this week, will at least allow the bipartisan Senate bill to come to the floor to be voted on. I'm confident that a majority will support it, and we'll meet our obligations to keep America moving and the economy growing.

ALL-OF-THE-ABOVE ENERGY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, all-of-the-above energy. It's a plan first introduced by House Republicans when gas prices spiked during the summer of 2008. For the 2 years prior, congressional Democrats were following a green energy plan only, doing their best to completely eliminate the traditional forms of energy like petroleum, natural gas, and coal that account for 83 percent of our energy consumption.

When President Obama took office in 2009, he took up their flag and began pushing for his controversial cap-and-trade law that even he admitted would mean electricity rates would necessarily skyrocket. He appointed an Energy Secretary that admitted on national TV that he wanted our gas prices at European levels. Well, they're both on their way. Since then, energy costs have doubled, gas prices have skyrocketed, and we are in a crisis in this country when it comes to our energy use.

Just as we saw in the summer of 2008, when these gasoline prices spiked and our energy costs rose, the price of everything else is soon to follow. When his cap-and-trade bill failed to get enough support in a Democratic-controlled Congress, he set out to have the

EPA basically regulate the bill into law.

Over the last 3 years, the EPA has issued some of the most costly regulations on power plants in their history. By 2016, the Utility MACT regulation is expected to cost \$9.6 billion annually in direct costs, and some analysts estimate its total indirect costs closer to \$100 billion. The Cross-State Air Pollution Rule is expected to impact over 1,000 power plants across the country, and, by the EPA's own estimates, it's estimated to cost \$2.8 billion annually.

With no business experience in this administration, I don't think they realize that when the cost of doing business goes up, business prices go up; and that affects every hardworking American taxpayer at the pump. When he turns on a light at home, when he buys a loaf of bread, when he goes to buy a U.S.-manufactured product, it costs.

According to the President's own Commerce Department, the Boiler MACT regulation in itself is expected to cost between 40,000 and 60,000 jobs. The impact of these regulations is already being felt. Last month, two utility companies announced the closing of 10 of their power plants as a direct result of some of the strict new regulations—another move that will raise the price of electricity for consumers.

Yet it seemed as though the President had finally come around when he said in his State of the Union speech earlier this year, right here in this room: This country needs an all-out all-of-the-above energy strategy that develops every available resource of American energy.

It's not often that I agree with the President, but at that point I did.

Unfortunately, the President hasn't stayed true to his words. In fact, just yesterday the EPA announced their latest set of regulations that will effectively ban the building of any new coal-fired power plants by dramatically decreasing carbon dioxide emissions.

Whether the President and environmentalists like it or not, coal currently accounts for almost half of the electricity generated in this country. Effectively eliminating coal-fired power plants is only going to increase the cost of electricity to American families.

We can no longer allow the White House to say one thing and do another when it comes to energy. If the President truly supports the Republican all-of-the-above energy strategy as he claimed he did, then he needs to follow through.

It's time we start to take advantage of all of the God-given natural resources this country has and to have American-made energy, American-made power that will power this Nation.

U.S.-AFGHANISTAN POLICY IN SHAMBLES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from

California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, the situation in Afghanistan is as bleak as I can remember at any point in the last 10½ years that we've been at war.

In recent months, we've seen the burning of the Koran by American troops, a video of soldiers urinating on bodies of dead Afghans, spontaneous riots in the Afghan streets protesting the continued U.S. occupation, as well as deadly attacks by Afghan soldiers on the U.S. and NATO forces that are there to help and to train them.

And now, in the most grotesque tragedy imaginable, 2 weeks ago a U.S. staff sergeant left his base, walked more than a mile to an Afghan village outside Kandahar, going door-to-door and systematically gunning down 17 civilians.

The New York Times reported that one Afghan farmer was visiting a nearby town for the day and returned home to find that his wife, four sons, and four daughters had all been murdered in the attack. And here's the irony: According to the Times' account, because the Taliban still lingered in the area, the farmer had been concerned about moving his family back to this part of southern Afghanistan last year, but he was reassured by the very fact that he would be near an American military base.

With these latest atrocities, how can we expect President Karzai, a reluctant ally under the best of circumstances, to continue to cooperate? How do we expect to convince the Taliban to come to the negotiating table for a peace and reconciliation settlement? And most importantly, after this incident, how do we convince the people of Afghanistan that we are their friends, that our presence in their country is a force for good?

Staff Sergeant Robert Bales will be tried for these unspeakable crimes, but I also think any responsibility analysis would conclude that he is also a victim of the war. He was on his fourth deployment. He clearly suffered from posttraumatic stress disorder, or even worse, mental health affliction. He clearly had no business being on active duty.

Mr. Speaker, more than a decade of war is weakening and wreaking havoc with the bodies and minds of our servicemembers. Staff Sergeant Bales will be held to account. But what about the cruel and unforgiving war machine that absolutely has to bear some responsibility? When are we going to finally set warfare aside and embrace a SMART Security approach?

Yesterday, 80 retired top military leaders took out an ad in Politico calling for robust investment in development, diplomacy, and other civilian efforts that will do a lot more than military force to keep America safe. And yet the Republican budget we'll debate later today cuts that very foreign aid in humanitarian programs.

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When will we learn, Mr. Speaker? How bad does it have to get?

Our Afghanistan policy is an absolute shambles, and the American people know it. The latest polling shows more than two-thirds, 69 percent, believe we shouldn't be waging this war.

This is the moment we must realize that this mission has no hope of succeeding, that the only humane and responsible course is to end the war at once. This is the moment, finally, after all the tragedy and mayhem, to bring our troops home.

STOP MILITARY RAPE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise again to highlight the epidemic of sexual assault and rape in the military.

Next week will mark the 1-year anniversary of my first floor speech on this issue. That day, I told the story of Technical Sergeant Mary Gallagher, who was raped by a coworker while deployed in Iraq. The week leading up to the rape, Sergeant Gallagher's assailant harassed her, stalked her, and attempted to break into her room.

Though she twice reported the assailant's threatening behavior, her command did nothing about it. They called it a "he said-she said" scenario. Justice was not served.

I've told the story of Army Specialist Blake Stephens, who was consistently assaulted and sexually harassed by the men in his unit. He reported the harassment to command, but no action was taken. Fellow servicemembers later sodomized him with a bottle; and the only punishment his assailants received was extra pushups. Justice was not served.

Last week, I told the story of Marine Lieutenant Elle Helmer, who reported repeated sexual harassment by superiors, to no avail. The Marine Corps did absolutely nothing in response to the harassment. Lieutenant Helmer was later raped by another superior whose behavior went unpunished.

Her command ultimately told her, "You're tough. You need to pick yourself up and dust yourself off. I can't babysit you all of the time. No justice was served."

Mary, Blake and Elle, like so many victims I've heard from, paint a picture of a military culture that treats sexual harassment and assault with silent acceptance, a culture that punishes victims for reporting the crimes committed against them.

The military refutes this; yet evidence suggests just the reverse. The "Hurt Feelings Report" that stands beside me is a repugnant example of how rape and sexual assault has been trivialized, and how a victim was mocked in the military.

It was supposed to be satire. The "report" was posted on the Facebook page

of a female captain in charge of the Marine Barracks Protocol Office just a few months ago. It mocks fellow marines who file sexual assault complaints with a list of "Reasons for filing this report," which include options such as:

"I'm a little b——."

"I'm a little p——."

"I'm a cry baby."

And "I want my mommy."

And what did the head of protocol do when she saw this document? Did she report or punish the people who made it? Did she tell them there is zero tolerance for this behavior?

No, she didn't do anything of the sort. In fact, the head of protocol wrote this caption to the image on her Facebook page: "My marines crack me up."

It's no wonder that only 13 percent of victims of rape and assault are brave enough to report the crimes committed against them. The "Hurt Feelings Report" and the Facebook response convey a toxic culture when it comes to sexual harassment, assault, stalking and rape. Victims have been told to "get over it," or told that they were "asking for it" based on the way they dress.

One year ago, I promised to tell the stories of servicemembers who survived rape and sexual assault while in the military. I said then, and I promise you now, that I will tell their stories until meaningful action is taken to eliminate the chasm between the number of estimated sexual assaults and the number of prosecuted sexual assaults.

I urge survivors to email me at stopmilitaryrape@mail.house.gov if they want to speak up.

THE DEATH OF TRAYVON MARTIN IS AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, the death of Trayvon Martin is, indeed, an American tragedy. Too often this violent act that resulted in the murder of Trayvon Martin is repeated in the streets of our Nation.

I applaud the young people all across the land who are making a statement about hoodies, about the real hoodlums in this Nation, particularly those who tread on our laws wearing official or quasi-official clothes.

Racial profiling has to stop, Mr. Speaker. Just because someone wears a hoodie does not make them a hoodlum.

The Bible teaches us, Mr. Speaker, in the book of Micah 6:68—

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend.

Mr. RUSH. These words:

He has shown you, O man—

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend. The Chair must remind Members of clause 5 of rule XVII. The gentleman is out of order.

Mr. RUSH. What is good. What does the Lord require of you? To do justly