

and see the space shuttle flying around the United States Capitol on its way to Dulles, which brought back memories. Certainly those who study history realize that back in the '60s it was President Kennedy who said that the United States will take a man, deliver him to the Moon, and bring him safely back to the Earth. Consequently, the space race took off at that point in time and literally hundreds of thousands of people became more engaged in science and technology, engineering and mathematics, something that I think that we need to rekindle today.

Mr. Speaker, I represent one of the largest manufacturing districts in the United States; and when I tour small businesses throughout the 10th District of Illinois, employers continually tell me that they have got job openings available, yet they can't find people, individuals, workers, able to fill those roles, roles that need to be filled by those who have taken science and technology, engineering and mathematics courses, or the STEM fields.

In the depths of this recession that we have been going through, manufacturing associations have statistics that say 600,000 jobs across our Nation went unfilled. They went unfilled because not enough people were trained in the STEM fields. These are not low-paying jobs, Mr. Speaker. These jobs, on average, pay \$77,000 annually. We must empower our students and job-seekers to pursue STEM education so that they can fill these good high-paying jobs right here at home.

Certainly one of the pillars of my Main Street Jobs Agenda is that of STEM education. If we can prepare our students and those who are looking for work, we can help empower these people to find good-paying jobs and keep our manufacturing and innovation right here at home.

The College of Lake County, a college in my district, has teamed up with local manufacturers to help provide education, education that is necessary in the STEM fields for those who are unemployed or wanting to pursue a manufacturing career.

I am pleased to say that one of the local manufacturers actually went to the College of Lake County and said we're actually pulling students from Iowa and Ohio, is there any way you might be able to offer courses here at the College of Lake County so that we could start hiring people locally to fill these jobs. They were all too happy to oblige.

I recently held a STEM field trip where I took interested students from high schools all across the 10th District to different high-tech organizations in the region. These students learn how they can apply their education firsthand and pursue advanced careers in this field.

Just last week, I hosted the first-ever Manufacturing and Education Summit to bridge the gap between educators and manufacturers. We had folks from high schools and colleges. We had man-

ufacturers there trying to say what it was that they needed, what were they looking for in students who were going to be graduating from either high school or college. This is exactly what we need to be doing right now.

One of the success stories of bridging the gap between education and manufacturing is that of Wheeling High School principal Dr. Laz Lopez. He has worked with local businesses to find out what the actual needs are in the community and offering students options in pursuing a STEM education.

Today, Dr. Lopez has been recognized as starting one of the most successful STEM high schools in our country. Just this last Friday, I joined him and other STEM students from various high schools around the area while they competed in a STEM competition, focusing on nanotechnology and high-powered computing. These are extraordinarily bright students who are better prepared for the 21st-century workforce.

STEM education is and should be a bipartisan idea. I believe that this is an area of common ground and that we should be promoting local efforts all across our Nation to help manufacturers fill open jobs and better prepare our emerging workforce for 21st-century careers. We must not stand idly by and hope that this happens. Rather, we must be proactive and work to spur our local economy by demonstrating the success of STEM education.

Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics is one way we can help spur our economy to get our country back to work. I would encourage my colleagues to get involved in their local schools and communities, local colleges, to find out more on how they can better prepare students for a career in the 21st century through STEM education.

It was not too long ago that John Kennedy gave us a charge to bring a man to the Moon and safely back to this Earth, spurring on STEM education. We have to do it again today. We have to make sure that we have that pipeline of students to be able to make jobs right here at home.

□ 1050

ISSUES FACING THIS CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I join my colleague that just spoke on the vitality and the importance of STEM education. As a 12-year member of the Science Committee, I also had a sense of emotion as Discovery flew many times over this great democratic institution. That emotion compels me to continue to fight for a place for one of the shuttles in the hometown where it was born, the place where John F. Kennedy spoke at the Rice Hotel and inspired us to go into space, and that is Houston, Texas, NASA-Johnson. I look

forward to that continued bipartisan effort to have an appropriate representation of the four shuttles back in Houston, where they belong.

I rise today as well to speak about a number of things. I believe it's important for my colleagues to sort of look at a series of issues. I support the Buffett Rule, not because I believe in any kind of class warfare. I celebrate capitalism and applaud Mr. Buffett and others. But it is a good way to raise revenue and bring down the deficit.

We, of course, will be dealing with a bill proposed by my Republican friends on the other side of the aisle. The only thing that they will do is enhance the pocket money of people who don't need it. There is an unfairness in the Tax Code. I would join in a bipartisan way to look at it. In making the Tax Code fair, I would hope that we would be able to bring down the deficit. But the bill that we will see, as I said, will increase the pocket change of millionaires. It will be a job killer. And, of course, it will cut the Medicare guarantees of those who have worked hard for their children and grandchildren. I cannot support legislation that isn't fair and balanced. I would plead to my colleagues to find the middle ground—a fair Tax Code, bringing down the deficit.

I would encourage them to look at H.R. 3710, an energy bill. I have practiced oil and gas law for 15 years. It addresses the question of the wetlands, it uses exploration dollars to bring down the deficit, and it allows expanded exploration in the gulf region, a process that has been vetted by many energy organizations, energy companies, and they believe that is a bipartisan approach. H.R. 3710 is ready for the combined work of all of us.

I also believe it's important to speak about the value of education in several ways. And I'm here today to join in H.R. 3826, proudly so, that stands with students who now carry the bulk of the debt in America—credit debt. These are students who are simply trying to, as my colleague just said, study science, technology, engineering, and math. In about 74 days, the interest rates on Stafford loans will triple to 6.8 percent. You may have borrowed at 2 percent, and here we are talking about it going up to 6.8 percent. I, with every fiber in my body, stand against that. I'm going to stand with the students and parents who have children in school. We can win this thing. We must have a legislative action to stop that stealing of money from our children, who are simply trying to be in the best colleges, the State colleges, and to be educated.

Parents, wake up. In 74 days, the interest rate on your children's loans is going up to 6.8 percent. Call our offices, get on our Web sites, and beg us to pass H.R. 3826 by my good friend Mr. COURTNEY from Connecticut. Please, I beg of you. And I will be there with you. From Texas Southern University to the University of Houston to Houston Baptist to the Houston Community College, we're going to work on this.

Let me also move very quickly, Mr. Speaker, to the fact that this is the fifth-year commemoration of the terrible killings at Texas Tech. This Congress has been charged with being fearful of dealing with gun legislation. Over the years, I have introduced the Child Gun Safety and Gun Access Prevention bill. I have, in fact, supported bills dealing with gun checks and to close gun loopholes at gun shows. I have supported bills to stop the proliferation of assault weapons. Not bills against the Second Amendment, but bills that would have stopped Mr. Zimmerman from recklessly walking around with a 9 millimeter, and he was only supposed to be the eyes and ears of his neighborhood.

Mr. Speaker, I join in a bipartisan manner, even to the extent of saying we must clean up the Secret Service—I support Mr. SULLIVAN—and even clean up the GSA, because Gilbane, which has received stimulus dollars from the GSA, has refused to be diverse. To the CEO of Gilbane, this Congressperson you need to call. You are an unfair company, and you're using Federal dollars from the GSA in an inappropriate way. No diverse workforce, and no small businesses.

STAFF SERGEANT JOSEPH D'AUGUSTINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today with heavy heart and sadness as we honor another fallen soldier and the life and legacy of Staff Sergeant Joseph D'Augustine, a young man from Waldwick, New Jersey. Staff Sergeant D'Augustine was killed on March 27, 2012, while conducting combat operations in Afghanistan.

It was just 1 day after graduating from Waldwick High School in 2001 that this young man enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. He was assigned to the 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 2nd Marine Logistics Group, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force. He served two tours of duty in Iraq, and was just 2 weeks away from completing his second tour of duty in Afghanistan.

Staff Sergeant D'Augustine worked as an explosive ordnance disposal tech. What does that mean? That means that he went ahead of the other soldiers, marines, and airmen and was the one that cleared the way for them so they could go on and do their work. And so it was with this greatest act of sacrifice possible that Staff Sergeant D'Augustine gave his life while protecting his fellow men and women in uniform. He was just 29 years old.

We're never going to know the number of lives that he was able to save in his work. But the tremendous outpouring of love and support that we have seen for his family in the days since his death perhaps provided a glimpse into the number of people that he touched in his short life.

To those people who knew him best—his parents, Anthony and Patricia; his three sisters, Nicole, Jennifer, and Michele; and to his brother-in-law, Len—he will be remembered as a loving son and brother. To his many friends that he grew up with in high school, he will be remembered as a good guy and friend by the nickname “Daggo.” To his fellow marines, he will be remembered as a faithful brother in arms. And to all of us here who just may be hearing his name for the first time—to America—he will be remembered as a patriot who loved his country, the Marine Corps, and as a man who gave his life for all of us by protecting our freedoms and our liberties in this country. Let us remember this young man.

The Marine Corps motto is *Semper Fidelis*—always faithful. Staff Sergeant D'Augustine lived this motto. He was faithful to his country; he was faithful to the mission; he was faithful to the Corps, and he was faithful to his fellow Marines.

In times such as this, words fail to provide adequate comfort to his family and friends. But it is my hope that they know that the prayers and gratitude of a nation are with them.

We will always remember the price of freedom paid by Staff Sergeant D'Augustine, and may we determine to live our lives worthy of his sacrifice.

□ 1100

POVERTY IN AMERICA

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

Ms. LEE of California. As cofounder and cochair of the Congressional Out of Poverty Caucus, I rise today to continue talking about the tide of poverty that impacts every single district all across our country. I rise to call on all of my colleagues to come together to reignite the American Dream for all Americans by helping to create the millions of new jobs that they so desperately need.

Mr. Speaker, Social Security, Medicare and the critical benefits to feed hungry children in America did not cause our deficits. Our Nation's debt is a direct result of the Republicans' two unfunded wars, their failed economic policies, and the totally failed oversight of the financial services sector by the Bush administration regulators. And giving more tax cuts to the super-rich and their corporations will only make the deficits worse and will do nothing to grow our economy.

Mr. Speaker, let's not pass another \$46 billion loophole for the wealthy 1 percent. Mr. CANTOR's H.R. 9 is yet another tax holiday that would only increase the deficit and will fail to create new jobs. We should be passing laws that protect the health and safety of our Nation's most vulnerable, like our children and our seniors. And we must pass laws that provide some relief for the millions of Americans still struggling to find a good job. Mr. Speaker, any so-called “jobless recovery” where

you and your family are still out of work is really no recovery at all. That is why we simply cannot seek to balance the budget on the backs of the poor, our seniors, and struggling families across America.

The Republican budget, the Ryan budget, seeks to do just that. Actually, the Republican budget really is not serious about balancing the budget at all. Their budget guts, mind you, guts food stamps for our families in a time of such desperate need, it cripples Medicaid and ends Medicare as we know it today. Their budgets make these draconian cuts not to balance the budget but to create even more tax giveaways to millionaires and to massive corporations.

Mr. Speaker, we can do better than blame the poor and the powerless for the greed and the corruption of the rich and powerful. We can do better, and we must do better for all of the American people. We can protect the most vulnerable Americans, grow our economy, and reduce our deficits. Critical programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, better known as SNAP, not only feeds hungry children and families, but it supports the overall economy. Every dollar of SNAP benefits generates \$1.84 in our economic activity. SNAP benefits reduce long-term health care costs, improve the educational performance of children, and help to stabilize and improve the long-term economic outcomes of the families who receive these benefits. All of those positive outcomes help boost the entire economy from top to bottom.

If people are able to buy a little more in the grocery store, someone has to grow it, pack it, and ship it. All of those things lead directly to more jobs. So making cuts on struggling families during hard times is not only heartless, mean and immoral, but it also makes no sense because it doesn't reduce the deficit.

Mr. Speaker, there is a proposal to get our fiscal house in order even while we protect American families and invest in a stronger and more prosperous future. The Congressional Progressive Caucus budget, the Budget for All, would do just that. This budget makes smart and targeted cuts that preserve our national security, protect Social Security and Medicare, and extends and expands critical unemployment benefits for millions of Americans, including those who have hit 99 weeks where they are no longer eligible. These are the people who are still struggling to find a good job.

The Budget for All would ask that the wealthiest 1 percent and the world's biggest corporations pay their fair share so that we can afford to invest in our children's future and grow our economy.

America cannot afford another year of inaction and bills that pander to narrow special interests. Let's pass the President's American Jobs Act and pass a robust transportation bill that