

the Holocaust heroes and martyrs—those who fought and those who resisted; those who survived and those who perished.

In Israel, the day is marked with the piercing wail of sirens that stops traffic and calls the nation to attention. Those sirens evoke the cries of loss, the cries of families torn asunder, the cries for vibrant Jewish communities reduced to memories and the cries of resolve that the State of Israel exists today as haven for Jews fleeing persecution.

In the United States, Yom Hashoah is observed with events in cities and states around the country. This week, the L.A. Museum of the Holocaust held a Walk of Remembrance and a day of activities at its memorial in Pan Pacific Park.

In Washington, DC, Yom Hashoah is commemorated as part of the Days of Remembrance sponsored by U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC.

This year, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum's events have the theme, "Choosing to Act: Stories of Rescue." It is especially appropriate as we mark the 100th birthday of Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish Diplomat who used his post to save as many as 100,000 Hungarian Jews. His legacy is profound and this nation is proud to have made him an honorary citizen of the United States. With the Raoul Wallenberg Centennial Celebration Act that passed the House this week, he is also one of the next awardees of the Congressional Gold Medal of Honor.

Jewish tradition teaches that for one who saves a life, it is as if they have saved the whole world.

People like Wallenberg, Irena Sendler, Miep Gies and the thousands of others recognized by Yad Vashem as "Righteous Among the Nation" risked their lives over and over again for the Jewish people they saved. In doing so, they restored humanity in a place where there was no value for human life. They brought dignity to a time in history that is measured in shame. They helped save the world from being eclipsed by the evil of Nazism.

It is an honor to rise and pay tribute to the survivors of the Holocaust, the rescuers, and the liberators. At a time when fewer and fewer survivors are alive to tell their stories, we must all bear witness to their tremendous legacy.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to solemnly recognize Holocaust Remembrance Day—Yom Hashoah. This date marks the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, when thousands of Polish Jews, faced with deportation and certain death, launched the first urban-uprising in Nazi-occupied Europe.

Surprised by the makeshift, yet effective, resistance they encountered, German troops systematically leveled the ghetto building-by-building and killed or deported to death camps tens of thousands of innocent men, women and children. We look back with sadness at the terror and despair these victims must have felt and with admiration at the courage and strength they summoned. And from their heroics, we are called to remember how much we lost, as well as what we gained, from this unprecedented tragedy.

The Nazi killing machine slaughtered millions of people—law-abiding and productive members of society—because they were Jewish. We will never know what scientific discoveries these people or their children would have made, what businesses they would have started, what books they would have written,

what music they would have composed and what trophies they would have won. Their loss has left a void not only in Europe, but throughout the world, and our lives are diminished because of it.

Let us honor the memory of those who perished in the Holocaust by remembering their suffering and bravery, standing by our friend and ally Israel, and fighting for justice and peace.

#### ANTIETAM NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD MEMORIAL ILLUMINATION

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

Mr. BARTLETT. Mr. Speaker, Baltimore, Maryland, was site of the first blood that was shed in our Civil War on April 19, 1861. The next year, on September 17, 1862, the bloodiest one-day military battle in America's history took place on farms along Antietam Creek near the small town of Sharpsburg in Washington County, Maryland.

The 24th Antietam National Battlefield Memorial Illumination will take place on Saturday, December 1, 2012. At twilight, 23,110 luminaries prepared by 1,400 volunteers will be lit, one for each soldier who fell there. Twenty thousand people will personally witness 23,110 individual lights not divided into camps, one Union, the other Confederate, but one unbroken formation across peaceful, rolling farmland on a silent winter night.

The first illumination in 1988 was spearheaded by Georgene Charles, the event's founder, who continues each year to coordinate this monumental effort. Local Girl and Boy Scouts, the Hagerstown-Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau, and others take pride in preparing North America's largest memorial illumination.

I highly recommend you make time to attend the 24th Antietam National Battlefield Memorial Illumination on December 1, 2012. It powerfully reminds us of the true costs of war and the sacrifices by generations of the members of our military and their families. It is a truly moving event. Please come.

□ 1430

#### TRIBUTE TO "HUMAN EVENTS"

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

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend a publication that has played a central role in shaping the ideas that have powered the conservative movement for decades.

Launched in 1944, Human Events is the Nation's oldest conservative newsweekly. In 1961, a rising star by the name of Ronald Reagan began reading Human Events. He enjoyed it so much that throughout his Presidency he would receive the very first issue each week hot off the presses.

Back in 1992, I was honored to serve as an intern for Human Events, where I worked closely with political editor John Gizzi, whom I consider a good friend. This week, Human Events relaunched its print edition with a new format and expanded Washington coverage.

Conservatives have long depended upon Human Events to carry out its mission, which is to analyze events through the eyes that favor limited constitutional government, local self-government, free enterprise, and individual freedom. That is a mission I wholeheartedly support.

I commend Human Events to you, Mr. Speaker, and to this entire body.

#### SMALL BUSINESS TAX CUT ACT

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

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, the House just passed H.R. 9, purporting to give a temporary tax cut to small businesses. I say "purporting" because it doesn't cut spending at the same time, and thus it merely shifts current taxes into the future. Once a dollar has been spent, it has already become a tax, taken either from today or from tomorrow to pay off deficits.

Nor does H.R. 9 do much to promote economic growth because it does little to reward new productivity at the margin. At best, it produces a 1-year sugar high until the bills come due.

Tax cuts without either spending reductions or real economic growth are an illusion. Real tax reform would permanently reduce the marginal tax rate for all businesses and cut government spending concurrently. This would encourage and reward growth, shift investment decisions from politicians to entrepreneurs, and not rob our economy of its future. I hope before the end of this session that we will do so.

#### PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, my name is KEITH ELLISON, and I will claim the time on behalf of the Progressive Caucus. This is the Progressive Caucus' moment where we come together and talk about our ideals, our values, the things that are critically important, we believe, to all Americans.

This week, I'm joined by two outstanding leaders in the Progressive Caucus and in the Congress and in America, HANK JOHNSON of Georgia and LYNN WOOLSEY of California. I want to invite both of my colleagues to jump in as they feel inspired to do so, but let me just set the groundwork a little bit.

This week, we saw a number of things occur. One of the things that we saw this week is the Buffett rule that

was taken up in the Senate. The Senate voted on the Buffett rule on a policy that requires millionaires and billionaires to pay the same tax rates as middle class families and working people.

I want to make it clear: we don't begrudge anybody for doing well; but we do believe, in a country as great as America, if you have been privileged enough to do well, that maybe you should do something for America. This wildly popular measure was filibustered and therefore defeated in the Senate. According to the CNN international poll, nearly three-fourths of Americans support the Buffett rule and believe it should be law. Despite this, Republicans in the Senate blocked the bill from even getting a majority vote.

I mention this particular situation this way as I begin our dialogue that we'll have tonight over the course of this hour because I think that this is emblematic of the problem that we're facing today. We're going to talk tonight about Citizens United; we'll talk about a lot of things. But one of the things that I think is emblematic of the problem we're facing here in the U.S. Congress today is that what the overwhelming majority of Americans want the overwhelming majority of Americans don't get, something like the Buffett rule. The reason why is the pernicious and corrosive effect of money in politics today.

So, we are the Progressive Caucus. We're honored to be before the American people today, Mr. Speaker. We are the caucus that, yes, will stand up for civil and human rights for all people without regard to your color, your culture, your sex, your gender, your sexual preference, your religion, wherever you were born—national origin. We believe that all Americans are valued and believe in liberty and justice for all.

Yes, the Progressive Caucus is the caucus that's going to say that if you work hard every day, you ought to be able to make enough money to feed your family in America. And, yes, we believe that if you've been able to be in this great country of ours and do well in this environment, you ought to do something, you ought to pay enough taxes so that the needs and the costs of our society can be paid for. And, absolutely, we believe we have a duty and obligation, a responsibility to the environment and our natural world.

Now, we're not ashamed to stand up for these values: peace, working-class prosperity and fairness, environmental sustainability, and civil and human rights for all people. We care about these things and we're going to. But today, we're going to discuss a number of issues, including the Buffett rule, Citizens United, ALEC, the budget, the Ryan budget, and a whole range of issues.

At this point I'm going to hand it over to my colleague and friend, LYNN WOOLSEY of California.

Ms. WOOLSEY. I'd like to thank the chairman of the Progressive Caucus for

bringing this together today to talk about what's so important to the people of the United States of America, our country, and in turn the world.

I want to say a few things about the Buffett rule just to fill out that discussion. There are some things we know: the Buffett rule is fiscally responsible. According to the Joint Committee on Taxation, the Buffett rule could reduce the deficit by anywhere from \$47 billion to \$162 billion over the next decade. The Buffett rule is widely supported, as the chairman just said. The Buffett rule would restore the principled fairness of the Tax Code because it ensures that millionaires can't game the system to pay a lower rate than middle class families.

Overwhelming majorities of Americans across the political spectrum believe millionaires should pay their fair share. An overwhelming 76 percent of Americans support increasing the taxes paid by people who make more than \$1 million per year, which includes 75 percent of Independents and 56 percent of Republicans.

□ 1440

The majority of millionaires themselves support the Buffett rule. In a recent poll of millionaires, an overwhelming 68 percent support the Buffett rule. Millionaires support the Buffett rule.

And remember, it's taxation above \$1 million and it's stepped up. It isn't the minute you hit \$1 million you're taxed at a much greater rate. It's over. From \$1 million up, the taxes will go up.

Seven thousand millionaires paid no individual income taxes in the year 2011. Seven thousand millionaires didn't pay any personal taxes in 2011. According to the Tax Policy Center, 7,000 millionaires—it was that tax center that told us that.

The Republican budget would shower even more tax breaks on millionaires while putting more of the burden on the middle-class families. While Democrats are fighting to restore fairness in the Tax Code, the Republican budget offers extreme right-wing alternatives—that's my opinion—that would shower millionaires and billionaires with tax breaks at the expense of the middle class, and that would further skew the system in favor of the wealthiest Americans.

So we've got a lot of statistics. We know the facts. We're ready to support the Buffett rule. Millionaires, themselves, support it. So the question is: Why can't we get the people we work with in the U.S. Congress to support the Buffett rule?

Mr. ELLISON. Well, I would say this to the gentlelady. You know, much of it has to do with the fact that we have a disproportionate percentage of wealthy interests. The fact is you've got money coming in, lobbyists paid for, campaign donations, all this stuff, and now we've got the onset of the super PAC and we have the Citizens United decision.

And if you ask yourself why can't we pass the Buffett rule, why can't we pass the public option, which is wildly popular, why can't we get environmental regulations we need to protect our lungs and our health and our Earth, why can't we do these things, and the reason why is because of the disproportionate corrosive effect of money in our government.

This is why earlier this week we were able to pass something, a Declaration for Democracy, which reads:

I declare my support for amending the Constitution of the United States to restore the rights of people undermined by Citizens United and related cases, to protect the integrity of our elections and limit the corrosive influence of money on the democratic process.

We have a lot of people who signed this particular document. But not just Members of Congress signed it. Some people who signed it were city council members, were community citizen activists. There are people from a broad cross section of American life, because they asked the same question you ask, Congresswoman WOOLSEY: Why can't we pass the Buffett rule? Why can't we pass environmental protections? Why can't we pass the public option? Why can't things that Americans want get through?

The reason they can't get through is because you've got the lobbyist money being poured in. You've got campaign donations here. You're about to see a whole plethora of ugly, nasty, divisive, corrosive attack ads in this upcoming Presidential election.

The bottom line is, if we get this money out, what will happen is that citizens' voices will emerge past the money. Citizens' voices will come up, and citizens will have their will reflected in the Congress more so.

It was an awesome lift to pick up health care, and we didn't even get all the things we wanted in there, but we got a lot of things we wanted.

But why didn't we get all the things we wanted even though they were popular? The corrosive, divisive effect of money.

I think the health care industry was putting in, like, \$14 million a day to lobby against the Affordable Care Act. And of course you know with all that kind of pushing and shoving and cajoling, it just gets incredibly difficult.

So I want to yield back to the gentleman from Georgia, who has some important information about a number of things.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. I'd first like to address, Congressman, the issue of taxes and fair taxes. Yesterday, or, actually, the day before yesterday, I stood with a group of "Fair Taxers," people who are recommending the fair tax as an alternative to our current system. And I stood with them and I spoke to them, told them that I was not there to endorse the fair tax; I was there to tell them that I believed that it was something that Congress should definitely study. We shouldn't just put it aside.

There's no doubt that we need fundamental tax reform in this country, and the fair tax is a vehicle to open the door for Congress to start reviewing other possibilities, including the fair tax, as a way of fixing our inherently unequal Tax Code. And our policies—if we can't pass the Buffett rule, which simply says that a millionaire would not pay a less effective rate than working people, and so, in other words, the maids and the butlers and everyone else who—the secretary—

Mr. ELLISON. The police officers.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Cops who patrol the area, the security guards—

Mr. ELLISON. Teachers, nurses.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.—that control the estate of these rich folks, the firefighters, ambulances that will come pick them up, they don't pay the same tax rates as those people.

And 70,000 of the millionaires in the country didn't pay a dime in income tax, and enjoying all of those benefits—police, fire. It's truly amazing to me that we are still not at the point in this country where we are willing to consider redoing our complicated Tax Code.

It's just ridiculous that it's not working. And we can't even pass a bill in this Congress which mandates that common people pay at a rate that is not in excess of those that the millionaires enjoy. That's just an issue of fairness. It's not fair. It's not right.

I would suggest to you, Congressman and Congresswoman, that perhaps the reason why we're seeing this kind of favorable treatment afforded to millionaires by this Congress is because almost half of the incoming freshmen, I understand, are millionaires. I think the figure is about 43 percent. And if someone can correct me on that, I'd stand corrected. But my information is 43 percent of the Tea Party freshmen are millionaires, and so they benefit from these laws, these trickle-down economics laws, and they've been enjoying them since 1980. That's when voodoo economics, as George Herbert Walker Bush called it, trickle-down economics, voodoo economics, or whatever you want to call it, it has not worked. But we still have proposals today to make it work.

And it's evident by what we did today, with a \$46 billion tax cut for what's called "small businesses," but, actually, a small business with 500 employees, when we only have about 1,000 businesses in the country with 1,000 or more employees. So we're actually talking about big business when we talk about 500 employees.

It's a one-time, 1-year, \$46 billion tax cut that they get, according to this legislation that we passed today, and it's totally unpaid for.

□ 1450

Ms. WOOLSEY. I want to add a couple of things about the Buffett rule. There is so much to talk about that, I'm sure, our C-SPAN viewers and probably most of the Members of Congress really don't realize.

The 400 highest-earning Americans in 2008, who made an average each of \$271 million, paid an average effective Federal tax rate of just 18.1 percent. At the same time, a married couple earning \$70,000 a year paid a rate of 25 percent. Is that just unbelievable?

Mr. ELLISON. Amazing.

Ms. WOOLSEY. The Buffett rule seeks to restore balance to families, and the Tax Code would make sure that no millionaire would pay a lower tax rate than middle class Americans. In fact, the Buffett rule is targeted. The legislation will only impact taxpayers with a taxable income of over \$1 million who are not paying a minimum tax rate of 30 percent. So realize that. Of the 144 million tax returns filed in 2010, fewer than 500,000 of them—0.1 percent of the taxpayers—had taxable incomes of over \$1 million. Remember, these are taxable incomes because there are lots of write-offs.

Mr. ELLISON. So the people who have the kind of money you just described are actually a small part of the population, but I think they're punching above their weight because they have an inordinate influence in the political process.

Ms. WOOLSEY. You're right. They have an influence in the political process, and average working Americans don't realize that that's not them. The families who earn \$70,000 a year are taxed on that at a rate of 25 percent.

Mr. ELLISON. So, if you're making 70k a year, paying 25 percent of your income in income taxes, that means, if there is an increase in your property taxes, you're really going to feel that. That's going to punch you right in the stomach. That's going to make a difference in whether the kids can get braces or not. That's going to make a difference as to whether or not you can put a roof on the house. It will make a huge difference. \$70,000 is actually doing pretty well, but small variations can change your life.

If you're a two-income household and are making \$70,000 and if one of the partners in the relationship gets sick or dies, that means catastrophic expenses on the family because, if you're spending at a \$70,000-a-year level and you lose a household member, you've got all those bills with just the one person, and then you're going to be in bankruptcy. This is why we know 56 percent of all bankruptcy filings are driven by medical debt. This is how this happens even to middle class people. But the Buffett rule and putting Americans to work and doing a lot of things are really what the Progressive Caucus is all about. It's about addressing these systemic problems we're talking about today.

So I just want to let everybody know, if you want to check out what the Progressive Caucus says about the Buffett rule, you should know that we have the Buffett rule contained in our budget.

We put America back to work by front-loading jobs in our budget. We invest in America's future by investing

in infrastructure, and we reduce the deficit, in part, by asking the wealthiest and most privileged Americans to do the patriotic thing and pony up a little bit more to help America.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. It's disturbing to me, with all that the Congressional Progressive Caucus has done to try to level the playing field in this country for working men and women, that we would all be lumped together and called names.

I want you to comment about one of our colleagues who, in response to a question asked of him—how many Communists are there in the United States Congress?—this Congressman stepped up to the mike in a calm and polite manner—thoughtful-looking, with a pensive look on his face—and he said, I believe that there are between 78 and 81 members of the Communist Party who are Members of Congress.

Now, can you respond to that, Congressman?

Mr. ELLISON. Do you know what? I have to demur and say that I'm not that excited to respond. I've responded on Ed Schultz. I've responded on Wolf Blitzer. I've responded on Martin Brashir, and I've just said it's not true. It's a false statement. It's untrue. It's unfair. It's unkind. It raises the level of vitriol and insult in this body, and of course, it's tough enough around here already. We don't need to hurl false accusations against each other.

I would just urge the public to remind Members of Congress that we need to have a little bit more civility around here and that, if you do want to make an ugly comment or a negative comment about your colleagues, at least try to make it somewhere within 10,000 miles of being true. This is absolutely false.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Sir, the next day, a statement was released by the gentleman. The statement was to the effect that the entire membership of the Congressional Progressive Caucus are card-carrying members of the Communist Party. I just think that it's important that we say, first of all, that that's not true and, secondly, that it has no place in the rational dialogue and in the honest dialogue that we seek to have here amongst us on both sides of the aisle. It has no place.

Mr. ELLISON. One thing I don't want to do—and I'm just speaking for me. If he calls us names, I'm not going to call him names. If he calls us names, I'm not going to call them ugly names like that. There are a lot of ugly names that you could call someone who has a right-wing perspective on the extreme. We don't engage in tit for tat, because that's childlike. We're adults. We're here to discharge a responsibility on behalf of the American people. We swore an oath to uphold and defend the U.S. Constitution, and that is what I'm going to do. I'm not going to be distracted by somebody who is not clear on what we're supposed to be doing here. I'm going to stay focused on what we're here to do.

Ms. WOOLSEY. I would like to say, by caring about American workers, by caring about women and children, by caring about our seniors, by wanting to put food on the tables of all Americans and help them with clean air and good food and clean water, if that labels us, so be it. All that says to me is somebody is very frightened about the good things we do. I think we should move on now.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Congresswoman, I agree.

I also want to point out that to label folks as Communists and Socialists just because they believe in fairness for the working people of this country is not true, and I think that it should be called out because, if it's left unaddressed, then some folks will think it's true.

With that, I certainly would love for us to get into a discussion about Citizens United, Congresswoman.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Thank you.

I believe that it's evermore important that we do something about the Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United v. FEC*, which overturns nearly 100 years of campaign finance laws in this country which limit corporation involvement in political campaigns.

□ 1500

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend.

Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) will control the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. WOOLSEY. In that action by the Supreme Court, big business was given a louder voice than the individual in this country. If we want to protect our democracy, that's what we have to bring an end to, all that money coming into the political system without transparency and making the average citizen feel like their voice means nothing.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Congresswoman, I believe that you have hit the nail on the head. This *Citizens United* ruling by the United States Supreme Court definitely puts corporations in a position of superiority over just the regular working people of this country. The reason why is because corporations have now been afforded the same rights that individuals have, to speak freely and with no regulation. Congress refuses to even consider any regulations on that speech for purposes of campaigning and affecting the outcome of campaigns.

This is a decision that is devastating to the working people of this country, the people who don't have a voice like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce or like some unknown super PAC that is formed on the eve of an election, funded anonymously, and used to affect an election and used in such a way that you can't even mount a response to it because the cascade of money is in that PAC and you have the slightest ability to raise the requisite amount of money

to match it. They control the outcome of these elections with the money, and that is a devastating blow to our democracy.

Ms. WOOLSEY. HANK, the entire time I've been in the Congress—I mean, I've been here for 20 years now, and we've had a Republican majority and we've had a Democrat majority. But when the Republicans have been in the majority, they use as part of their mantra that they are returning government to the people.

Excuse me. Citizens United takes government away from the people. I don't hear them trying to change that. They—the other side of the aisle, the party in the majority right now—seem to be defending Citizens United.

The other thing they are doing at this moment is they are trying to upend the Presidential campaign finance system. They want to drown out the voice of the people and give more power to the well-heeled special interests in the Presidential elections as well. Those elections go quite well with public financing. People choose on their tax form whether or not they want to give to the Presidential elections.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Congresswoman, that was something that has happened this year that perhaps not a lot of people know about is that, under this Republican-controlled 112th Congress, the House has voted to do away with or abolish the \$1 checkoff on a tax form that you send in. You can check the box and it will automatically deduct a dollar from the amount that you owe or the amount of whatever refund you're entitled to. That \$1 then goes into a pot to be distributed among the candidates who applied for this funding.

So everything that had been put in place to try to make everything equal, along with giving people their rights to invest to a certain amount in campaign-related donations, everything is being dismantled systematically. It certainly does not help the people on our side of the aisle, the Democratic side of the aisle, who traditionally have depended on workers unions and labor organizations to be the deep pockets for our campaign contributions.

I had a visit from one of my good friends in labor the other day back in my district, and this gentleman has grown to be a good friend of mine. He's a good man. He is a full-time union worker, works for the union, the administrative part of the union, not just represented by the union. He told me that with all of the people in the union who are out of work today—and we've got a few jobs in the Atlanta area that are near completion. After completion, even those workers who are able to work won't have any more work, and then there's nothing else on the agenda that these people can go and get jobs at.

He said it's gotten so bad with the attacks on labor and the unemployment

to where the workers represented by the union can't pay the dues, and then the moneys having been drawn down by the unions to take care of the workers to assist them during this extended period of unemployment are on the decline and almost exhausted. After telling me that, he said, Today is my last day employed at the union because they had to let me go. We both sat there and we cried.

It was really touching, because that gentleman is in the same boat that many other workers are in, and the union which represents those workers is suffering greatly. They won't be able to do what they have done in the past for campaigns. But these super PACs and wealthy individuals who fund them—anonymous, much of the time—can afford to actually put millions in and billions in. This is a very serious situation that we face in this country.

Who's going to win, is it money or is it the people?

Ms. WOOLSEY. Congressman, the one beacon of light in the system is the public financing of Presidential campaigns. I have to remind everybody, that's voluntary. People volunteer \$1 a year out of their tax return to support the public financing of the Presidential races. They have to opt to do that. They don't have to. It's served our country well, and it's a very limited expense. It needs updating. It doesn't need dismantling. We need more public financing of our Federal election, not less.

Actually, if I had my way, we would have public financing, we would have a much shorter campaign season, and we would also publicly finance advertising as well as set spending limits and not turn campaigns—it's an industry in this country now that certainly employs thousands and thousands of people. But it spends a lot of our time and individual money in order to get people elected.

□ 1510

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Yes. I would echo those comments, Congresswoman. You know, Members around here, some folks spend 60, 70 percent of their time, instead of being in committee meetings, they are out making phone calls trying to raise money for their next election. It's not, it doesn't augur well for the country's future for us to have, you know, this kind of leadership, in other words, leadership that depends on others to make the decision. They come in, vote on it, and then go back to the phones making calls.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Right. I have been so fortunate because I represent a district that I fit. You know I'm retiring, but I have represented this district for 20 years, and I have fit so well that I have not had to raise millions of dollars.

I have watched my colleagues who are in these districts that could go either way and where now Citizens United has brought this super-PAC

money in against them, and I don't know how they do it. I mean, what a way to ruin our democracy, to have the people you elect to represent you spend much of their time raising money instead of raising consciousness, instead of raising issues, instead of fighting for what we know needs to be done in this country.

This corrupt campaign finance system we have, with the special interest money, is going to actually corrode our democracy. If we don't step up to it on both sides of the aisle, everybody is going to be affected by it, not just Democrats.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Well, I am going to tell you, Congresswoman WOOLSEY, that's why I am going to hate to see you leave, and I know you have been here for 20 years. That's a long time to be anywhere. You have certainly been an unrelenting spokesperson for equity and fairness for all, and you have been a voice for peace, and you have been a voice for telling the truth. You are, indeed, a rare breed in Congress, and I'm personally going to miss you, and I know many others will too.

But I'll tell you, Congresswoman, there are people on the other side of the aisle and some, I know, feel the same way that we do. They don't like the way or the route that our country is going. We've even had some good people over there who have already been defeated for reelection based on that special interest money coming in at the last minute, shaking things up and telling a bunch of lies, and then the public votes a good Representative out.

I think people on both sides of the aisle are being hurt by what's happening in America right now, and I'm hopeful that this next election will see the kind of change that needs to come here. We need to take care of the people's business. This is their Congress, this is not the corporations' Congress. We should be of, by and for the people, not of, by and for the corporate special interests.

You know, I'm afraid that's where we are now. I, myself, have been fortunate so far to be in sync with the people of my district and so, consequently, I've not been forced to go out there and raise a billion dollars, but I still have to raise money.

I would prefer a system where I could just be a legislator and we could have a fairness in our elections, everyone starting with the same amount of money to spend; and that way it's not the money, it's your message that counts.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Right. If everybody has a certain amount of time on air, they can spend it putting down their opponent, or they can spend that time letting their constituents know who they are. If they want to be negative, they can do it the way they want to, but they will probably find out it's much more wholesome and people will like them a lot better when they know

them for who they are and not as put-down artists.

When you say there's folks from the other side of the aisle, and I'm sure there are, I think that it's our job now to pull together a core here in the Congress who are willing to limit the influence of contributors and who are willing to curb the power of political action committees and impose spending limits and not let corporate America have a bigger voice than the average voter.

Somehow or another, I think it's going to be possible, but it's going to take leaders like yourself, HANK, to make that happen, so I'll be cheering for you.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Well, I believe you are right about that. But I will say, though, those moderates on the other side of the aisle who I am referring to are the prime targets of the interests that want to get rid of them and go to an extreme. So folks over here on the Republican side of the aisle are forced to comply with the party line or else they'll suffer the consequences.

Even when they follow the party line here, they think, okay, well, we don't trust this person over here because there's some new blood over here that talks much more extremely, and so we want to get rid of that person here and put this new person in.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Well, if we eliminate special interest money, if we have the Declaration for Democracy and have a constitutional change, the United States Constitution regarding this Citizens United action of the Supreme Court, I think we can help turn that around.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Well, you know, Congresswoman, you lead into the Declaration for Democracy, which I had the pleasure to sign yesterday, along with many of my other colleagues; and I am sure that the longer that this is around, the more that people will sign up. Have you had an opportunity to sign?

Ms. WOOLSEY. I signed the little card. I haven't signed that one, but I'm looking why aren't I on there. I mean, that's how much I support it.

Actually, Leader PELOSI has signed the declaration. It's very well received in the Congress.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. I'm going to read it. It's the Declaration for Democracy, and it reads as follows:

I declare my support for amending the Constitution of the United States to restore the rights of the American people undermined by Citizens United and related cases, to protect the integrity of our elections, and limit the corrosive influence of money in our democratic process.

Anytime we start talking about putting limits on any activity and creating more fairness, then we get labeled as socialists and communists and we're just people that care. I don't care what you call it, we're in support of this Declaration for Democracy, which

would put the reins of government back into the hands of working people, poor people, everyone. Even the corporations would have a seat at the table, but they would not speak any louder than you or I; and I think it's very important. So I was proud to sign the Declaration for Democracy.

We are in a climate where we have an organization that is set up to connect the corporate influence, the corporate money, the special interests. We have an organization that is set up to pair those special interest corporations with legislators from the various State legislatures of the Nation.

□ 1520

About 60 percent of the legislators in the United States—the State legislators—have joined this organization. It's called ALEC. ALEC is the American Legislative Exchange Council. And what ALEC does is it's funded, of course, by business interests, billionaires and millionaires, and companies. What it does is it invites the legislators to join. It really entices them to join by offering them for a mere \$50 a year—and the taxpayers, of course, pay that—as a professional fee or professional cost. And so the legislators join. Then he or she gets to go off on these 2- and 3-day weekends at some location like Hilton Head or Jekyll Island or Martha's Vineyard, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, wherever they can be alone and with some anonymity and in a luxurious setting.

So these legislators who join go to these locations for the retreats. The business interests are there because they're underwriting it. And then they get together in committees, and the committees work out various model laws that are produced before the folks even get there. They're told about these model laws in the committees that they work on—the committees being the legislators and the business interests. And the public's interest is not there. It's all done in secret.

And so the result is that the legislators come home, and they have legislation which they can claim as, This is my legislation and I'm introducing it. And, By the way, this is my 80th piece of legislation that I have introduced and it has passed and I'm a busy substantive legislator.

So it makes them look good out there on the campaign trail. Nobody knows what the substance of that legislation is and what it actually does and how much it costs. And then, for introducing that legislation, the legislator is rewarded with a campaign contribution also from the same corporations and individuals associated with those corporations.

So based on that formula right there you've got business being done behind closed doors to benefit folks other than the people who elect these legislators, and then you never know who those legislators are because that's private information. They keep it private. But if you're a member, you can log into

the Web site and then go to a page and find out who all of the corporate and who all the legislative members are. You can only get access to that if you're a member. And to become a member you have to be prescreened in advance to make sure that you are like-minded. And if you can pass that muster, they will let you in.

So this is the same organization that announced yesterday that they would not be involving themselves—they're disbanding their committee that had to do with social issues, as they call them, including voter rights. And so the Trayvon Martin killing, the shooting and killing of Trayvon Martin and then the claim of self-defense, stand your ground, but, really, shoot to kill legislation, that legislation was produced by an ALEC committee.

I'm glad to know that committee will no longer be in action, but the damage has already been done. As a result of that, you have had some corporations that have decided that this is not—we didn't buy into this. We didn't buy into this social thing. We just joined ALEC because we wanted to deal on the committees that deal with our issues—taxes, FDA, whatever. We wanted to deal on those things, but instead ALEC has gone to an extreme.

Now we have corporations that are threatened with boycotts of their goods and services jumping off the ALEC bandwagon, and that caused ALEC to announce yesterday that, We're not going to deal in any more social issues.

So I think that is instructive of the power of the people. If the people only know what is happening, the people will come together, despite the differences that we have. We can look at each other and say, Okay, you are older than I am. Plus, you are a white woman. And so, therefore, we don't have anything in common. Or I could say that this person over here doesn't have the same sexual orientation as I think they should and so therefore I'm going to condemn them to purgatory just on that basis alone. Or we can look at somebody and say Well, they've got a hoodie on. He's wearing a hoodie, and it's a black guy in a neighborhood. He can be 9 years old, he can be 15, or he can be 17; but he's still threatening me just by his mere presence. We size people up like that.

But when we really get down to it, our interests are the same. And if we can get past the fear that we have of each other and the misunderstanding that we have about each other, we can come together and we can reclaim this country so that it will be a government run by, of, and for the people. And so that is my goal, to continue to work towards that, if my citizens think that I'm worthy of continuing to do that.

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

#### CLEARING THE NAMES OF JOHN BROW AND BROOKS GRUBER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NUNNELEE). Under the Speaker's an-

nounced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. JONES. I am coming to the floor again to clear the names of two marine pilots who crashed in Arizona April 8, 2000. Not only two pilots, but there were 17 marines in the back.

The V-22, which is the plane that goes from a helicopter mode to a plane mode, at that time was really an experimental plane. Major Gruber and Colonel Brow in the cockpit had no idea of what was happening when the plane went into what's called "vortex ring state."

I would like to go through this 10-year journey for the record, Mr. Speaker.

It so happened that in November 2002, Major Gruber's wife, who lives in my district in Jacksonville, North Carolina, wrote me a letter that I would like to read. Her husband, Brooks Gruber, was the copilot.

□ 1530

I contact you in hopes that leaders of integrity, free of bias, would have both the intelligence and the courage it takes to decide the facts for themselves. If you do that, you will agree the "human factor/pilot error" findings should not stand as it is in the marine military history. Again, I respectfully ask for your support. Please do not simply pass this matter along to General Jones without offering the support my husband and his comrades deserve. Please remember, these 19 marines can no longer speak for themselves. And I certainly am not afraid to speak for them and I believe someone has to. Even though it's easier to put to rest and forgotten, please join me in doing the right thing by taking the time to address this important issue.

Mr. Speaker, on March 9 of this year, The Hill magazine—and I would like to thank a new young man on the staff named Jeremy Herb, who did an article in the magazine about this 10-year journey that started with Connie Gruber's letter to me.

Mr. Speaker, over the 10-year journey, I have spoken to many, many experts. One that I would like to quote today for the RECORD is a former Assistant Secretary of Defense, Phil Coyle, and he states: Major Gruber should not be blamed for an accident caused by loss of lift due to the aircraft entering "vortex ring state," a phenomena which no one in the Marine Corps adequately understood in relation to the Osprey at the time of the accident.

Secretary Coyle further states: Not only did the Marine Corps not understand Osprey performance under VRS, the root cause of the accident, but neither did the contractor nor the Marine Corps had not tested the aircraft near VRS—vortex ring state—conditions, something which, following the accident, it later took the Marine Corps years to accomplish. Surely Major Gruber and Colonel Brow could not be blamed for something that the Marine Corps, itself, did not grasp until years after the accident and after the death

of the 19 marines. Considering that it was ignorance on the part of the Marine Corps that caused the April 2000 accident, the Marine Corps should make it clear to the Gruber and Brow families, with no ifs, ands, or buts, that Gruber and Brow were not responsible for the accident.

He further stated: I don't suppose the Marine Corps ever apologizes, but considering that the accident was their fault and not Major Gruber's and Colonel Brow's fault, an apology to the family would be in order also.

Mr. Speaker, I read that because this 10-year journey—and I will continue to add names in the next few minutes of people trying to help me. These two marines were the very best of the pilots, Major Brooks Gruber and Colonel John Brow. They gave their life for this new plane known as the V-22 Osprey. And those young marines sitting in the back, 19, 21, 23, 24, and 25, were selected from other marines to sit in the back of that plane. Those in the Marine leadership that created the mission in Arizona should join me in clearing the names of these two pilots.

Mr. Speaker, I further read for the RECORD, a former adviser to the Secretary of Defense, Rex Rivolo, stated in a letter trying to clear these names, and I read:

The failure of the manufacturer, Bell-Boeing, and the Navy to characterize the slow speed, high rate of descent handling qualities of the V-22 through flight testing, to describe them for the aircrew in the NATOPS, and to provide an adequate warning system were the causes of the mishap—not aircrew error.

With the passing of 10 years, and the future of the aircraft now secure, I sincerely hope that the names of Lieutenant Colonel Brow and Major Gruber can now be exonerated and cleared for posterity. I strongly support any and all measures to this end and request this letter be included in any official record regarding the causes of the MV-22 mishap at Marana, Arizona, on April 8, 2000, or any resolution attempting to clear the names of Lieutenant Colonel Brow and Major Gruber.

Mr. Speaker, what has been so ironic about this 10-year journey of everyone that was part of reviewing the accident, or maybe it was in the air like Lieutenant Colonel Jim Schaeffer who is joining this effort. Colonel Schaeffer was a friend of John Brow and Brooks Gruber, and Colonel Schaeffer was in a third airplane that night, a V-22, and he saw his friends and the 17 marines in the back flip, crash, and burn. And there is no reason that the Marine Corps will not give the wives what they're asking, and I'll explain that in just a moment, Mr. Speaker.

In this 10-year journey, Mr. Speaker, I've gotten to know the two attorneys, Jim Furman in Arizona, who defended the families of John Brow and Brooks Gruber before Bell-Boeing—it was a major suit—and then Brian Alexander in New York, who defended the 17 families of the marines sitting in the back of the plane. They have all joined in this effort to clear the names of John Brow and Brooks Gruber.