

make sure that people understand their choices, are able to articulate what they and their families want, and that their health care wishes, whatever they may be, are respected.

This bipartisan concept got caught up in the madness of the 2009 political lie of the year—death panels—but it's now time to revisit it. It's overwhelmingly supported by the American people, including the Tea Party and Occupy Wall Street. It costs nothing, and will help enhance the well-being of our families.

There is a golden opportunity to come together around a collective vision of rebuilding and renewing America. This is happening at the State and local levels as people are uniting around their visions and putting up money to achieve it. This is the fastest way to revitalize the economy and protect our quality of life, and the Federal Government should be playing.

While I strongly support efforts to correct the distorting and, in some ways, corruption of the political process by avalanches of secret money that are now savaging Republican candidates for the Presidential nomination, there is another corrupting process that is taking place for which there are no constitutional barriers to remediate—the legislative redistricting process. In most States, it's a scandal where politicians pick the voters rather than voters being able to pick the politicians. We all ought to identify with reform efforts that are emerging in this area.

These are five simple steps that don't cost money and certainly, in the long run, will save money while they enhance the integrity of the system. They can strengthen the economy while revitalizing the political process and addressing the frustrations of both Occupy Wall Street and the Tea Party.

NUCLEAR WASTE STORAGE IN TENNESSEE

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, it's great to be back down on the floor, back to being in Washington, DC, to continue with what I spent most of my time last year doing, which was addressing the high-level nuclear waste issues in this country.

Today, we go to the great State of Tennessee, and identify a location where there is presently high-level nuclear waste stored and compare that to the site that was picked and that is in Federal law right now, which is the high-level nuclear waste depository scheduled to occur in Yucca Mountain.

First of all, this is Sequoyah in Tennessee, where there are over 1,094 MTU of spent nuclear fuel onsite. At Yucca Mountain, which is in the desert in Nevada, there is currently no nuclear waste onsite. At Sequoyah, the waste is stored above the ground in pools and dry casks. If we were to put it in Yucca

Mountain, where it is supposed to go, the waste would be stored 1,000 feet underground—underneath, in essence, a mountain. At Sequoyah, the waste is 25 feet from the groundwater table. At Yucca Mountain, it would be 1,000 feet above the water table, and Yucca Mountain is 100 miles from the Colorado River. Sequoyah is 14 miles from the city of Chattanooga and 14 miles from Chickamauga Lake.

So why do I highlight these issues? Because of what happened in Japan with Fukushima Daiichi and the high-level nuclear waste.

A lot of the nuclear exposure was because pools had dried up. The nuclear waste heated up, and then you had almost a worldwide catastrophe right next to the ocean. If we were doing what was public policy in Federal law in collecting our high-level nuclear waste and taking it to a desert underneath a mountain, that would be a much more secure location than around our major municipalities, our streams, and our groundwater locations. But, no, because of this administration and some political promises made in the last election cycle, they have defunded and pulled off the table Yucca Mountain from consideration.

In 1982, the Nuclear Waste Policy Act made the Federal Government responsible for checking waste. Since that time, \$9 billion and 20 years was spent studying for a suitable location. That study ended in Yucca Mountain.

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In 1987 Congress named Yucca Mountain the sole candidate site for a permanent repository, and then in '94 DOE published scientific results demonstrating Yucca as capable of protecting public health and safety; in '98, the statutory deadline for DOE to commence disposal of spent nuclear fuel.

So we pay these nuclear utilities money to hold their own waste that we should be collecting based upon Federal law.

In 2002 we voted here, and the President and Congress approved Yucca as the site repository. DOE issued a license application in 2008, and then in 2009 President Obama announced plans to terminate Yucca Mountain after \$15 billion spent in studying this site.

And I'll close with this: Would you rather have nuclear waste 14 miles from a major metropolitan area next to a lake or would you rather have high-level nuclear waste hundreds of miles from the major, largest city, 100 miles from a river, underneath a mountain, in the desert?

Public policy, good public policy demands that we move forward on Yucca Mountain.

CONGRATULATING UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA ON 2011 BCS CHAMPIONSHIP

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

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate the University of Alabama Crimson Tide for being the 2011 BCS champions. Roll Tide.

The State of Alabama is still number one in college football. For the past 3 consecutive years, a team from the State of Alabama has won the national championship trophy. The University of Alabama has been the national champs twice in the last 3 years.

The championship game between Alabama and LSU represents college football at its finest. Both schools have a proud and very rich tradition in football history, and the LSU Tigers should be commended for an outstanding season. While both teams deserve recognition, in the end, Alabama beat LSU with a final score of 21–0.

I want to congratulate the coaches, staff, team, and the entire university family and fans for an amazing season. It was your hard work, persistence, leadership, and commitment all season long that made this decisive victory become a reality.

The University of Alabama has had a long-standing tradition of excellence in collegiate football. This year's victory represented the 14th national championship title for the University of Alabama. Since being founded in 1892, the Crimson Tide football program has achieved 813 victories in the NCAA Division I and 26 conference championships. The Crimson Tide also sets an NCAA record with 58 post-season bowl appearances. The Tide leads the SEC West Division with seven division titles and seven appearances in the SEC Championship Game.

This entire team deserves recognition and honor. I want to especially acknowledge Trent Richardson, who was a Heisman Trophy finalist and winner of this year's Nation's Most Outstanding Running Back. I would also like to acknowledge Barrett Jones, who was the 2011 Outland Trophy winner for the Nation's best interior lineman in college football.

This championship team also includes six players who were selected for the 2011 Associated Press All-America Team: Mark Barron, Dont'a Hightower, Barrett Jones, Trent Richardson, Courtney Upshaw, and Dre Kirkpatrick. This year's team was truly a force to be reckoned with.

This win not only represents a victory for the University of Alabama football team, but it also is a unifying victory for the State of Alabama, who suffered so much during the devastation of the April tornados. This victory shows the resilient spirit of Alabamians and reflects our hope for a better future.

I speak on behalf of the constituents of the Seventh Congressional District, the great State of Alabama, and this Nation as I express how proud we are of the players, coaches, and athletic staff of the University of Alabama for making this victory possible and helping our communities heal.

I also want to thank Representative CASSIDY of Louisiana for being such a

good sport and looking so dapper today in his brand-new Crimson Tide tie and attire. What an addition to your wardrobe.

I urge my colleagues to please join me in celebrating the achievements of the University of Alabama Crimson Tide and its outstanding athletes on their 2011 BCS championship victory.

Roll Tide.

MAKE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT LIVE WITHIN ITS MEANS

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

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, when the 112th Congress was sworn in on January 5, 2011, I, along with many of my fellow Republicans, voted to change the status quo.

Instead of escalating spending, we have made and pushed for significant spending cuts. Instead of forcing a trillion dollar government takeover of health care on the American people, we voted to repeal it in the House. Instead of imposing costly and burdensome regulations on an already struggling business economy, we passed legislation to reverse overly burdensome regulations so businesses can get back to hiring again.

These are the vows we made to our constituents when we took office a year ago. And despite hitting numerous snags in the do-nothing Senate and with leadership lacking in the White House, we delivered on the promises.

In the past year, the House has passed 27 job-creating measures as part of our plan for American job creators. We have remained committed to removing the onerous taxes and regulations that are crippling small business and our families and are the cause for so much distrust of Washington. We have begun an honest conversation about which programs are in alignment with our constitutional principles and which programs are wasteful and inefficient.

We have the responsibility to make the Federal Government live within its means, just like hardworking families across the country. This means we have to cut spending, stop raising taxes, and eliminate wasteful spending from our outdated, overreaching government programs.

When we took office last January, we vowed to reduce discretionary spending to 2008 levels, and we delivered. The House passed a bill to reduce spending by \$5.8 trillion over the next 10 years. We also voted to cut over 100 programs across government and save billions of dollars in the process. In May, the House also overwhelmingly voted against giving President Obama a blank check to increase the debt limit without spending reductions or reforms.

We have relentlessly fought for policies that will encourage job creation and free our families from the burdensome economic problems of govern-

ment regulation. We acted to undo duplicative permitting requirements for farmers by passing the Reduced Regulatory Burdens Act. We pushed back against the President's attempts to implement a cap-and-trade policy—an energy reduction policy, really—through the regulatory process by passing the Energy Tax Prevention Act. And we confronted the EPA's costly and burdensome agenda by passing three regulatory reform bills that safeguard our environment while keeping Americans at work.

On November 16, we defeated the 3 percent withholding rule by passing H.R. 674. This misguided tax rule would have required government agencies at all levels to withhold 3 percent of their payments to businesses for goods and services. Any small business that contracts with the government would have their profit margins wiped out if such a rule were allowed to take effect.

We passed the REINS Act, to bring accountability to the executive branch by requiring that government bureaucrats receive permission from Congress, the elected representatives of the people, before the implementation of any major regulation.

Just 2 weeks after beginning our work in Congress, the House voted to repeal the overreaching, costly, and harmful government takeover of health care that President Obama forced upon the American people. H.R. 2 was one of my first votes after being sworn in. The bill cut new spending by \$1.4 trillion over 10 years and repealed the President's health care takeover, and I was proud to vote to repeal this job-killing law which will do nothing to bring stability and certainty to American families.

Throughout the first session of the 112th Congress, House Republicans have remained committed to changing the way the government does business. We've delivered on our promises to pass legislation that reins in spending and encourages job creation. Going forward, I'm hopeful that our friends in the Senate and the leadership in the White House will finally be ready to join us in passing legislation that the American people want and not let dozens of job-producing bills sit idle in the Senate.

This year, I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House as we look beyond the next election and focus on improving people's lives and creating a brighter economic future with the freedom God really intended for all of us.

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STOP PIPA AND SOPA

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. PIPA, Protect Intellectual Property Act; SOPA, Stop Online Piracy Act. Now, who could be against bills like that, to prevent the

theft of intellectual property or online piracy, to prevent online piracy. Clever names, great. Content, not so much.

Now, the worst, organized, government-sanctioned theft of intellectual property in the world goes on day in and day out in Communist China. And this government has done precious little to rein that in. We run a huge trade deficit with China. We're buying their goods. They are dependent upon our purchasing of their goods. And yet we allow them to get away with that. This bill does nothing to deal with the organized theft in Communist China, which is the greatest problem that confronts us in the theft of intellectual property.

Now, concealed behind these really benign names and embedded in the text is something that's kind of like what we call malware. Now, we all know what malware can do to our computers. We've seen it; the black screen of death. Well, this is a little bigger than malware that gets on your computer, steals your data, or crashes your computer. It could crash the entire Internet and the productivity of the Internet.

Now, eventually this legislation could threaten the existence of an entire domain because of one blog entry, one user link. A whole domain could be taken down. Wow. That's pretty incredible. Imagine how some of these user-content sites are going to have to try and police things.

Well, they can always err on the side of censorship because there are broad provisions in this bill to allow you in good faith to censor something because you thought maybe it was a problem. So they could start censoring rather dramatically. The legislation also includes very broad language for so-called anti-circumvention, that is any site that provides information that could—could, maybe, possibly—help users get around censorship would be a target. Well, that's kind of an interesting contradiction for the government of the United States because actually we promote through the State Department software that helps democratic activists in Communist China, which I already mentioned, and in Iran and other vicious dictatorships around the world to get around their government's online censorship. We're now going to enshrine principles that would allow this sort of censorship, sort of mimicking some of the actions of the Iranian and the Communist Chinese, I guess, in regards to the Internet here. Of course, we're going to allow private companies to impose this censorship instead of the government imposing this censorship; but they would have government enforcement behind their actions, the private right of actions that would be allowed in this bill.

This is pretty extraordinary legislation, very poorly drafted. If you didn't care about the Internet, if it didn't exist and you wanted to put in the toughest possible protections theoretically for piracy and intellectual property, maybe you'd write something like