

Now, in responding to them, I've often discussed a piece of legislation that's very important to the debate on budget priorities and the so-called "fiscal cliff"; that's the Sequestration Transparency Act. This bill passed the Budget Committee by voice vote and was later approved in the House, with only two in opposition. After the Senate passed it with unanimous consent, the President signed it into law. So this was truly a bipartisan effort, a statement by almost every one of us working together that we're concerned about the impact that sequestration might have on our constituents, and an effort to get more information about the true harm that that sequestration will cause.

Now, following the administration's recent report detailing those cuts that would come under sequestration, I am even more concerned than before, and my constituents are concerned. And I know constituents all across this country are concerned as well. Mr. Speaker, there is bipartisan concern about the impact that sequestration might have, and yet we haven't been able to come to a bipartisan consensus to avoid it.

We've identified a problem; now we must identify a solution. This should be a balanced solution, working together, and I look forward to working with all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to arrive at that solution. It's a solution for my district in Oregon, for all of the great State, and, importantly, for all of this great Nation.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 8 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Rabbi Steven Weil, Orthodox Union, New York, New York, offered the following prayer:

Master of the Universe, today we stand before You in this hallowed Hall, grateful for the freedoms we have been granted here, grateful for the men and women in this room who You imbued with wisdom and blessed with the courage to make the difficult decisions that will impact the destiny of all humanity.

Allow the Members of Congress to be Your partners in making a more perfect world, and grant them the insight and the vision to always be mindful of the responsibilities they bear. We implore You to guide and strengthen

them so that they can do what must be done to save the world from those who wish to perpetrate terrorism and evil.

Dear God, enable them to do what must be done to plant the seeds for a brighter and more prosperous economic future. Dear God, support them in providing our children with a strong education to meet the challenges of tomorrow. Thank You for giving us such wonderful shepherds and allowing us to be their cherished flock.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. POE of Texas led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

VOICE OF TEXAS: ELIZABETH FROM HOUSTON, TEXAS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Elizabeth from Houston wrote me this about her business:

My immigrant parents came to the United States legally. They had to learn English. My dad worked very hard. He opened several bars and restaurants, hired wait staff, cooks, bartenders, and cleaning people. There was never a dime of government assistance. Hard work, long hours, and sleepless nights were the norm for all of us. I learned their work ethic early, and I also have worked very hard for my family. No welfare, no government handouts.

This is my country, and I love this country as much as my parents did. But I do not respect the current President or his administration. They want to be in charge of all of us, from cradle to grave. That is not the American way. That is exactly what my parents and grandparents fled from. Please take us back to the right way.

Mr. Speaker, Elizabeth's family did it the right way—and without Big Government getting in the way. They built their American Dream all on their own.

And that's just the way it is.

ALL THE APPEARANCES OF A SWINDLE

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Did Peabody Energy Company deliberately unload a bad investment on public power organizations serving 217 cities and villages across the Midwest? Congress must find out because Peabody Energy lured public power organizations into contracts that forced municipal utilities to pay up to twice the market rate for electricity. At a time when private funding could not be had for new coal-fired utilities, Peabody Energy unloaded 95 percent of its investment onto public power customers in what became an almost triple cost overrun, with a coal mine that lasts 22 years, instead of 30 years as promised, and an ashfill that was supposed to last 23 years, and will last only 12 to 14 years.

The contract which municipals are tied into forces them to pay for power 42 percent above the market rate, whether the plant is producing energy or not. Billions of dollars were issued for bond financing for the project, and utility customers are vulnerable to huge costs for debt retirement. Wall Street wouldn't invest in the project, so Peabody went to Main Street, and now millions of public power customers will pay sky-high electric rates in what has all the appearances of a swindle.

SEQUESTRATION TRANSPARENCY REPORT SHOWS LACK OF LEADERSHIP

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, the administration released a report on how the President plans to implement the \$600 billion defense sequester, threatening service-members, military families, and veterans. Politico explained it "shed little new light on the sword of Damocles." This report, required by the passage of the Sequestration Transparency Act, arrived 1 week late, confirming that the President and the liberal-controlled Senate have refused to take sequestration as a top priority.

Today, the House Armed Services Committee held a hearing to receive testimony from key government officials who will implement sequestration. Based upon the minimal information provided, it's clear the administration has not made appropriate plans for the drastic budget cuts, even though the White House is responsible for proposing the disastrous proposal. House Republicans have voted five times, led by Chairman BUCK McKEON, to replace sequestration with commonsense reforms to avoid the threat to national security or destroying jobs. I urge the President and the Senate to begin working with the House before it's too late.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11th in the global war on terrorism.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS IN THIS CONGRESS

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, the great Hall of Fame Coach Vince Lombardi once said that “Winners never quit, and quitters never win.”

I was reminded of that quote when the House Republican leadership announced last Friday that they are canceling all session days for the month of October, despite the fact that we have an unfinished farm bill, postal reform bill, Violence Against Women Act, the Cybersecurity Act, we have a fiscal cliff looming for middle class families on January 1, and a sequestration on January 2.

It is true there are passionate differences between the two sides about how we resolve these problems, but you don't resolve it by going home for 7 weeks. As Coach Lombardi said: “Winners never quit, and quitters never win.”

The American people deserve better than a 7-week recess with these challenges facing the American people. It's time for this leadership of this House to cancel their order and get back to work and solve the problems of our Nation.

GOODLETTSVILLE LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL TEAM

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

Mrs. BLACK. From a small town in middle Tennessee, 13 young men recently became the 2012 Little League World Series U.S. Champions. These All-Stars from Goodlettsville, Tennessee, played with sportsmanship and talent beyond their years. In the U.S. championship game, Goodlettsville racked up 21 runs to become the first Tennessee team in history to clinch a U.S. title. This achievement is a testimony to their dedication and perseverance—qualities that will serve them well throughout their life.

They have made their hometown, their parents, their coaches, and their Congressman very proud. I am confident that this achievement is just the beginning of more great things to come from each of them.

Congratulations, boys.

CONSTITUTION WEEK/VOTER SUPPRESSION

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that my team came in second to Tennessee. Tennessee was the only team that beat them—but beat them twice. They did a stand-up job. So did our kids in Petaluma.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, I took part in a moving naturalization ceremony as 50 new people from 20 different countries took the oath that made them Americans—225 years to the day that the Founders signed the U.S. Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, there's no constitutional right more precious than the right of self-governance. These new Americans were excited for the very opportunity to vote in this upcoming election. That's why we should do everything possible to ensure that every eligible American can do just that. Unfortunately, several States are throwing up barriers to voter participation, restricting ballot access to silence people's voices.

Mr. Speaker, guess who is disenfranchised by strict photo ID requirements and the like? It's not Republicans. It's communities of color and low-income families.

□ 1210

WSU SALUTES

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, Weber State University is honoring people, and I wish to mention four individuals who are being honored by the university.

State Representative Gage Froerer and State Senator Scott Jenkins will be receiving the Shurtliff Award for contributions to education. Both of them have done much for their particular communities, as well as Weber State and their outreach campus in Davis County.

Receiving the prestigious President's Award will be Nolan Karras, a cum laude graduate from Weber State who also served as speaker of the house in Utah and was instrumental in Weber State attaining the status of university level.

In addition to that, he has benefited the community as well as the education system in Utah ever since by being on the board of regents in Utah.

The second nominee will also be one who has been called one of the brightest minds in Utah politics, Spencer Stokes, a 1995 graduate from Weber State who has done much in his community as the commissioner as well as an advocate, and who's also, I have to admit, gone over to the dark side and is a staffer for the Senate right now as the chief of staff for a Utah Senator, but we will forgive him for that.

These four individuals have done much for the community, done much for their common county, Weber County, and the State of Utah, and are really deserving, very deserving of these honors they are being given by Weber State University today, and I wish to honor them as well.

DO-NOTHING CONGRESS

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

Ms. CHU. Mr. Speaker, at the end of what Republicans consider to be a grueling work week consisting of 2½ whole days, Republicans are heading home once again to take the next 2 months off.

The Republican-led “Do-Nothing Congress” was in session for a grand total of 8 days this month, and it took 5 weeks off before that.

During their time here in Washington, Republicans made sure to vote to end Medicare as we know it, increase costs for seniors, and give tax breaks to millionaires and companies that ship jobs overseas.

But on addressing the ongoing jobs crisis in this country, they did nothing. On providing tax cuts for the middle class and small business, they did nothing. On working towards a bipartisan solution to the looming fiscal cliff, they left the American people hanging by continuing to do nothing.

The hardworking men and women who call this country home deserve so much better. They certainly deserve better than nothing.

STEM JOBS ACT OF 2012

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6429, the STEM Jobs Act of 2012. This pro-growth, pro-jobs legislation will create a smarter and more focused immigration system for our country by prioritizing new immigrant visas for the best and brightest foreign students of American universities in the science, technology, engineering, and math fields.

These fields are the fastest-growing segments of our economy, and retention of these highly skilled American-trained innovators is critical to future economic growth in our country.

Rather than giving the boot to students who are American-educated at our best universities, like the University of Kansas, in these advanced fields of study, we should work together to ensure these bright minds can stay here and continue helping to boost our goal of competitiveness rather than returning to their home nation to work against us.

Mr. Speaker, by working together in bipartisan fashion to prioritize these students in our national immigration policy, we can boost job creation and improve our economy by allowing the U.S. to retain some of the best and brightest minds.

PORT INFRASTRUCTURE

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