

for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

BIG SPENDING LEADS TO FISCAL CLIFF

(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. Madam Speaker, at midnight tonight, our Nation is scheduled to fall off the fiscal cliff, because the Augusta Chronicle editorial of December 2 is correct:

It's that stubborn adherence to big spending that's powering the momentum toward the fiscal cliff. And halting big spending is what's going to stop it.

Over the past year, House Republicans have passed effective bipartisan legislation to prevent the entire fiscal cliff. Unfortunately, these bills remain stalled in the Senate graveyard. This fact makes it very clear that House Republicans have addressed this issue, and Speaker JOHN BOEHNER is holding firm for fiscal responsibility.

With only a few hours to go, it's my hope the Senate will accept one of the House proposals and send legislation back to the House, which will attempt to tackle Washington's out-of-control spending, extend tax cuts for all Americans, and prevent the devastating defense budget cuts before it is too late and hundreds of thousands of jobs are destroyed.

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

Congratulations, Jay Pierson, for your years of service.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE

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

Mr. KUCINICH. The question settling over this Capitol as we face the fiscal cliff is: How can this be happening? It's hyperpartisanship meets Citizens United. America's politics are so saturated with money and so politically polarized that the system cannot function to meet its obligations to keep the government running. But make no mistake about it—government does work. It's working for Pentagon contractors, for arms manufacturers, for oil companies, for coal companies. It's working for those who want to hold down wages and suppress the rights of workers. It's working for drug companies whose sweetheart deal on prescription drugs blew a hole in the Medicare budget.

The apparent dysfunctionality of government masks the reality that the tax resources of government increasingly are going to the highest bidders in a \$4 billion national election. The debris at the bottom of the fiscal cliff will be the wrecked hopes of doctors and Medicare patients, unemployed workers who can't protect their families, and middle class taxpayers who

just can't pay any more. Our Nation's pose at the fiscal cliff is proof of the necessity of a constitutional amendment, H.J. Res. 100, to rid this Nation of the corrupting influence of special interest money with public financing, which recreates a true government of the people.

FACTS THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DESERVE ABOUT THE FISCAL CLIFF

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

Mr. OLSON. Madam Speaker, I want to give the American people seven facts about our fiscal crisis.

Fact number one: we have a \$16 trillion national debt that's expected to go up to over \$22 trillion before President Obama leaves office.

Fact number two: Washington's problem is not revenue. It's uncontrolled spending.

Fact number three: in less than 14 hours, automatic tax hikes will give Washington more money to spend.

Fact number four: the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office says these automatic tax hikes threaten to put us back into another recession.

Fact number five: the House has done its job to avoid this crisis by passing a bipartisan bill to stop the tax hikes.

Fact number six: the Senate, with the President's approval, has refused to take up this bill.

Fact number seven: we've done our job in the House. It's time for the Senate to do their job before the clock strikes midnight.

REAL EFFECTS OF GOING OVER THE FISCAL CLIFF

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, at midnight tonight, the Budget Control Act of 2011 and sequestration will trigger spending cuts of \$1.2 trillion over 10 years, including \$109 billion in 2013. We'll have 8.2 percent, or \$54 billion, in domestic spending cuts funding to the National Cancer Institute that supports clinical trials for new cancer treatments. If you're a patient at Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo and you're diagnosed with late-stage cancer, you don't have the luxury of time that these cuts demand. That's what sequestration means to cancer patients in Buffalo and throughout the Nation.

We'll have 9.4 percent, or \$55 billion, cut in defense spending. What does it mean to my community of Buffalo and western New York? MOOG, a world leader in motion control technology with a thriving defense unit, a \$2.5 billion company that employs 8,400 people, takes a major hit. That's what sequestration means to the defense industry in Buffalo and throughout the Nation.

Madam Speaker, sequestration cannot be viewed in the abstractions of Washington and this institution. Its real consequences will be felt hard by real people in real communities throughout this Nation, including in Buffalo and western New York.

PASS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO AVERT THE FISCAL CLIFF

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Madam Speaker, the 112th Congress has been defined as the least productive Congress in recent memory. And now we run the risk of being the Congress whose action will cause real harm to our country's economic future. The American people have consistently said they want Republicans and Democrats to act like adults and work together on the challenges we face. And yet here we are again, facing a critical financial deadline with no agreement in place to avert the so-called fiscal cliff and to protect seniors, middle class families, and business owners while we reduce our debt. There's just too much at stake right now for this Congress to keep playing the games of brinksmanship and partisan politics.

Over the last 10 years, as I've met with Rhode Islanders from Woonsocket to Newport and everywhere in between, I've heard one clear message: now is the time for those of us who serve in this Chamber to get this hard work done on behalf of the men and women who sent us here. I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to spend less time assigning blame to each other and instead pass a comprehensive plan that averts the fiscal cliff, cuts our debt, and protects middle class families, seniors, and small business owners.

PUT DOWN THOSE GUNS

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

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Today is New Year's Eve. While we debate going over the fiscal cliff at midnight, there are people somewhere in America planning to shoot their guns in celebration at midnight. Put down those guns. Millions of people have died or been injured due to this dangerous celebratory custom. Put down those guns.

If I were in my district of Miami today, I would be participating in a press conference that we started 10 years ago, calling an end to this deadly custom. As a result, celebratory gunfire has largely disappeared from our country. It is a result of repeated demands and media events over and over again. Now people get it. Remember, what goes up must come down. Bullets are no exception. Instead, hug your kids. Light a candle. Resolve to sell your gun in the next community gun buy-back initiative. Say a prayer for

all of the precious children who have lost their lives to gun violence in our Nation, especially those babies we lost most recently in Connecticut.

Put down those guns. Don't even think about it. Because one bullet—just one bullet—will kill the party. Please, America, put down those guns.

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WORK TOGETHER FOR A HAPPY NEW YEAR

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

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. It will be very hard to wish the American people happy New Year unless this Congress reaches and passes an agreement that keeps taxes from going up on the 98 percent who have already had to sacrifice during the recession, that extends unemployment, enables doctors to continue to care for their Medicare beneficiaries, fixes the AMT, provides disaster recovery money to help our fellow Americans, and passes the farm bill.

Democrats agreed last year to \$1.5 trillion in cuts over the next 10 years, which are already in place. President Obama offered several concessions. Now Republicans need to give up at least an equal amount on the revenue side.

And right now—but definitely early in 2013—my constituents in the Virgin Islands need relief from the highest energy costs in the country and a fair Medicaid match so that everyone can have access to quality health care.

Whatever partisan differences we have and the Republicans have with our President, let's set them aside as this difficult year comes to a close and work together to give our constituents a happy New Year.

AVOIDING THE FISCAL CLIFF

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to implore the House GOP leadership to address the looming fiscal cliff. We have only a few hours left, and we owe it to the American people to find a solution, pass legislation, and send it to the President for his signature tonight.

There is too much at stake to let this critical situation devolve into the same politics as usual that we have seen throughout this Congress. The consequences of failure or inaction are dire. According to the Congressional Budget Office, going over the cliff would raise the unemployment rate from 7.9 to 9.1 percent in 2013. We would also see devastating cuts to programs that pay for education, food inspection, and air travel safety, nearing \$55 billion.

Madam Speaker, there is no more time, and the American people are de-

pending on us for a solution to avoid this fiscal cliff.

SENATE NEEDS TO GET TO WORK

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

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Speaker, here we are on New Year's Eve working to avoid this latest fiscal cliff. Of course, if you wonder why we're here, just look at the fact that we shouldn't have to be here.

Back on August 1, this House, with a bipartisan vote, passed a bill that would have avoided this fiscal cliff. It would have protected every American family from seeing a tax increase. The bill passed on August 1, and it's been sitting over in the Senate every day since then. But here we are on New Year's Eve, and the Senate is finally rolling up their sleeves and working to avoid this crisis.

Well, here we are at another crisis, and, unfortunately, as we look towards this New Year tomorrow, this is not the last time that we may be here. We passed a budget here in the House months ago. It's been more than 3 years since the Senate passed a budget, yet months from now we'll be hearing another cliff approaching of a government shutdown because the Senate hasn't passed a budget.

It's time for the Senate to start doing their work and stop creating these crises and forcing American families to wonder what's going to happen next and what's going to be the next crisis. We should not have any American family facing a tax increase. Let's get the American economy on track.

FISCAL CLIFF DEADLINE

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Madam Speaker, the American people are looking at Congress with disdain—and rightfully so. With the deadline on the fiscal cliff only hours away, we have failed to reach a reasonable compromise to move the economy forward and ward off painful tax hikes on the middle class.

The majority of Americans have sent us a clear message of what they want—a fair tax system, an economy that works for everyone, and a strong social safety net. These are classic American values, and throughout our history Members of both parties have made compromises in order to protect them. Those compromises reflect not just the will of the people but the way normal people do business.

Every day of their lives American workers solve problems and collaborate with their coworkers to meet objectives. They don't get to wait until after the deadline passes to get the job done; if they do, they lose their jobs. The American people can't just go home if they don't get their way. And yet

that's exactly what House Republican leadership did earlier this month. I hope it's not what they plan to do again this week.

Madam Speaker, if my colleagues don't wake up and respond to what the American people want, they will be the ones to ultimately lose their jobs—and rightfully so.

FISCAL CLIFF

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

Ms. HANABUSA. Madam Speaker, when Chairman Bernanke first coined the phrase the "fiscal cliff," he was really describing the perfect storm. The fiscal cliff is not only sequestration, the impact of the Budget Control Act, but also includes and is not limited to the expiration of the Bush tax cuts, unemployment insurance, the SGR, the AMT patch, the debt limit, other tax provisions. Ergo the perfect storm—major issues that this Republican-controlled House will not address until the wealthy are protected.

We must address a sufficient number of these provisions to avert the perfect storm. To do so, we must look to the building of public confidence so that we can continue steady growth in the economy and jobs, the true way to avert the cliff. This is why we must do what is best for the middle and working class first: extend the Bush taxes for the middle class, extend unemployment insurance, SGR, the AMT patch, delay the sequestration—those items which we can all agree upon. We've got to get to work.

IMPENDING FISCAL CLIFF

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

Mr. TONKO. Madam Speaker, well, here we are on the last day of calendar year 2012 with an impending fiscal cliff challenging all of us.

The women and men who serve in this great body assemble and express great differences, but those differences ought not divide us; they should build us with the best consensus.

We need a bold and balanced approach to this fiscal cliff. We need to make certain that the 33 consecutive months of private sector job growth are not disrupted. We need to make certain that the unemployment rate does not rise as the CBO, the Congressional Budget Office, suggests, to 9.1 percent. We need to avoid taxes growing by \$2,200 for an average family of four in 2013. That's what's impending here. It is important for us to go forward and take the initiative and avoid the consequences of that fiscal cliff.

I'm concerned because FEMA, as an example, would be cut by some \$878 million. Having witnessed the destruction in my district, we can ill-afford that. Cuts to nutrition programs, cuts