

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendments:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “North Korean Child Welfare Act of 2012”.

SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) hundreds of thousands of North Korean children suffer from malnutrition in North Korea, and North Korean children or children of one North Korean parent who are living outside of North Korea may face statelessness in neighboring countries; and

(2) the Secretary of State should advocate for the best interests of these children, including, when possible, facilitating immediate protection for those living outside North Korea through family reunification or, if appropriate and eligible in individual cases, domestic or international adoption.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(2) **HAGUE COUNTRY.**—The term “Hague country” means a country where the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, done at The Hague May 29, 1993, has entered into force and is fully implemented.

(3) **NON-HAGUE COUNTRY.**—The term “non-Hague country” means a country where the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, done at The Hague May 29, 1993, has not entered into force.

SEC. 4. BRIEFINGS ON THE WELFARE OF NORTH KOREAN CHILDREN.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of State shall designate a representative to regularly brief the appropriate congressional committees in an unclassified setting on United States Government efforts to advocate for the best interests of North Korean children and children of one North Korean parent, including efforts to address, when appropriate, the adoption of such children living outside North Korea without parental care.

(b) **CONTENTS.**—The Secretary’s designee shall be prepared to address in each briefing the following topics:

(1) The analysis of the Department of State of the challenges facing North Korean children residing outside North Korea and challenges facing children of one North Korean parent in other countries who are fleeing persecution or are living as de jure or de facto stateless persons.

(2) Department of State efforts to advocate for the best interest of North Korean children residing outside North Korea or children of one North Korean parent living in other countries who are fleeing persecution or are living as de jure or de facto stateless persons, including, when possible, efforts to address the immediate care and family reunification of these children, and, in individual cases where appropriate, the adoption of eligible North Korean children living outside North Korea and children of one North Korean parent living outside North Korea.

(3) Department of State efforts to develop a comprehensive strategy to address challenges that United States citizens would encounter in attempting to adopt, via intercountry adoption, North Korean-origin children residing in other countries or children of one North Korean parent residing outside North Korea who are fleeing persecution or are living as de jure or de facto stateless persons, including efforts to overcome the complexities involved in determining jurisdiction for best interest determinations and

adoption processing, if appropriate, of those who habitually reside in a Hague country or a non-Hague country.

(4) Department of State diplomatic efforts to encourage countries in which North Korean children or children of one North Korean parent are fleeing persecution or reside as de jure or de facto stateless persons to resolve issues of statelessness of North Koreans residing in that country.

(5) Department of State efforts to work with the Government of the Republic of Korea to establish pilot programs that identify, provide for the immediate care of, and assist in the family reunification of North Korean children and children of one North Korean parent living within South Korea and other countries who are fleeing persecution or are living as de jure or de facto stateless persons.

Amend the title so as to read: “An Act to express the sense of Congress regarding North Korean children and children of one North Korean parent and to require the Department of State regularly to brief appropriate congressional committees on efforts to advocate for and develop a strategy to provide assistance in the best interest of these children.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the reading). Without objection, the reading is dispensed with.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WAIVING THE REQUIREMENT THAT MEASURES ENROLLED DURING THE REMAINDER OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS BE PRINTED ON PARCHMENT

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I send to the desk a privileged concurrent resolution and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 147

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That pursuant to the last sentence of section 106 of title 1, United States Code, the requirement of section 107 of such title that the enrollment of any bill or joint resolution be printed on parchment is waived for the duration of the One Hundred Twelfth Congress, and the enrollment of any such bill or joint resolution shall be in such form as may be certified by the Clerk of the House of Representatives or the Secretary of the Senate (as applicable) to be a truly enrolled bill or joint resolution (as the case may be).

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1230

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas

and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

CONGRESSIONAL PAY FREEZE AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6726) to prevent the 2013 pay adjustment for Members of Congress and persons holding other offices or positions in the Federal Government from being made.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6726

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Congressional Pay Freeze and Fiscal Responsibility Act”.

SEC. 2. ELIMINATION OF 2013 PAY ADJUSTMENT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 147 of the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011, as amended by section 114(a) of the Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2013 (Public Law 112–175; 5 U.S.C. 5303 note), is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(1), by striking the matter after “ending on” and before “shall be made” and inserting “December 31, 2013,”; and

(2) in subsection (c), by striking the matter after “ending on” and before “no senior executive” and inserting “December 31, 2013.”.

(b) **ELIMINATION OF DELAYED ADJUSTMENT.**—Section 114(b) of the Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2013 is repealed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, for the last 2 years, Oversight has worked diligently. Our professionals have worked, to a certain extent, against their own best interest. They’ve found excesses in pay and compensation within the Federal system and moved with careful detail to try to reduce those amounts, make them more commensurate with the private sector. Currently, Federal workers receive typically over \$100,000 and are about 16 percent higher compensated than their private sector counterparts.

Today we will consider something on the fiscal cliff, but before we do it, I felt it was important to deal first with this bill. And so I’m happy, in a few

moments, to recognize Mr. FITZPATRICK, the author of this bill, which is very narrow, but simply says that the President cannot and should not add about \$11 billion to the deficit by the stroke of a pen, by an executive order at a time in which he's negotiating to try to raise taxes to earn maybe another \$60 billion or \$70 billion, at most, for the Federal Treasury.

So this will stop the Federal workers from receiving a pay increase. It will not stop their step increases. It will not stop their merit increases. It will not stop a great many other increases in their pay and compensation. But it will say that, at this time, when the American people are not getting automatic cost-of-living increases, neither should the Federal workforce.

And oh, by the way, Mr. Speaker, neither should you, neither should the ranking member, neither should I. And this bill stops us from giving ourselves a pay increase that the President has asked for.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, in order to allow the author of the bill to speak, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK).

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, the American people do not get an automatic pay increase, and neither should Members of Congress.

My bill, the Congressional Pay Freeze and Fiscal Responsibility Act, gives us the chance to show the American people that, at least in this regard, that we do get it: freeze salaries now, including for Members of Congress, at current levels.

Mr. Speaker, there are too few opportunities in this town where issues can bring us together. The President has done that for us this week. Unbelievably, in the middle of talks this week on tax rates and sequestration revision, in the midst of high deficits and a growing national debt, the President has proposed pay increases for Members of Congress, and has done so by executive order dated December 28.

I have to say that nobody in this town saw this coming, and very few think it is warranted. The Congress has not produced a budget in 3 years because the Senate refuses to do their job. The last thing they need is a pay increase. In fact, the No Budget, No Pay Act should be the law of this land. If you don't produce a budget within the prescribed period of time, you should not get paid. And if you produce a budget after the proscribed period of time, you should not get paid retroactively.

Mr. Speaker, this is common sense, but common sense just isn't too common in this city, and there's no sense at all in the President's executive order to increase pay at this time—not now, not under these circumstances, and not in this economy. It is an action taken unilaterally by the President,

which has earned an immediate and almost universal scorn, as well it should.

As we close out 2012, there are still too many issues unresolved. There are too few instances of accomplishments or results. Our economy is still at risk, and the American people are still struggling. American workers have given all they can. Have we? Have we given all that we can?

I'm glad to see that so many in this Chamber have cosponsored this measure. And in the past 24 hours, I've seen comments from Democrats and Republicans expressing outrage at the President's unilateral executive order. A Democrat in the Senate called it the worst idea ever. A Democrat in this House has called it inappropriate.

So, extend the pay freeze for all Federal workers, including elected officials. This bipartisan policy was originally put in place by our Democrat colleagues because they recognized that the pain being felt across our economy could not be reserved for the private sector.

Federal workers in my district and across the country are hardworking individuals. They deserve fair compensation too. Mr. Speaker, we're not trying to punish or force unnecessary hardship on civil servants, but taxpayers should not be taking home less than Federal workers.

Recent studies have shown that the average Federal worker earns 20 percent more than a private worker in a similar position. This disparity is even wider when benefits are taken into account. We have to recognize that over recent years there's been a growing disparity between the compensation for Federal workers and their counterparts in the private sector, and, quite frankly, that sends exactly the wrong message at exactly the wrong time.

The President's own Debt Commission, which has thus far been ignored by the President, recommended a 3-year pay freeze for Federal Government workers. If it would have been adopted at that time, that pay freeze would have lasted through 2013, the same period of time that this bill proposes.

Of course, we all agree that the men and women of our Nation's military deserve a pay increase while our Nation is at war. This bill provides that members of the Armed Forces will continue to be eligible for the pay increases that have been supported by me and a strong bipartisan majority of my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, we hear a lot of talk from some of our colleagues about shared sacrifice. Higher taxes from ObamaCare are coming, and tax rates for certain businesses and individuals are going to go up. The private sector and small businesses are being asked to sacrifice.

What kind of a message does it send if, at the same time, Members of Congress, the administration, and the Federal Government get a pay raise? That is exactly the wrong message at exactly the wrong time.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and to send the American people the strong message that the public sector and elected officials do not consider themselves exempt from the economic realities of our time.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this bill, H.R. 6726, which seeks to extend the pay freeze on the dedicated men and women of our civil service for the third consecutive year.

□ 1240

This is a pig in a poke.

From the outset, let me be clear. I strongly support freezing the salaries of Members of Congress. I've signed a letter to do that. And if this bill did only that, I would be an original cosponsor. But it doesn't. The Senate last night did just that. It froze our salaries. But it didn't do this. It didn't extend that freeze for a third year to the men and women who serve our country in Federal service.

The bill before us today, which cynically pairs a pay freeze for us in Congress with a continuation of the pay freeze on career civil servants, is yet another tired, duplicative, and cheap shot at our Nation's dedicated Federal workforce. It's one last parting shot in the dying days of this Congress, which cannot die too soon.

If Members of Congress and the public simply take a look at the scoreboard, they'll see that, with respect to the deficit reduction, Federal workers not only have borne a disproportionate share of the cost, they've virtually borne the only share of the cost. Federal employees have contributed already \$103 billion toward deficit reduction through an extended pay freeze that continues to this day—and benefit cuts.

For example, Federal workers have contributed \$60 billion towards deficit reduction as a result of the 2-year pay freeze covering 2011 and 2012. The recent pay freeze extension through March of this year adds another \$28 billion. This total also includes the \$15 billion contribution that will be made by Federal new hires who, starting next year, will see their pay decrease by 2.3 percent as contributions to their pensions are raised compared to current civil servants, with no commensurate increase in benefits. Meanwhile, this inequity is amplified when one compares the financial sacrifice made by our dedicated civil service to the deficit reduction contributions made by millionaires and billionaires over the past 2 years.

I might add, as if it weren't enough, my friends on the Republican side of the aisle actually tried for the first time to finance transit in America—in a transportation bill that died an ignominious and well-deserved death—\$50 billion by having these same pension benefit cuts on existing civil servants, which would have added \$50 billion

more to the deficit reduction cost only apportioned to Federal workers. Meanwhile, if I'm not mistaken, compared to the \$103 billion deficit reduction contribution by Federal employees, the deficit reduction sacrifices—that shared sacrifice my friend from Pennsylvania referred to—has demanded of millionaires and billionaires adds up to a grand total of zero. Yet, despite these facts, there are still some attempting to squeeze even more deficit reduction out of Federal workers, even as they seek to protect the millionaires and billionaires who have yet to make any contribution to debt reduction in this country.

Republicans in the 112th Congress have treated Federal employees like America's piggybank, dipping into pay and benefits to help pay for everything from the payroll tax cut to unemployment benefits to transit in the transportation bill.

Federal employees are on the front line of communities throughout America. They defend America. They serve side-by-side with our military in theaters of war. They put out fires. They process Social Security checks. They deal with the sick and they deal with our children. They protect our borders. I strongly oppose any attempt to cut benefits and wages that Federal employees have earned by providing essential services to all Americans.

Given the very small share of the Federal budget represented by Federal employees' salaries, further reducing their pay and benefits is not rational and not an effective way to reduce our Nation's debt. It's picking on them.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I would trust that the gentleman was unaware that Mr. FITZPATRICK also does have a bill that only freezes our pay, and it does not bear the gentleman's name as a cosponsor. Perhaps he can correct that today.

I yield 4 minutes to the gentlelady from Minnesota (Mrs. BACHMANN).

Mrs. BACHMANN. I thank the gentleman from California. I thank Mr. FITZPATRICK for his bill as well.

I, too, was shocked when I saw that the President of the United States, out of nowhere, at no request from any Member of Congress, had issued a unilateral executive order, which means he decided to take the law into his own hands and, in effect, become his own Congress and decide unilaterally, at the height of the fiscal cliff debate, that he would throw a new wrench into that argument, and it would be this:

When there is massive uncertainty, unfinished business, he would decide that he would unilaterally give a pay increase to the United States Congress exactly when the public is uncertain and doesn't know what is going to happen. Will their taxes go up? Will they no longer be the recipient of a spending program?

And so now Congress is going to get a spending increase?

This was a cynical planned move, Mr. Speaker, on the part of our President. He brought great drama to this effort, unnecessary drama. Because, you see, this House of Representatives already did this job to avert the fiscal cliff. We did this work. It was completed last August. We said that no one's taxes need to go up, and we were able to offset any spending cuts. The work was done. The problem is the Senate never took up the completed work of the House, and the President of the United States spent the last half of this year continually castigating the House of Representatives for not having this work done when we did our work.

And so out of nowhere, again, not at the request of Congress, the President decided to make a very unlovely party to this conversation—the Congress—even less palatable by putting upon us the idea that we wanted to raise our own salary when we had nothing whatsoever to do with that. That's why over the weekend I directed my staff that we would put forth a bill to take away this unilateral increase in salary for Congress at the President's hand. We put our bill together. Mr. FITZPATRICK put his bill together. We both introduced bills yesterday.

And I'm very happy to be a part of this bill, as every Member of Congress is happy to be for this bill, because, after all, this had nothing to do with the conversations. This was a cynical effort on the part of the President—and I believe nothing more cynical than the fact that the current agreement with the fiscal cliff was agreed to, we're told, somewhere around 11:30 last night. The bill was voted on at 2:00 in the morning. Again, this is New Year's Eve. I don't know how many Senators between midnight and 2 a.m. in the morning had a chance to thoroughly read this agreement that's 157 pages long.

You see, this is not how we should run our government. This is drama, unnecessary drama. And President Obama bears the responsibility for his failure to lead and his intentional effort, it appears, to mislead the American public with this cynical bill. That's why we are here this morning, to clarify the President's action. This was not at our behest, and we are rejecting this measure today to increase Congress's salary.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. I must say I appreciate the gentlelady's points about cynicism. But Federal workers and the American public might be forgiven for thinking that it is cynical to be decrying a last-minute deal necessitated by the fact that the House has been out for 15 of the last 19 weeks in recess instead of doing its business here on the House floor, which is why we're here today.

By the way, I also want to appreciate, because I know it wasn't a cheap shot, and I know that the distinguished chairman of the committee was trying to inform me of the fact that a bill I was not aware of was introduced yes-

terday. If there is a clean bill introduced by my friends from Minnesota and Pennsylvania simply to freeze congressional salaries, I'm only too happy to cosponsor it. I know that will reassure my friend, the chairman of the committee.

I now yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished ranking member of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS).

Mr. CUMMINGS. I want to thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 6726, which would extend the pay freeze on Federal employees through the end of 2013 and eliminate the pay adjustment for Members of Congress.

I think we need to be very careful in this discussion. As my distinguished colleague from Virginia just stated, I don't think there's any Member of Congress that is against freezing the pay of Members of Congress. If I had known about the bill, I would have cosponsored it. I don't know when it was filed, but I would have cosponsored it, as he said he would have also. But this is a different issue.

□ 1250

I cannot understand why the House is considering this bill right now. The Senate just approved a landmark deal to avert the fiscal cliff with widespread bipartisan support—a vote of 89–8. Acting on the fiscal cliff legislation as soon as possible should be our first and most urgent order of business this afternoon. But instead, this bill—which is yet another assault on very hard-working, middle class American workers—was introduced not very long ago. Is this really the way the majority wants to begin the new year?

Members of Congress certainly can do without a pay adjustment. And the bill passed by the Senate last night to resolve the fiscal cliff already includes a provision freezing Members' pay. I plan to vote for the package that came out of the Senate, assuming it stays in its present form. But Federal workers are the backbone of our government. Let me say that again: Federal workers are the backbone of our government. They're the ones who support our troops in the battlefield. They are the ones who provide care to our veterans. They're the same ones that bring about cures for dreadful diseases at NIH. They are the ones that protect our borders and safeguard our food supply. They're the same ones that ensure our seniors get their Social Security checks and help hunt down terrorists like Osama bin Laden. They're the same ones.

In return for their hard work and dedication, the majority has rewarded Federal workers with an unprecedented assault on their compensation and on their benefits. This has included proposals to arbitrarily cut the number of Federal workers. All you've got to do in my district, when you go and visit a

place like Social Security and you talk to the employees—many of whom are my constituents—employee ranks are being decimated. People are working harder and harder without the help that they need. Our colleagues have gone on to slash retirement benefits and now with the most recent proposal to extend the current 2-year pay freeze for yet another year.

I know all kinds of studies are presented to say that Federal workers are making a whole lot of money. Well, maybe we need to walk around and do a little survey of our own and talk to some of the people who work around here. Go to some of these Departments, Agriculture, the various Agencies, and talk to them. Talk to some of the ladies who may be a single-mother household making \$45,000 a year; talk to her about a pay freeze. Talk to the gentlemen who moved our offices—we've seen them all in the House throughout our buildings—ask them about the pay freeze. Talk to them, and I think they will tell you another story.

Millions of middle class Federal workers have already sacrificed more than \$100 billion in the name of deficit reduction and to pay for the extension of unemployment benefits to millions of other workers; yet our House Republicans insist on raiding their pay and their benefits again. Enough is enough.

We need to put aside this legislation and take up the fiscal cliff legislation immediately. The Senate has done its work, and now it is our responsibility.

The one thing we should not do is let the markets open tomorrow without the fiscal cliff being resolved. As I listened to my good friend, Mr. FITZPATRICK, talk about this provision with regard to making sure that Members of Congress not get a pay increase—and I agree with him totally—I hope that he will also join me when I vote for the legislation that has been sent over here by the Senate since it contains that very, very important provision.

With that, I wanted to thank again the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The ranking member made a good point, and in this body you should always go along with that which is true and oppose that which is false. The gentleman made an excellent point: we do have hundreds of thousands of hardworking Federal employees. They deliver to the American people a good product. The vast majority of them, if you ask them, do not feel they're over-compensated. They've worked hard; they're highly educated; in fact, they're not overpaid in many ways. They do, in fact, have a very generous defined benefit plan, something the American people usually don't have, something that would guarantee them a pension over and above their 401(k). And automatically it increases with inflation; automatically it is funded. That's true whether you're a postal

worker, a Member of this body, or the executive branch.

We're not arguing whether or not the Federal worker is dedicated at all. We're arguing whether this is the right time to add \$11 billion to a \$10 trillion deficit that we're not dealing with. We have a \$10 trillion deficit after today's action on "ending the cliff" that is still going to be projected. It hasn't been scored exactly, but it will still be over \$1 trillion this year—and if history repeats itself, for every remaining year of the Obama administration.

Now, the gentleman from Maryland did say one thing that perhaps was not accurate—and he didn't mean to. He said, well, if you ask people around here. Well, perhaps he forgot that here in the House of Representatives, this entire body—except for congressional salaries, which are stipulated under the Constitution—we have, in fact, had to deal with a 5 percent reduction year over year in actual money available to run the House, and in the next year, 6.4 percent; meaning, we have dropped more than 11 percent in the dollars spent—not in some hypothetical base plus, but in the dollars spent we have dropped more than 11 percent under Speaker BOEHNER.

That kind of a cut has not been duplicated by the executive branch. Had it been duplicated by the postal workers, we wouldn't have a \$12 billion loss there. Had it been duplicated by the executive branch, to be honest, Mr. Speaker, we would be talking today about how can we cut anymore and both sides would be agreeing. We haven't made an 11 percent drop in actual spending in 2 years. Had we done that, we wouldn't be looking at a hundred percent growth in the last 12 years in the cost of government.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. I would inquire of the Chair how much time remains on this side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia has 9½ minutes; the gentleman from California has 6 minutes.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I would simply observe to my friend, the chairman of the committee, in talking about the 11 percent cut here in the House of Representatives, of course that does not address the lack of productivity here in the House. There are many Americans who might think that that cut is deserved given how little got accomplished in the 112th Congress—one of the least productive Congresses in American history.

Mr. ISSA. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. I would normally yield, but I would remind my friend, Mr. Speaker, that he would not yield to me when he made his comments about cosponsorship of the piece of legislation, and so I reluctantly will not yield.

I now yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH).

Mr. LYNCH. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this so-called "Federal worker pay freeze." As the ranking member of the Subcommittee on the Federal Workforce, we have witnessed a deliberate effort over the past 2 years of the Republican majority to undertake a series of legislative attacks on our middle-income Federal workers, and this bill is no different.

Despite the title of this legislation, this bill would extend the current statutory pay freeze for all Federal civilian employees—the vast majority of whom are middle class earners—through 2013.

In place of a balanced approach to deficit reduction based on a genuine commitment to shared sacrifice, this bill again seeks to target Federal employees who are already in their second year of a 2½-year pay freeze. Collectively, because of the pay freeze that's been in effect for the last couple of years, these same Federal workers have already contributed over \$100 billion towards deficit reduction and continued unemployment benefits for other workers.

I'd like to note that I am not opposed to a pay freeze for Members of Congress. I think we should lead by example. In fact, I have voted for pay freezes for congressional pay on six different occasions.

□ 1300

Regrettably, however, this legislation continues the concerning trend throughout the 112th Congress of attempting to address deficit reduction on the backs of middle-income workers in the Federal Government again by attacking their take-home pay. These are the dedicated folks who work at our VA hospitals; they protect our borders; they care for, again, our wounded veterans; they run the research facilities in researching cures for deadly disease, and they provide services to the Defense Department and the State Department. So these are the people that are doing the hard work, and this is not a way to repay them. Again, they are already in the second year of a 2½-year pay freeze.

I agree that that pay freeze should apply to me and other Members of Congress; however, these hardworking fellow employees should not be asked to carry even more of this burden.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I know my friend from Virginia means well, but, once again, he talks about a lack of accomplishment. Apparently, he hasn't looked at the work that the clerks have done here on the floor. He hasn't looked at the work that CBO, the Congressional Budget Office, has done, or the Government Accountability Office. Those are all funded, and yet we had an 11 percent reduction in spending.

So, in fact, when we're talking about the hardworking men and women of the government, this branch has found a way to reduce spending by over 11

percent in spite of the hardworking men, not just here on the floor and in our offices, but the Governmental Accountability Office, the CBO and others.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, before I call on the distinguished Member from Virginia, I would simply note, of course, the productivity I talk about is the productivity of this legislative body, not the honorable men and women who serve us, but for us.

And we passed a fewer number of bills in living memory. We have been out for 15 weeks since August instead of doing the people's business. That is one of the least productive records in American history, and no words are going to change that, not in the history books and not in the minds of the American public that is showing its disapproval of that productivity with the low approval ratings of this Congress.

I now am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished Member from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my very good friend who has been tireless in representing not just the interests of his constituency but of this great country.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, and it may seem petty, but if it were done by the other side, it would be a big deal. This bill was dropped at about 20 past 12 today and then it was brought up. Now, in less than an hour, we drop a bill and we bring it to the floor? That's not the way to do business. The caucuses are involved in other things. The whole Democratic Caucus is talking to the Vice President, and here we are about to do something of real consequence, not just for Federal employees and the Members of Congress, but for the country.

First of all, as my very good friends, Mr. LYNCH and Mr. CONNOLLY, have pointed out, Federal employees have contributed now over \$100 billion toward deficit reduction. They have had their pay frozen for 2 years. This will be a third year. New hires are going to have to contribute four times as much into their pension as they would have to today. So they're really being made a scapegoat. And we're doing this at a time when we're trying to compete in a global economy.

Now, what happens is we send a message to Federal employees that if you can get out, get out. We don't really appreciate what you're doing for the public sector. Get into the private sector. Most of you can make two or three times what you're making in the public sector. So this is a good time to go, because otherwise your family is going to have to suffer and you're not going to be able to achieve the kind of quality of life that your talents, experience, and skills would merit, and we're going to continue doing this to you individually and collectively.

That's not the way to run a government. We pass all these laws, we pass appropriation bills, and then it's the executive branch's responsibility to carry them out. How do we think we can pass these laws and then expect people to carry these laws out with efficiency and effectiveness when we take \$100 billion out of their compensation? What kind of a message does that send to the people who serve us directly and all of the American people's interests in terms of their ultimate mission? It sends all the wrong message.

Now, I know people don't care much about the procedural issue, but, boy, what a precedent to set.

Mr. ISSA. Will the gentleman yield? Mr. MORAN. Yes, I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. ISSA. I might note for the gentleman, it was posted last night, which means it was actually posted before the cliff bill. The technical dropping is a different rule. But it was posted, so it was available to all Members last night. And, of course, as you know, it's very simple. We simply freeze, and that's not hard for people to understand. I hope the gentleman understands a half percent freeze is all this bill does.

Mr. MORAN. I trust the gentleman will yield me the 30 seconds that he took to explain that.

Mr. ISSA. I would be delighted to yield the gentleman 15 seconds.

Mr. MORAN. I thank the chairman.

The point is: you drop it on New Year's Eve. I'm not sure if that isn't a distinction without a difference, really. There's been no time to review this. Nobody's focused on this.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. MORAN. I would hope the gentleman who chairs Oversight and Government Reform would recognize, as Mr. CONNOLLY and Mr. LYNCH have recognized, that there are some very serious risks in going forward with this. I don't think that the way to solve our deficit situation is to cut off our nose to spite our face, and that's really what we are doing here. This is not fair to the Federal workforce, it's not fair to the country, and it should not be passed today.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I note, once again, that this is a half a percent that will not be increased by this action—half a percent—so on \$100,000 it's \$500 of a pay raise that will not occur for Federal workers, and, in fact, the sky is not falling if we choose not to have that happen this year.

With that, I'd like to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FLORES).

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, our Nation is on the verge of going over a fiscal cliff because Washington has a spending problem. President Obama still does not understand this problem

as he has recently issued an executive order granting pay increases to most civilian employees and to Members of Congress. I believe that, given our current economic climate and huge Federal deficits, these raises are grossly inappropriate and represent an insult to hardworking American taxpayers. These factors have prompted me to join this legislation to halt these unnecessary salary increases.

You have heard arguments today that Federal workers are being victimized by this legislation. Well, here are a few facts that will rebut that assumption:

One, the income of the average American private sector family has gone down about \$4,000 during the last 4 years;

Number two, Federal workers, on average, earn pay and benefits that are equal to about twice that of their private sector counterparts;

Number three, Federal workers pay an amount into their Federal retirement plan that is less than one-tenth of the amount that private sector employees have to pay into Social Security; and

Four, last year, hardworking American taxpayers had to pay about \$40 billion to subsidize the insolvency of the Civil Service Retirement System.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons and the huge deficits of our Federal Government, I support this legislation wholeheartedly.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I have an inquiry. How much time remains on this side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia has 2¾ minutes remaining. The gentleman from California has 3½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. If I may inquire, Mr. Speaker, if my colleague on the other side has any other speakers?

Mr. ISSA. Not at this time, so I would simply reserve the right to close.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. I'm prepared to wrap up and yield back, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I'm worried about the future of the Federal workforce's continued denigration of public service. Continued whacking away at compensation and benefits that make it an attractive career choice for so many young people is going to make it much harder to recruit and retain the skilled workforce of the future. And despite what my colleague just indicated—I'm not quite sure where he got his statistics—the Federal Salary Council, which looks at Federal salaries every year, concluded that Federal employees earned, in 2011, 26.3 percent less than their private sector counterparts and, this year, 34.6 percent less. A CBO study found that people in the Federal workforce with a Ph.D. degree earn 23 percent less than their private sector counterparts, and if you had a bachelor's degree, roughly 23 percent less, and only in the high school level did

they actually earn more, 21 percent more.

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Actually, we've got a problem. As we look at the baby boom generation getting ready to retire, 47 percent of the entire existing workforce is eligible for retirement over this next decade. How will we recruit and retain that workforce if we're going to continue to use them not only as a piggy bank to finance the deficit, but perhaps more disgracefully as a punching bag in terms of disparagement of service? We are far away from John Kennedy's call to serve your country.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, this bill is going to pass, and it's going to pass likely on a bipartisan basis because it would be the ultimate in inappropriate behavior by this body to allow our pay to be raised. This is something I think that both sides have said fairly straightforward that this is not a time in which Members of Congress should take their \$174,000 salary and increase it. I don't believe we've earned it this year. By the way, I believe the President's salary will not go up and the Vice President's salary will not go up, and that is also appropriate.

But as we look at the hardworking men and women of the Federal workforce and look at my colleagues from Virginia who spoke and my colleague from Maryland who spoke, the point that the Federal workforce should be listening to today is that, in fact, it's not how hard they work; it's what can the American people afford. We cannot afford to continue these deficits. It's not how hard they work. It is the inefficiency and waste not just in their office, but in the way government is organized.

Mr. Speaker, everyone had a New Year's resolution, I trust, last night. For all of us, I'm sure it was to lose a little weight, do a few other things that we haven't been doing; but for me particularly, it's to go after the duplication in government, to go after the organizational flaws in government that would allow us to be less critical, perhaps, of what we can afford from our Federal workforce and more proud of the fact that it is organized for efficiency.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, the President called for reorganization authority and then did nothing in his first term. It is my goal to give him reorganization and a reorganizational plan. It is my committee's obligation to do that.

As I vote today to freeze our pay and to freeze all of the Federal workers' pay, I do so recognizing that the best way for Federal workers to get a pay raise without it being on the backs of the American people is for us to reorganize government, whether it's in information technology or any other

goods and services that Federal Government delivers. We can do better. We can take waste out of Medicare, and we can take waste out of all aspects of the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, I know this bill will pass on a bipartisan basis because it's appropriate to do here today. I urge its support, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 6726, a bill that aims to claw back the .5% COLA promised to federal employees when the Continuing Resolution expires in March of this year. While I do not oppose the provision of the bill that freezes the pay for Members of Congress, I cannot support a measure that asks federal employees who have already disproportionately sacrificed so much for deficit reduction to sacrifice even more.

This bill is yet another assault on the middle-class Americans who work to ensure that the food we eat and the water we drink are safe. These dedicated public servants protect our airports, care for our injured veterans and guard our borders. And yet, as this bill proves, their service and sacrifices are not valued by many in Congress who, when they look at federal employees can only see their pensions and pay and benefits as a source they can turn to anytime they need extra cash.

Federal workers have contributed \$60 billion as part of a two-year pay freeze; they contributed \$15 billion more as part of the Payroll Tax Extension; and the Continuing Resolution the government is currently operating under asked them to forgo, until March, the .5% COLA they were promised this year. If this bill passes, the two year pay freeze Federal employees are currently laboring under will be extended for another year. Enough is enough!

Members of Congress can afford to go without a pay raise, but Federal employees should not be treated as if they were the federal government's piggy-bank.

I ask my colleagues to join me in opposing this bill so that we stop wasting our time in the dying hours of this Congress and instead focus our attention on the important business of moving the bipartisan package that the Senate passed yesterday to address the Fiscal Cliff.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, with regard to H.R. 6726, this is a bill to deny all federal civilian employees a 0.5% pay increase after they have endured two consecutive years of a mandatory pay freeze. This bill unfairly punishes federal employees who have already sacrificed significantly during difficult economic times. By denying federal employees even a modest salary adjustment this Republican bill strangles the federal workforce, making federal service an ever less attractive career option for America's best and brightest.

This bill also denies a modest cost of living increase to Members of Congress. If House Republicans want to deny a pay increase for Members of Congress then they should have put forward a clean bill that does not punish the federal civilian workforce.

Last night the U.S. Senate passed the bipartisan amendment to H.R. 8 that prevents a tax increase for 98% of American taxpayers. In Section 902 of that legislation is language denying a cost of living increase to Members of Congress in 2013. If my Republican colleagues really want to deny Congress a pay

increase that has a chance of becoming law then I urge them to vote for the Senate's bipartisan agreement that raises taxes on millionaires and billionaires and cuts taxes for middle class families.

Mr. CURSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this bill that would extend the current two-and-half year pay freeze for federal employees.

Unlike others in the middle class, federal employees are the LONE segment that has made sacrifices that are directly dedicated to deficit reduction. Federal employees have sacrificed \$60 billion dollars in lost wages over 10 years for deficit reduction, they have been forced to pay 50% of the cost of the Unemployment Insurance extension, contributing another \$15 billion, and their contribution to their pension from their pay has significantly been raised, further depleting their available cash to take care of daily necessities.

These impacts are being felt by hard working employees, critical to our nation, who are by no means the highly paid federal employees. We are talking about nursing assistants in VA hospitals that care for our wounded veterans who make only \$27,000 a year or prison correctional officers at 38,000 who face our most dangerous criminals daily. Once again, regular working men and women are being asked to sacrifice in the name of national debt reduction, and yet this Congress has yet to pass a SINGLE tax increase on the wealthiest Americans.

Federal employees earn and deserve their wages. These workers will purchase goods and services, pay off bills and put this money right back into our economy. The burden of deficit reduction should be shared, not placed squarely on the back of America's middle class.

One more point—to be clear passage of this bill will include a pay raise for members of Congress—a raise they do not deserve. We can remedy that misfortune by passing the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 which specifically restricts an increase in Members of Congress pay.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, Members of Congress do not deserve a pay raise. I won't accept one. In fact, all of us should have our pay docked, as should the president. But that's not what this vote is about. It's time for members of both parties to stop attacking our Nation's hardworking civil servants.

Unlike other sectors of our society, since the beginning of 2011, federal employees, as a result of reduced compensation and benefits, have already made significant contributions to efforts to reduce our Nation's deficit. I know that every federal employee continually is willing to contribute to efforts that address our Nation's unfunded spending obligations and liabilities. However, they also rightly expect that others will join them in this effort.

The legislation before us could have a significant impact on our ability to recruit and retain qualified employees.

Has anyone fully considered the impact that a three-year pay freeze will have on the CIA, the NSA, the National Reconnaissance Office and the National Counter Terrorism Center?

Or the impact on the FBI, which has, since 9/11, disrupted scores of terrorist plots against our country?

Or the impact on our military, which is supported by federal employees every day on military bases across the Nation?

Or the impact on VA hospitals across the country, which are treating military veterans from World War II to today?

Or the impact on the Border Patrol?

Or the impact on NASA, its astronauts, engineers and scientists, especially on the nine-year anniversary of the tragic loss of the Columbia crew and a week after the 45th anniversary of the loss of the Apollo 1 crew?

Or the impact on NIH, and other federal researchers, scientists and doctors?

Clearly, federal employees don't just sit behind desks. They are members of our communities who are out in the field, often in harm's way, protecting our Nation. Within the last year, residents in northern Virginia mourned the loss of two federal employees who died in the line of duty—U.S. Park Police Sergeant Michael Andrew Boehm of Burke, and National Park Service Ranger Margaret Anderson, who previously worshipped in Lovettsville.

Their sacrifices remind us that many federal employees are often put in dangerous situations. Since 1992, nearly 3,000 federal employees have paid the ultimate price while serving their country, according to the Office of Personnel Management. The first American killed in Afghanistan, Mike Spann, was a CIA agent and a constituent of mine from Manassas Park. I attended his funeral. Over 100,000 CIA, FBI, DEA agents, and State Department employees have served side-by-side with our military to carry out the War on Terror in locations such as Iraq and Afghanistan. Three years ago, I attended funerals for some of the seven CIA agents who were killed by a suicide bomber at Forward Operating Base Chapman near Khost on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

Our Nation mourns the loss of the four Americans who died during the attack on the U.S. consulate and annex in Benghazi, Libya, U.S. Ambassador J. Christopher Stephens, U.S. Foreign Service Officer Sean Smith, and two former Navy Seals, Glen Doherty and Tyrone Woods.

And we should not forget that the CIA agents who planned and helped execute the raid that killed Osama Bin Laden are federal employees.

Every day, Border Patrol agents and ICE agents are working to stop the flow of illegal immigrants, victims of human trafficking and drugs across our borders. Federal firefighters work to protect federal lands and mitigate the spread of deadly fires. Immediately following the December 2011 shooting at Virginia Tech, some of the first law enforcement officers on the scene were ATF agents. These are but a few examples of the vital jobs performed by federal employees.

Federal employees who are not in harm's way on a daily basis are also dedicated public servants. The medical researchers at the National Institutes of Health working to develop cures for cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer's, Lyme disease and autism are all federal employees. Dr. Francis Collins, the physician who mapped the human genome and serves as director of the NIH, is a federal employee. The CDC employees tracking steroid shots tainted with meningitis are federal employees. The USDA researchers who work with our farmers to find solutions for the invasive species that are destroying our crops are federal employees. The National Weather Service meteorologists who track tornadoes and hurricanes, as well as the FDA inspectors working to stop a salmonella outbreak, are federal employees.

The Nation's debt limit has been reached. We have annual deficits of more than \$1 trillion. We are facing the prospect of across-the-board cuts to programs from the sequester. All of our Nation's fiscal problems could be resolved if the Congress had the will to pass the bipartisan Simpson-Bowles proposal, which I have long supported and have voted for.

I vote no.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6726.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

LIEUTENANT RYAN PATRICK JONES POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 3662) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6 Nichols Street in Westminster, Massachusetts, as the "Lieutenant Ryan Patrick Jones Post Office Building".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 3662

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Lieutenant Ryan Patrick Jones Post Office Designation Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) First Lieutenant Ryan Patrick Jones volunteered to serve the United States in the Army.

(2) Lieutenant Jones earned his rank, the Army Achievement Medal, the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star, the Iraqi Freedom Medal, the Combat Action Badge, and the War on Terrorism Badge through his dedication to the highest ideals of the United States.

(3) Lieutenant Jones chose from a young age to generously volunteer his talents to his community, and was recognized with academic, social, and athletic leadership positions throughout his life.

(4) Lieutenant Jones committed himself to excellence in all aspects of his life, including earning a Bachelor of Science degree, with honors, in civil and environmental engineering.

(5) While earning his engineering degree at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Lieutenant Jones was awarded a Reserve Officers' Training Corps scholarship.

(6) Lieutenant Jones faithfully and expertly led his fellow soldiers as a platoon leader in the Army's First Infantry Division while deployed to Iraq in 2007.

(7) Lieutenant Jones made the ultimate sacrifice for the United States on May 2, 2007, when he was killed in action by an improvised explosive device set by the enemy.

(8) Lieutenant Jones' life of service, courage, and honor was made possible by his dedicated parents, Mr. Kevin Jones and Mrs.

Elaine Jones, who reside in Westminster, Massachusetts.

(9) Mr. and Mrs. Jones organized the shipment of supplies to soldiers serving alongside their son, thereby supporting the morale of the members of the Armed Forces.

(10) Before entering combat, Lieutenant Jones made arrangements to ensure that his life insurance policy proceeds would become a scholarship fund to benefit others, a request that Mr. and Mrs. Jones fulfilled.

(11) Lieutenant Jones is remembered by his family, his friends, and the people of the United States as a role model for his fellow citizens to emulate.

(12) Lieutenant Jones' spirit of generosity has been commemorated by organizations ranging from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to the Boston Celtics.

(13) It is fitting that the life of Lieutenant Jones should be further memorialized for future generations by naming the post office in Westminster, Massachusetts, in his honor.

SEC. 3. LIEUTENANT RYAN PATRICK JONES POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6 Nichols Street in Westminster, Massachusetts, shall be known and designated as the "Lieutenant Ryan Patrick Jones Post Office Building".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Lieutenant Ryan Patrick Jones Post Office Building".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, on this second-to-last day of this Congress, the Senate has sent us a naming. Although my committee has stopped doing namings, except in the case of Medal of Honor recipients, this one is coming over, and I believe it is meritorious. The Senate has asked us to pass it, and I will do so today.

It was introduced by Senator SCOTT BROWN of Massachusetts and would designate a facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6 Nichols Street in Westminster, Massachusetts, as the Lieutenant Ryan Patrick Jones Post Office Building.

Lieutenant Jones earned his engineering degree at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. When he earned his degree, he was also awarded an ROTC scholarship in the Reserve Officer Training Corps. Lieutenant Jones led his fellow soldiers as a platoon leader in the Army's 1st Infantry Division while deployed in Iraq in 2007. And I