

the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. I rise today in support of freedom and liberty, the basic principles our country was founded upon. It's a sad day for America when our President infringes upon our religious rights, a fundamental right protected by the First Amendment.

The President announced he will make a so-called accommodation on the ObamaCare rule requiring religiously affiliated organizations to offer insurance plans that cover contraception.

Even though the President slightly backtracked his attack on religious freedom, he did not go far enough. The new rule still mandates that religious organizations with moral objections will be forced to act against their religious beliefs.

This is not about health care; it's about our rights under the First Amendment. And this is yet another example of why we must repeal ObamaCare in its entirety, adhere to the basic tenets of our Constitution, and stop the administration's severe overreach. The sooner we repeal ObamaCare, the sooner we restore freedom and liberty to all Americans.

#### SAME SEX IMMIGRATION BENEFITS

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

Mr. WELCH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to talk about two wonderful Vermonters from Dummerston: Frances Herbert and Takako Ueda.

They met in college in Michigan more than 30 years ago. Takako, from Japan, was studying English on a student visa; and after completing school, Takako returned to Japan but stayed in touch with Frances. Eventually, Takako returned to the U.S., and she and Frances married. Quite a love story.

Now Frances and Takako face their biggest challenge yet. Takako is being threatened with deportation. Frances and Takako are a same-sex couple. Their marriage is recognized in Vermont, but it's not recognized under Federal law; and without that recognition, Frances and Takako are not eligible for the same immigration benefits as other married couples.

Madam Speaker, these are good people. They have a good relationship. They're good Vermonters. They deserve better.

□ 0910

#### HHS RULING

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

Mr. BENISHEK. Madam Speaker, from the 1099 provision, to IPAB, to the

hundreds of billions of dollars in cuts to Medicare, it's clear that President Obama's health care law is bad medicine for America. But the recent ruling by the Department of Health and Human Services is the most egregious example of Federal intrusion to date.

Soon after the ruling was announced, I began hearing from citizens across Michigan's First District. Letters and emails came in by the hundreds, with the vast majority in opposition to the administration's position. It is evident from this correspondence that many northern Michiganders are deservedly upset about the administration's blatant attack on our religious freedom enshrined in the First Amendment.

The opposition to this law is not about access to contraception, as my friends on the other side of the aisle would have you believe. Women and men can already access contraception at very low cost. The debate is over the fact that the administration's new rule strikes at the fundamental beliefs of our democracy.

The concept that the Federal Government can force people to pay for actions that violate the teachings of their faith goes against two centuries of American religious freedom. This action represents the very government overreach that the Framers of our Nation fought against and the reason the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution.

Madam Speaker, like most northern Michigan citizens, I see the right to practice one's religion as a fundamental liberty, and I intend to fight this action forever.

#### GETTING COUNTRY BACK ON TRACK

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, well, we're going to take up legislation which is targeted to fix the reimbursement for doctors, which is absolutely essential to Medicare. This threat should go away forever. We should make a permanent fix and not pretend that we can just keep dragging this on without jeopardizing seniors.

Unemployment, we need to extend that for people who can't find work. They lost their jobs through no fault of their own. They can't find work; we need to help them out.

But borrowing \$100 billion from the Social Security trust fund under the premise that the consumer spending generated will bring about economic recovery and create jobs, that's the Larry Summers principle from the stimulus era. Look, that doesn't work. You want to create jobs, you want to borrow \$100 billion, let's borrow \$100 billion, finance the transportation bill that the Republicans pulled from the floor this week, and put a few million people to work rebuilding the crumbling infrastructure in this country with all made-in-America goods. That

would be an effective way to get this country back on track, not Social Security tax cuts.

#### HONORING LOCAL WORLD WAR II HERO JOHN TEMAN

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Madam Speaker, for most Americans, our busy lives make it difficult to reflect as often as we should upon the incredible sacrifices by those heroes who have answered the call to service throughout our Nation's history.

Today, I would like to take a moment to honor the service of one such hero from my home State of Minnesota. Minnesota native and World War II pilot Lieutenant John Teman flew missions in all the major battles in Europe. He flew through flak on the night before D-day in strategic spots over Europe behind enemy lines, and he repeatedly flew missions dropping supplies to the troops trapped at the Battle of the Bulge.

In recognition of his incredible service, John has been awarded seven Bronze Stars, three Air Medals, the Croix de Guerre twice, and on Wednesday he received France's highest recognition and honor, the Legion of Honor.

Madam Speaker, John epitomizes what it means to be a hero. I'd like to thank him for his service and congratulate him on an honor that's much deserved.

#### REOPENING AMERICAN CAPITAL MARKETS TO EMERGING GROWTH COMPANIES ACT OF 2011

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

Mr. CARNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to encourage my colleagues to support bipartisan legislation to create jobs. In December, Congressman STEPHEN FINCHER and I introduced H.R. 3606, the Reopening American Capital Markets to Emerging Growth Companies Act of 2011.

Our legislation will create jobs by making it easier for emerging growth companies to undertake an IPO. On average, 92 percent of a company's growth occurs after they go public. Unfortunately, in recent years the number of companies going public has fallen dramatically. This legislation will reduce the cost of going public for emerging growth companies by phasing in certain costly regulatory requirements.

Last night, our legislation passed out of the Financial Services Committee with a bipartisan vote of 54-1. We have worked hard to craft this legislation in a way that can pass both the House and the Senate and be signed by the President.

Please join me in supporting this bipartisan legislation that will create jobs and grow the economy.

## MORE VIEWERS NOTE MEDIA BIAS

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, according to a Pew Research Center survey conducted last month, more viewers feel the national media are biased than ever before. The survey found that 67 percent of Americans say there is a "fair amount" or a "great deal of bias" in news coverage. Only 10 percent responded that there is "no bias at all" in the national media.

These percentages show a significant increase in the number of Americans who believe that they receive biased coverage of current events by the national media. The national media owe it to the American people to be honest and fair. Americans' distrust of the national media will continue to grow until the media adhere to the highest standards of their profession and provide the American people with facts, balanced stories, and objective coverage of the news.

## HOUSING CRISIS FACING AMERICANS

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

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to talk about the housing crisis facing Americans. In California's San Joaquin Valley, we know firsthand the pain the housing crisis has caused our families and communities as foreclosure rates have continued to hover well above the national average.

The \$25 billion settlement announced last week gives significant relief to homeowners; but it's not the wholesale, systemic change necessary to put our housing market back on solid ground.

Homeowners are tired of waiting for meaningful change, and tweaks are not enough. Enacting the HOME Act and a homeowner's bill of rights would go a long way toward stabilizing the market and leveling the playing field for the future. We know it's essential to get our economy back on track.

Restoring economic security starts with passing meaningful policies that rebuild the foundation of our communities and the American home. After all, the American home is the single largest investment that the average American family makes in their lifetime. It's part and parcel of the American Dream and the foundation of America's middle class.

## CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3630, MIDDLE CLASS TAX RELIEF AND JOB CREATION ACT OF 2012

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 554 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 554

*Resolved*, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 3630) to provide incentives for the creation of jobs, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the conference report to its adoption without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate; and (2) one motion to recommmit if applicable.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. CAPITO). The gentleman from South Carolina is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume.

During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

## GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, House Resolution 554 provides for consideration of the conference report on H.R. 3630, a bill to extend the payroll tax deduction, protect Medicare payments for doctors, and begin responsible reform of the unemployment benefits system.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of this rule. Today, we are taking up legislation that does three things: extend the payroll tax deduction, reform our unemployment benefits system, and protect Medicare payments for doctors.

First, on the bright side, Republicans and Democrats were able to find a compromise to pay for two very important things: much-needed reforms to the unemployment benefits program and protecting Medicare payments to the physicians who serve our seniors.

In regard to the payroll tax deduction, unfortunately our friends on the left did not think it was important to pay for the extension. Spending without making the proper adjustments is a notion I am not fond of. My voting record makes no secret of that. This is what makes this vote so difficult today. You cannot always get exactly what you want; but, today, I applaud both sides for attempting to get fairly close to it.

We cannot continue to pay unemployment benefits for 99 weeks indefinitely. We cannot allow payments to our doctors to be affected, as that will only turn around and affect the care available to those in need.

□ 0920

And we cannot raise taxes on American families. By voting for this rule, we are signaling it is time to move forward, plain and simple.

Once again, Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this rule. I encourage my colleagues to vote "yes" on the rule, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I thank my good friend from South Carolina for yielding me time.

Millions of Americans all across this country are struggling, and they need our help. What they don't need is more Republican gamesmanship at their expense. The Democrats have literally forced the Republicans to realize that they can't just make policy measures that help the rich while taking away from the poor.

I may support this bill in light of the fact that it will give a payroll tax cut to 160 million Americans. It also extends unemployment insurance to those Americans who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own, and it will allow seniors access to their physicians under Medicare. And, as a footnote there, we really should do the doc fix permanently and stop piecemealing and playing games with this particular measure.

The bill is not perfect, the pay-for is nowhere near perfect, and the length of the extension is not perfect, but it does contain critical provisions that many Democrats negotiated to keep in the bill. While we were able to compromise today, I do not think that my Republican friends deserve too much credit. Since they regained the majority, the American people have seen firsthand their obstructionist policies in action. In fact, earlier this week, my friends on the right attempted to bring to the floor a transportation bill so flawed that my former colleague and Transportation Secretary and good friend of mine, Ray LaHood, stated:

This is the most partisan transportation bill I've ever seen, and it is also antisafety. It hollows out our number one priority, which is safety. It's the worst transportation bill I've ever seen during 35 years of public service.

The American people want a government that understands the challenges they face daily. Republicans want an economy that works great for the greediest and leaves the neediest out in the cold. Just ask a teacher in my constituency in Belle Glade or Margate or a firefighter in Fort Lauderdale or Pompano Beach and they'll tell you an extra \$1,000 in their pockets makes a huge difference in putting food on the table, gas in the car, and being able to stay in their homes.

We've been forced to strike this compromise because, for decades, Republicans have pushed policies that favor the wealthy. We should not forget that, while we are debating how to pay for this payroll tax cut, unemployment insurance, and payments to Medicare