

Representatives from 1974 to 1976 and was then elected to the Indiana Senate, serving from 1976 to 1982. As a member of the Indiana General Assembly, Mrs. Hall was influential in establishing the Genesis Center, Hudson-Campbell Fitness Center, and the Adam Benjamin Metro Center, in Gary. Katie also served as the Chair for the Lake County Democratic Committee from 1978 to 1980 and for the Indiana Democratic Convention in 1980. In 1982, following the untimely passing of United States Congressman Adam Benjamin, Jr., Katie won the special election to complete his term in office and to represent the First Congressional District of Indiana in the 98th Congress, becoming the first African American from Indiana elected to serve in the United States House of Representatives. While in office, Katie served as chairwoman of the Post Office and Civil Services Subcommittee on Census and Population. During her time in Congress, Representative Hall made a truly historic contribution through her sponsorship of the bill that made Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday a national holiday. This bill had been stalled in the House for fourteen years, and through her passion and persistence, Katie was successful in establishing this recognition of Dr. King. Mrs. Hall was a trailblazer for the Civil Rights Movement and a devoted public servant to her community, state, and Nation. In the years following her term, Katie continued her life of public service as city clerk for Gary, Indiana from 1988 to 2003.

Katie Hall leaves behind a loving family. She is survived by her cherished husband, John Henry Hall, as well as her adoring daughters, Jacqueline and Junifer, and her beloved granddaughter, Kristina. She also leaves behind many other dear friends and family members, as well as a saddened community and a grateful nation.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in remembering the Honorable Katie Hall for her tremendous contributions to the people of her community, the State of Indiana, and the United States of America. Her life of public service is to be admired. Her legacy will serve as an inspiration to us all.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. I thank the gentleman for his remarks, and I would be very happy to yield to my colleague from Indianapolis.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to join my colleagues to honor the life of former Congresswoman Katie Hall who passed last week at the age of 73. I met her as a young man. In fact, I had a chance to spend some time with her in the early eighties in San Francisco during the Democratic National Convention.

□ 1900

But she quickly made a name for herself, to my colleague's point, not only as a strong advocate and leader in the State of Indiana, but as an educator. She knew that America's children were suffering, and she supported alternative education, Mr. Speaker. She understood that children had different needs, and she made sure that she was an advocate of different educational models to meet those needs.

So my deepest sympathies go out to her family and friends who are mourning her passing. And we know that Indiana politics will not be the same.

I thank my colleague for acknowledging me.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, Katie Hall will be missed. And once again, our sympathy goes out to her family and all of her loved ones.

HONORING SERGEANT T.J. CONRAD

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

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, February 23, Virginia and our Nation lost a true hero. Sergeant T.J. Conrad was killed in action in the Nangarhar Province of Afghanistan in the rioting there.

Sergeant Conrad, just 22 years old, was a husband, a father, a son, and a brother. Outgoing, determined, and a man of true grit, Sergeant Conrad truly personified the Army's old slogan, "Be All You Can Be."

Born in Newport News and raised in Roanoke County, Sergeant Conrad grew up attending Masons Cove Elementary School, Northside Middle School, and Northside High School. In high school, he was an outstanding wrestler. In his senior year, he helped lead his team to the Blue Ridge District titles for both the regular season and the tournament.

Today, I wish to extend my prayers and our prayers and condolences to Sergeant Conrad's wife, Holly; his infant son, Bentley; his parents, his relatives, and his friends. His father has stated that he will always be remembered for his great sense of humor, his infectious smile, his kind heart, and his desire to brighten anyone's day.

On behalf of a grateful Nation, we grieve the loss of our warrior brother, but we honor Sergeant Conrad for his courage, his sacrifice, and his selfless commitment to duty, honor, and country. He gave his all in service for the sake of our safety, our freedom, and our liberty.

MINNETONKA 2A GIRLS HOCKEY TITLE

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Minnetonka girls high school hockey team on winning their second consecutive Minnesota 2A State title this weekend at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.

Mr. Speaker, after winning last year's championship in a nail-biting game, the Minnetonka Skippers this year defeated the Roseville Raiders 3-0. The first goal came early in the first period by defender Holly Korn, who scored on a power play. After that, forward Diana Drayaard followed up with

a second goal late in the third period. And then finally, there was a third goal by junior Laura Bowman, who scored the final goal. Of course this victory could not have happened were it not for the outstanding goaltending of goalie Sydney Rossman, who blocked 23 shots in the shutout.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to congratulate all the girls on the Minnetonka Skippers hockey team, as well as their coaches. I also want to thank them and recognize their hard work, their training, their perseverance, and their commitment because it really paid off. We're proud of these student athletes, and so is our entire community.

GET OUR TROOPS OUT OF AFGHANISTAN

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I serve on the Homeland Security Committee and have the privilege of serving on the committee dealing with foreign affairs here in the House.

I rise today to, as usual, offer our deepest sympathy for all of our soldiers that have fallen in battle. But I am particularly outraged at the incidents that are occurring around the unfortunate burning of the Koran—for which our President appropriately extended his apology, as we would want if someone had burned Bibles. But it is outrageous for our soldiers to be in harm's way, for them to lose their life. It is time now for the Afghan national security forces to stand up and be security forces. It's time for President Karzai to indicate that he will not be driven out by the Taliban. And it's time for us not to allow the Taliban again to grip ahold of the Afghan people.

This is a tragic and horrible situation. None of us would have wanted it to occur. But we cannot stand for our soldiers to be in the eye of the storm and be shot for something that they did not do, intentionally or individually.

So I would ask that our soldiers be taken out of harm's way around any Afghan national security forces that we cannot vet and ensure that they are intending to do the right thing. We need to hear from President Karzai in a way that denounces this horrible action. And we must stand up to the Taliban and have a transition out of Afghanistan in which the Afghan national security forces are protecting their people, and they're allowed, in essence, to have a nation that protects women and children and families, and has the adherence to the law that requires human decency.

HOUSE REPUBLICANS ON JOB CREATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. GRIFFIN) is recognized for

60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I came here to the floor tonight to talk with some of my colleagues and the American people about what I believe is the most pressing issue facing our country.

A lot of us have been home working in our districts over the last week, seeing our constituents, speaking at local Rotary clubs, visiting with constituents in the office and around the district. It is clear to me that the top priority for the American people over the last year remains the same, and that is jobs. People back home are encouraged and are optimistic about the future, but they need some signs that jobs are increasing here in the United States. Jobs remain the number one issue.

Since I got here a little over a year ago with some of my freshman colleagues, a lot of us have made jobs our sole focus. There are a lot of different things that we can do to encourage job creation. My focus has been on the private sector. Private sector job creation, in my view, is the way that we get our economy going again, not through government stimulus. We've tried that to the tune of about \$1 trillion—almost \$1 trillion—and it has not done what the President promised.

□ 1910

It seems to me the best approach is to create an environment here in this country where the private sector can flourish, where people want to take risks, where they want to invest and compete with other countries. How do we do that? There are a variety of ways and that's why we're here tonight, to talk about some of these.

I'm joined by some of my colleagues, and I think that they would agree that one of the ways that we can encourage the private sector to grow and create jobs is through fundamental tax reform. Another way is regulatory reform. Job creators around my district tell me what a lot of us know and that is that not regulation but overregulation, not regulation but excessive regulation, is a tax on businesses and it is a tax on job creators. So we need tax reform and we need regulatory reform.

We need to further pursue our energy resources here in the United States. We need to construct, for example, the Keystone XL pipeline that the President first delayed and then denied. Thirdly, we need to further explore our energy resources. Fourthly, we need to live within our means as a government. That means dealing with our spending problem, our spending addiction, our debt, our trillion-plus-dollar deficit.

If you were to ask me what is your plan, what would you do, what are you trying to do, what have you been fighting for over a year to try to encourage the private sector to grow jobs in this country with, I would say tax reform, regulatory reform, increased energy exploration and development here in the United States, and making the Federal

Government live within our means. Those four things, if we can address them in bold ways, we can change the course of this country's fiscal situation and the economy and ultimately grow this economy and create jobs.

I'm going to turn now and yield to the gentleman from Virginia if he'd like to comment on some of this.

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. Thank you, Congressman GRIFFIN, I do. I agreed with what you had to say and wholeheartedly support your concepts and where we need to be moving this country.

Let me say to each and every one of you that the American worker is second to none in this world. When you look at our workers, they are the most innovative workers in the world, and they are the hardest workers in the world. Statistics, different reports continue to show us this point.

We will never compete with the Chinese and other countries on wages; nor do we want to. But our advantage, Congressman GRIFFIN, is that we have the ability to use our energy resources in a way that we can create jobs, and we can fight for American jobs by having affordable energy. That's our trump card. For some reason, those in the administration want to tie our hands behind our backs and not allow our businesses to use our trump card to keep jobs in the United States and bring great energy resources in this country.

The President was recently in Florida, and he mockingly described the Republican plan on energy and getting gas prices down. He said step one is drill, step two is drill, step three is drill. The President is just wrong. We have a true all-of-the-above policy. I like to describe it this way: it is drill. That's step one. Step two, dig. Step three, discover. Step four, deregulate.

Let me explain a little bit. Drill is easy. We have vast untapped resources in oil, and we have huge resources in natural gas. If we're allowed to drill for natural gas and for oil, we can turn around a lot of the things that are happening in this country.

Let's talk about gas prices because that affects jobs. Listen, some of this has to do with looking at the world market. If we signaled immediately that we were ready to start using our resources, the prices would come down because those people who are speculating that oil is not going to be available in the future and the not-so-distant future, but also even 2 or 3 years from now, would realize that the giant in the world of energy was finally awakened from its slumber and ready to go on the march for jobs. So I think it is important that we look at drilling. I don't think we should be mocking it.

Dig. Obviously we have a lot of coal resources in this country. My district has a lot of coal. It also has natural gas. We are number one in the world in coal resources. Everybody else in the world is using the coal. We are the ones who refuse to use it. As I said before,

we have our hands tied behind our backs. Ladies and gentlemen, I've got to tell you something. We need to have reasonable regulations, but we've got to untie our hands and be ready to use our coal. The Chinese are now buying our coal to use our coal to make the products, the goods that we used to make in this country.

Guess what, a lot of times folks say we don't want to use coal because it has pollution and it creates problems; but a NASA study has shown us that if we have the Chinese using our coal to make the products we used to make, they get the money for those products, their people have the jobs. And guess what happens to the pollutants in the air? It takes roughly 10 days to get from the middle of the Gobi Desert to the eastern shore of my beloved Virginia. Just 10 days. We know that a significant portion of the mercury in our air is coming from foreign sources. Not our plants, but foreign sources.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. I would like to comment on something the gentleman just said. I think it is a great point.

A lot of times some of us think about this country and pollution here. I think what I hear you saying—it is a very good point—is that this is one world and we in this country through the processes and the regulatory structure that we have, we burn coal cleaner and we are a better steward of the Earth when it comes to using some of these traditional energy sources. What I hear you saying is—and I think it makes a lot of sense—if you believe that coal will not be used if we do not use it here, then that's not exactly accurate. Somebody is going to burn it. The question is: Do we do a better job with some of these traditional energy sources? Do we do a better job than other countries that will burn it if we don't? The Chinese can burn the same coal, yet regulate it in a way where they do a lot more damage to the environment.

That brings me actually to the Keystone pipeline. The President first delayed it, then he denied it so that the extreme environmentalists would be happy with him. If you apply what you are talking about, it seems to me we would rather be refining the oil sands from Canada in this country instead of the alternative that Canada has talked about, which is shipping it to China for refining. Why? Because we refine cleaner, we refine safer, and we do a better job.

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Those oil sands are going to be refined. The issue is not if we don't refine them, no one will. The fact is they will be refined. The issue is do we refine them or do the Chinese refine them? I think what you're saying, and I wholeheartedly agree, we do a better job here.

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. Absolutely. I would have to say we do a much better job here.

It's almost like I can remember when I was much younger, liberals always said to conservatives, Well, you all act like the United States is the only country in the world, and we have to look at the whole world. Now the liberals are looking at it and saying, Well, the United States is the only country in the world. We have to only look at the United States and we don't look at the big picture.

I think, inadvertently, even with good intentions, there are, in fact, greater pollution risks by us not using our energy than there are with us using our energy with the reasonable regulations that have been in place for some time.

That being said, let's take a look at how that impacts on jobs. Not only do we get the pollution, but we don't get the jobs. We don't get the money.

You talked about living within our means and so forth. Let's take a look at my district.

AEP, American Electric Power, is the biggest power provider in my district. There are others. They have estimated, with new regulations, energy costs are going to go up 10 to 15 percent as they spend an additional \$6 billion to \$8 billion. Ten to 15 percent on hardworking American families is tough, but when you look at the job component, when you look at that job component, that means it's going to cost more in my district to make potato chips. It's going to cost more in my district to work the family farm. It's going to cost more in my district to make furniture. It's going to cost more in my district to make paper products, whiteboard. I just touched on the surface.

Every single retail establishment, every single business has to use electricity; but when you raise the cost of manufacturing goods or using electricity to manufacture goods by 10 to 15 percent over the course of the next few years, you're making us less competitive in the world, and we lose more jobs and we have more people who are unemployed and more people who aren't able to go out and buy products, which then means more people lose their jobs because they're not selling those Fords down at the Ford place. They're not selling washing machines and TVs and all of the products that are out there. We lose even more jobs because of the failure to recognize that the regulations are killing our jobs, and our jobs are going elsewhere.

I have to say, getting back to what I call the four Ds—drill, dig, discover, and deregulate—I'm not saying we don't look at all of the above. The President was in Florida. He said we only wanted to drill, drill, drill, and he was talking about algae. I'm not one of those people who's going to criticize the President for looking at algae. I think algae actually has a positive future, but it's a positive future that is probably 15 to 50 years away. We need energy now. We need affordable energy now. We need jobs now.

To be looking at something, I think it's absolutely right. That's the "discover" part of those four Ds. We need to encourage discovery. But one of the ways to encourage discovery is to deregulate and let people make a product without having all kinds of regulations put on top of them.

It's interesting how folks want to do all of these things, and then they come up with regulations and they find out that the new start-up companies oftentimes have difficulty creating the new alternative energies because they run into other regulations that prohibit them from going forward.

So I think we need to make sure that we look at drill, dig, discovery, looking at those alternatives, finding more ways that we can be efficient and finding new alternative energies. Then let's not regulate our industries out of existence, which is where we're headed at this point. When you do that, we continue to lose jobs, we continue to have a flat economy.

The unemployment situation has gotten better, but we're still in the neighborhood of 8 percent. I don't think that's anything to celebrate. I'm glad it's better, but I don't think it's something that you go out and go, woo hoo, we've solved our problems. I believe that we have not solved our problems at this point. We're working on it, and that's good.

The economy in this country, because of our hardworking Americans, because they're innovative and because they work harder than anybody else, is not going to just roll over and die, but at the same time it could be doing so much better, and we need to maintain that we are the number one economic power in the world. The way to do that is to keep our jobs by keeping our energy and our energy sources and our energy costs at a reasonable level so that we can, in fact, compete with the low-wage countries of the world. We don't want the low wages, but to do so, to make sure that we can still compete, we have to keep our energy affordable.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. I want to comment a little bit on the all-of-the-above strategy that you were talking about.

I'm an advocate for an all-of-the-above strategy. We've heard the President mention that, but we here in the House have been advocating for that. I have since I got here. That includes alternate energy sources, renewable energy sources, biodiesel, wind, solar. I'm for those things. But I'm also for the traditional energy sources and, in addition, nuclear. We have a clean, safe nuclear energy plant, power plant in Arkansas that we count on to provide safe, affordable energy. We also have coal plants, other sorts of energy sources.

In my district, we make the windmill blades that go on these massive windmills. We also have Welspun Tubular in my district, in the Second Congressional District of Arkansas, and

they've recently been in the news because there has been a lot of uncertainty about their future as a result of the President killing the Keystone pipeline, or denying the permit. The happy news that I have to report is that Welspun is doing some diversifying. They did have to lay some people off after the Keystone pipeline was delayed, but they're doing some diversifying so they can make some other sorts of pipe, and they're actually going to expand. I believe we will ultimately win the battle on the Keystone pipeline; and once we get the Keystone pipeline in full swing, the construction in full swing, then that will further help Welspun.

So I'm for all-of-the-above, but I know that in my lifetime we are still going to be using a lot of these traditional energy sources. It's not an either/or. We can continue to pursue wind and continue to pursue solar and continue to pursue biodiesel and alternate energies, renewable energy sources, but at the same time pursue the traditional sources, particularly, natural gas.

Natural gas is abundant and, best of all, it's American—and, in my case, it's Arkansan. We've got a lot of natural gas in my district and other districts in Arkansas. It is abundant and it is cheap. Where ethanol can increase the wear on a traditional car engine, natural gas can extend the life of that engine.

I want to turn the conversation over to my friend from the Third District of Arkansas, Congressman STEVE WOMACK. He's got a lot of natural gas in his district as well.

Before I do, I just want to recap.

We have jobs as our main goal. And there are pillars under that goal of jobs, and those pillars are: tax reform, regulatory reform, further energy exploration, and getting our spending under control so that we deal with our debt and we live within our means. Those are four pillars. They're not separate from job creation. They are a critical part of encouraging private sector job creation and giving certainty to job creators.

Now I'd like to yield to my friend from Arkansas.

Mr. WOMACK. I thank the gentleman, and I do appreciate his leadership in this discussion about job creation in America.

I've said many, many times that if there is an elixir out there to fix the problems, the challenges facing our country today, it's job creation.

What the gentleman from Arkansas has been articulating in the last several minutes has been a very good discussion about the four things, and I couldn't agree more, the four things that are part and parcel to our country creating jobs and putting itself on a different fiscal path.

He's talked about overregulation. I'll come back to that in a moment. He's talked about the threat of higher taxes and the need for comprehensive tax reform in our Nation; he's talked about

the need for a solid energy policy that allows our country to access its own resources, American energy resources to solve America's energy challenges; and, of course, he's talked about the deficits and the debt.

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Now, if you look at the plight that we're in today insofar as job creation—one greater than 8 percent unemployment, sustained unemployment of over 8 percent—and when you look at the fact that people are out here scrambling to find work—meaningful jobs as they want to be productive and want to contribute to American exceptionalism—then the way you do that is not by taking a welfare check; it's by having a paycheck. If you're looking at this plight today like you would an impending storm, it's a dark, dark cloud of uncertainty that hangs over the job creators.

I submit to you that the reason so many people are sitting on trillions of dollars of cash, those who would like to get into the game and create jobs and expand the American economy, is that they have a difficult time computing their input costs. They don't know how energy is going to affect their ability to create jobs. They don't know how the next regulation, the next rule that is going to come down from Washington, is going to impact their ability to earn a profit. As evidenced by the downgrade that we had last year by the S&P, they're not confident that Congress, these people who gather in this Chamber every day, is capable of making the decisions, of having the courage to make the decisions to put America on a different fiscal path. It's a dark, dark cloud of uncertainty. I don't blame them for sitting on the sidelines right now, but there is a lot of cash ready to get in the game if we'll just do some of the right things.

The gentlemen who have spoken tonight talked about regulation, but that's not why I came to the floor tonight, and that's not what I wanted to talk about primarily. I came from a meeting right before votes today that talked about an issue totally unrelated to my district and unrelated to most of America. It's out in California.

Later this week, we're going to vote on H.R. 1837, the San Joaquin Valley Water Reliability Act. I heard my colleague from California talking passionately about this issue, as he has done a number of times from the well of this House, in that, back in 2009, Federal regulations to protect a 3-inch fish, the delta smelt, led to the deliberate diversion of over 300 billion gallons of water away from the San Joaquin Valley and its farmers. It cost thousands of farm workers their jobs; it inflicted up to 40 percent unemployment in certain communities; and it fallowed hundreds of thousands of acres of fertile farmland.

Those were real people.

Those were real jobs.

Because of Federal regulations and this desire on the part of this Con-

gress—of this Federal Government, I should say—to protect a 3-inch fish, we turned our backs on American workers. In so doing, we affected millions of people nationwide because, when you affect the fertile farmlands of California the way we have by diverting this water, you have, indeed, taken a step toward increasing the price of food.

The bill that we will consider later this week is a comprehensive solution that would restore water deliveries that have been cut off through the Federal regulations and environmental lawsuits and through a plethora of things facing the California farmers.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. I hear what the gentleman is saying. I agree wholeheartedly. Correct me if I'm wrong, but what you're saying is that the issue is not regulation. The issue is excessive regulation. The issue is overregulation.

I've got a 2-year-old and a 4-year-old. I love them dearly and hate to get on that plane when I have to come up here from Arkansas and have to leave them back at the house. I want them to have clean air and clean water, and I don't know anyone—the folks here tonight included—who are against all regulation. Regulation when used properly protects us, the kids, et cetera.

This is not about whether to regulate or not. This is about excessive regulation, overregulation, the regulatory process that does not consider cost-benefit, that does not consider the impact on jobs, that does not employ common sense, Washington regulators who don't speak with folks impacted on the ground, well-intentioned though they may be, who don't look at the impact and at the potential impact of their overregulation. That's what I hear from my colleagues.

I agree wholeheartedly, and I think that is a critical distinction to point out because we always hear folks saying, You just want no regulation.

That's a false choice. That's a straw man. That's not anyone's argument that I've heard. The issue is one of overregulation, of excessive regulation.

Mr. WOMACK. Let me take it a step further because I can relate to what the gentleman is talking about and can relate it back to my home district.

I think the gentleman would agree that, over the last several years in Arkansas, there has been a phenomenal rate of growth in the northwest part of our State, the area that I happen to represent, which is the great Third District of Arkansas. It's known for its incredible growth over the last several years. Now, it is home to some pretty well-known companies, companies like Wal-Mart and J.B. Hunt trucking and Tyson Foods.

If you look at northwest Arkansas, there is really no compelling reason why prior to the establishment of those major companies that northwest Arkansas would be an area where you would have this unprecedented growth. But for the entrepreneurial spirit and drive of guys like Sam Walton and Don

Tyson and J.B. Hunt—and I could go down another list of people who have provided jobs and who have created and expanded businesses and who have made a meaningful impact on the greater mid-South and the entire Nation—northwest Arkansas would be kind of an average area with no great infrastructure, until recently there, and with no real compelling reason why it would be anything special.

Yet we're fighting an issue in the greater northwest Arkansas area that could, indeed, impact our ability to continue to grow. I'm talking about EPA's desire, insatiable appetite, to put a total maximum daily load, a TMDL, if you would, on phosphorus loading in the Illinois River watershed, which flows into Oklahoma, because of a loading standard imposed on northwest Arkansas by our neighboring State, a standard that many say is not even achievable.

So all of the great development and job creation and the elevated quality of life is in jeopardy. The future is in jeopardy as a result of a Federal agency imposing on the region a standard that may or may not even be able to be achieved.

I bring that up for this reason: back when I was a mayor of a city in northwest Arkansas, I challenged EPA to give us the science, to show us exactly how they can calculate that this standard has been impacted by the farmers and ranchers of northwest Arkansas and those who manage the point sources of pollution, the municipalities. I happened to be the mayor who presided over one of those. As I understand it, the science was a collection of data from about 20 streams somewhere in America, streams not known to us. They took, I think, the 75th percentile of the average phosphorus loading into those streams. I doubt seriously that they used streams and rivers that were similar to what we were dealing with in northwest Arkansas.

I bring up this subject only because we're talking about job creation tonight, and our ability to continue to expand the economy in northwest Arkansas is dependent on our ability to have a good, clean water supply and to be able to treat our wastewater and to be able to discharge it properly and sufficiently in order to be able to create growth.

Yet I'm afraid, one day, we're going to look up, and because of these standards imposed on us by the Federal bureaucracy, this overregulation that we've talked about, that we're not going to have an opportunity to grow because we're going to be into moratoria on growth and development in our area as a result of these unfair standards. But that's a whole other story.

I really came tonight to talk with my colleague about tax reform because, as we've indicated, the threat of higher taxes, or the tax structure as we now know it, is, in my strongest opinion, one of the great barriers to job creation.

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You know, just the other day, in this very Chamber, the President of the United States stood on the dais and he talked to this Congress about the need for comprehensive tax reform. In his proposal to reform the corporate tax code, I was pleased to see the President showing some leadership in that regard, and I look forward to working with the administration and my colleagues in the House and Senate to do something that in my strong opinion is long overdue.

I, along with many of my colleagues, agree on the need for corporate tax reform. The U.S. has one of the highest corporate tax structures in the world, second only to Japan. This discourages job growth and job creation in the United States.

It's time to broaden the base, time to get the government out of the business of picking winners and losers, time to eliminate special interest loopholes, and it's time to lower the corporate tax rate once and for all. But corporate tax reform is not the only piece of the puzzle. There are many other pieces. If we are going to grow the economy and give our job creators the certainty they need to invest, we also should look at the individual rates—not just the corporate rates, but the individual structure as well.

There's an opportunity to simplify the individual tax code. In December of 2010, according to the Compendium of Tax Expenditures prepared by the Congressional Research Service that we all use, there were more than 300 tax expenditures in the form of special exclusions, exemptions, deductions, credits, rates, and deferrals. We need to re-evaluate every single one of these expenditures.

There are many other benefits of comprehensive tax reform. For example more than 90 percent of the Treasury's budget goes to the IRS. If we simplify the Tax Code and make it easier to follow and enforce, the IRS doesn't need the resources it currently needs.

What's more, IRS reported, and I think these numbers were back in 2006, hundreds of billions—I think some were just short of \$400 billion—of what we call a tax gap. Again, simplification of the Tax Code makes it easier to follow and enforce, and we can significantly narrow that gap.

I thank my colleagues from both sides of the aisle who are looking forward to working on comprehensive tax reform. I believe in my heart that it is, as my colleague from Arkansas has indicated, one of four things, four basic things, four basic issues facing America today that can help put our job creators back into the business of doing what they do best. And that is having ideas, incubating those ideas, making those ideas come to reality, taking the necessary risks, having access to the capital to help support those businesses, to expand those businesses by hiring people, by growing things, by making things.

And as my friend from Virginia said a moment ago, we have proven that the American worker is the most productive worker in the world. And that's what we need to do: Corporate tax reform; ending this excessive over-regulatory environment that we're in; to access American energy solutions to solve America's energy challenges; and once and for all doing something about the extraordinary deficits—four straight trillion-plus-dollar deficits—facing America, and nearly trillion-dollar deficits as far as the eye can see, based on the current glide path; to do those things necessary to get our deficit under control, to begin to whittle down that debt and save future generations of the burdens that we have in an almost immoral way put on their shoulders.

With that, I thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. I thank my friend from the Third District of Arkansas and appreciate his comments here tonight.

I'd like to continue a little bit tonight talking about tax reform since Representative WOMACK was talking about some aspects of the President's proposal. I think most of us around here are certainly excited that the President has even started discussing fundamental tax reform. Unfortunately, I think that the President's proposal has a lot of aspects that would be burdensome to the businesses and the job creators that he purports to be trying to help, and so I don't think that it has much chance in the House or the Senate, and I think he knew that when he proposed it. But at least he is having that conversation. That's a start, that's a start.

As we talked about, whether you are talking about tax reform, energy exploration, regulatory reform, our commonsense budgeting, making the Federal Government live within its means, all of those relate to jobs. They all are directly related to encouraging private sector job creation.

We've been working on a highway bill recently. Infrastructure is a critical part of this equation. That's part of the spending our money wisely under the budgeting side of things because we need a strong infrastructure so that we can compete with other countries, continue to have economic development in this country. So that's a critical part of it.

But with regard to the President's tax plan, it raises taxes at least a dollar for every dollar in tax cuts that he provides to simplify the corporate tax code. It creates a whole new category of taxes for our companies that do business overseas.

And most glaringly, it doesn't do anything to address individual tax rates, the tax rates that you pay at home, I pay. And why is that important for job creation? Well, for a number of reasons. First of all, the code we have now is complex. It doesn't always reward hard work. In fact, sometimes it punishes it.

But one of the real specific reasons why we must deal with the individual tax rates to grow jobs is because many businesses pay their taxes, particularly LLCs, sole proprietorships, partnerships, mom and pop businesses all around the country in Arkansas and in my district, they pay their taxes using the individual income tax brackets. So you can't just address corporate tax code, although the President's corporate tax "reform" has got a lot of tax hikes in it that will make our businesses, our job creators in this country, less competitive.

But you can't just reform the Tax Code by dealing with corporate tax reform. You've got to look at individual tax reform, corporate tax reform across the board. You have to make it simpler, fairer, and flatter. Some of the terms that we've talked about, we've certainly advocated for that in our budget last year, and we are going to do it again this year.

It's critical, not only for job creation by larger businesses but by small business, mom and pop businesses. So tax reform is a critical part of what we need to do to get jobs going.

As I've talked about earlier, some of my colleagues talked about, there are a number of reforms that we have been pursuing for over a year now that relate directly to private sector job creation.

□ 1950

As I indicated earlier, it's tax reform. It's regulatory reform. It's more energy development. It's living within our means. Individually, these issues may not have jobs in the title, but they are the columns, the supports, that hold up the private sector job building, if you will.

I want to say a couple of things about the regulatory issue because I've just introduced a bill, H.R. 4078, Regulatory Freeze for Jobs Act. Again, as a lot of us said, I'm not antiregulation. I don't know anyone that's against regulations across the board. What I'm against is the Federal Government failing to apply common sense when regulating. What I'm against are excessive regulations, overly burdensome regulations.

I'll give you an example. I had a jobs conference down in my district in Little Rock at the Clinton Presidential Library. We had a jobs conference. We invited a number of job creators. It seems to me if you want to know what to do to create private sector jobs or encourage private sector job creation, you'd ask someone who had actually created them, folks from the private sector, experts on this issue. We invited them in and said, Hey, what's the biggest obstacle to job creation? We had Democrats and Republicans both. And we asked them just point blank, and the number one answer was regulatory uncertainty.

What does that mean? Well, it means that folks have money that they might want to invest, but they hold on tight

to that money because they're not quite sure what's going to happen. They're not sure whether we're going to get our debt under control or not. They're not sure how much ObamaCare, the President's health care law, is going to cost them. They're not sure whether the regulations that they've heard proposed by the EPA as potentially being proposed, they're not sure whether those are going to be implemented or not. It's just uncertainty everywhere. And I had someone say to me the other night, Well, there's always uncertainty.

Yes, there is always uncertainty. If you're a farmer, there's uncertainty whether there will be enough rain for the crops that year. There will always be some uncertainty in life because we don't have crystal balls. I get that. But what we don't want is a Federal Government that needlessly creates additional uncertainty.

You know, sometimes we say, I had enough problems before this came along. Well, that's what we're talking about. You have enough to deal with naturally. You have enough uncertainty as it is. You don't need the Federal Government creating more uncertainty.

If you talk to community banks who have been impacted by the President's Dodd-Frank law, they've got a lot of uncertainty. They're having to hire new folks to comply with the law. What are the new regulations going to be? We don't know yet, just know they're coming. Don't know what they're going to be yet, just know they're coming and they're going to be burdensome. The same with the health care law.

Here's a quote from, actually, a well-known Democrat businessman, commissioner on the Arkansas Highway Commission appointed by our Democrat Governor in Arkansas, former chairman of the Arkansas Economic Development Commission, John Burkhalter. He said at my jobs conference:

Every project I look at now, I've got to wonder if I'm going to get to build it because, are the regulations going to stop me? I've got to admit that I pass on over 50 percent of the projects that I would like to do because of the burden, the hurdle of the regulations.

Now, the President recently said in his State of the Union Address that he has approved fewer regulations in the first 3 years of his Presidency than his Republican predecessor did in his. Well, the President said that, sitting right here on the floor of the House during the State of the Union this year, so I think it deserves some attention.

Well, is that true? If you just look at the numbers, it's true, if you just look at the number of regulations. But if you look at the number of what are called major regulations and the burden that it puts, the cost of the regulations, what this President has done far exceeds what we've seen before.

The previous administration issued an average of 63 major regulations per

year. This administration has issued an average of 88, an increase of 40 percent. Under President Bush, the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs reviewed an average of 77 economically significant regulations biennially. These are the ones that really impact business. I'm not talking about a minor regulation here or there. We're talking about the ones that really impact job creators. Under President Bush, his Office of Regulatory Affairs reviewed about 77 every 2 years. Under this President, it's 125. Not quite doubled, but not far from it. If the administration maintains its current pace, it would add nearly \$150 billion annually in new regulatory costs over 8 years.

I'm going to yield to my friend from Virginia, but before I do, I just want to mention that I have proposed the Regulatory Freeze for Jobs Act, H.R. 4078. What it would do, it would basically freeze the introduction and progression of major regulations, those having an impact of \$100 billion or more. It would freeze those with exceptions for emergencies, health issues, what have you. There are exceptions in the bill. But it would freeze them until our unemployment rate gets down to 6 percent to show that we're getting our footing, because what the regulatory environment is doing to our job creators is stifling their ability to create jobs.

I'm going to yield now to my colleague from Virginia.

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. I thank you so much.

I stuck around just because I wanted to hear more about your Regulatory Freeze for Jobs Act. I think that is a great concept. I look forward to reading it. It is the way and the direction that we ought to be going, because I'm willing to bet that those regulations that have been approved are probably, if you looked at the inches of the regulations, it might only be one reg, but I would be willing to bet that this administration beats the Bush administration on inches of regulation by a mile.

That being said, I have to also say that I go out and talk to not only the Rotary Clubs and other civic organizations, but I like talking to high school students, because what we do here in Washington will be a far greater impact on their lives than what we do on our own lives. It's our children.

You indicated you have young children. I have an 11-year-old, a 6-year-old, and a 4-year-old, and I'm concerned about them.

But the high school students get it. When I start talking about the regulations and I talk about what would you do if you were a factory that was faced with having to pay big fines because you couldn't comply—couldn't comply, not didn't want to—couldn't physically and timewise comply with an EPA regulation, what happens to those jobs? You know what they say? I don't have to teach them this. They already know it. Those jobs go somewhere else, usually to China.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Sure.

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. And they know, and we talk about the money issue. You talked about that, and you're absolutely right. They know that if we create a regulatory environment that's conducive to creation of jobs—not no regulations, but conducive to creating jobs—that we end up with more jobs. If you end up with more jobs, you have more taxpayers. If you have more taxpayers, you have more taxes. And guess what. Just like in our households, if you have more money coming in, it's a whole lot easier to pay your bills going out.

And so when we talk about living within our means, we can live within our means at a higher level if we just have the ability for the American entrepreneurial spirit and the American entrepreneur to go out and take the normal risks that are associated with any business enterprise and create the jobs, the jobs that over the last centuries we, as Americans, have worked hard to create, and in a mere 200 years created the greatest economic system, the greatest economic country ever seen on this planet.

I have to say, it comes back, and you talked about Dodd-Frank and banks, community banks in particular, and I come from a very rural district compared to a lot of the others, and the community banks are the heart and soul of those communities; and yet they are afraid to lend money to people they know are going to stay there and fight to keep those jobs and to fight for their communities, but they are hesitant to lend the money because they don't know what the regulatory scheme is going to be.

□ 2000

Not only do you have the entrepreneur who doesn't know, but the banker doesn't know, so he doesn't know if he can lend money even to that entrepreneur.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. I have heard story after story from small-town bankers, community bankers, who say that not only are they deciding not to loan to folks based on character and based on relationship, but they're being told they can't. They're being told they can't. They are community banks, the sources of credit. The source of money for small-town America are being told who they can and cannot lend to. Their judgment is being taken away from them, and they're saying, Look, you don't have to decide. We're going to regulate that. We'll tell you who you can loan to and who you can't loan to, never mind the fact that you've known them for 20, 30, 40 years, generation after generation. We're going to control this from Washington.

This President talks about his financial reform bill going after Wall Street. Actually, the folks on Wall Street backed it. What it ended up doing is hurting the folks that had nothing to do with the financial collapse in the first place. Small-town community

banks got the brunt of a lot of this because the big banks can afford the extra regulation and compliance. The small banks cannot. So, what the President's bill did is it ignored Fannie and it ignored Freddie—the problems—and then it went after banks. It made Wall Street happy in many ways. Many of them got on board and endorsed it. And then who took the brunt of the burden, the regulatory burden? Small-town banks. Small-town banks.

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. You said that Wall Street backed it, but I can guarantee you, Main Street didn't back it. Main Street had problems with it. I feel personal about this because as a young lawyer right out of law school, I took some risks. I had to go to the bank. The bank that I had been dealing with wouldn't work with me on buying a building. But one of my community banks stepped up to the plate, and they said, do you know what? We know that as long as you're alive, you'll pay this loan. Even if business isn't good, we count on you because we have known you since you were a kid, and we know exactly that you're going to be there, and you're going to do things.

Without that money, I daresay that I wouldn't have had a successful law practice for 28 years. A lot of times people don't think of lawyers as businessmen, but if you're a sole practitioner like I was for many, many years, you've got to make the payroll, you've got to pay your loans, and you've got to do the things that you have got to do. Well, guess what's happening? That loan wouldn't have been made to me today.

Another young man in a situation like I was in who wanted to go out and practice on his own and make his way in his hometown wouldn't be allowed to do that under the current regulatory scheme—and that's that job plus the jobs of all the people who I had working for me in that office as I went forward with my practice. So you're absolutely right in what you say.

Further, I have to get back to your Regulatory Freeze for Jobs Act. I have said for some time I wish I had introduced the bill. But I have said for some time that if we would put a freeze on new regulations and say to the American entrepreneur, the business people out there if you invest in the United States now, we will give you a window where you don't have to worry about any new regulations, we would turn this economy around like that, and we would see that unemployment rate not just drop by point one or point two, but we would see it drop down to your 6 percent that you've put in there, and I think we would even see it drop below that 6 percent if people knew that they could count on having, not no regulation, but reasonable regulations, and not have to worry about new regulations during this time of economic stress.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. I thank the gentleman from Virginia. I know we're running short on time, so I just

want to say to the folks listening out there, wherever you may be, these are not new ideas. Some of the ideas you've heard tonight on tax reform, regulatory reform, energy exploration and making the Federal Government live within its means and investing in infrastructure, these are not ideas that just came up this week. You may ask yourself, why haven't we passed these a long time ago? Why haven't we worked on this before? Why are we just talking about it now? We have been for over a year. For over a year we have been working on these issues.

Many of these ideas we've passed. Let's take tax reform. We talked about that in our budget over a year ago—it will be a year, I guess, in April. Regulatory reform, I can't count the number of bills—not including mine, I just introduced mine—but we have passed bill after bill after bill that deals with regulatory reform. What about energy exploration? I literally can't count the number of bills that we've passed that deal with energy exploration, particularly the Keystone pipeline, bill after bill after bill.

If there's any softening in the President's position on the Keystone XL pipeline, you can bet it's because we have been relentless in this House—relentless in this House—pushing the President to allow for the construction of that pipeline. We've got a long way to go, but we'll keep pushing.

On the issue of the budget and living within our means, we've been fighting this battle for over a year. So none of this is brand spanking new. A lot of these ideas we've been fighting for for over a year, and we'll continue to. But we've got to keep talking about them, keep talking about them.

So what's happened after we passed them? Well, a significant number, about 30 or so, have passed this House, and they go right down to the other side of the building, and they sit in the Senate. Many of us grew up in the 1970s and saw the little cartoon, "Schoolhouse Rock," the little bill sitting on the Capitol Hill steps out here somewhere. That little cartoon taught me the fundamentals of our democracy, how a bill becomes law. It passes this House, and then what happens? Well, it has to go down to the Senate.

Unfortunately, they haven't passed a budget out of the Senate in over a thousand days. So you can bet they haven't passed our bills, either. So we've addressed a lot of this stuff. And we're going to keep talking about it and keep pushing and keep pushing. But a lot of it is sitting right down there in the Senate waiting for action, going nowhere. So if you're wondering what's happened to these ideas, that's where they are. And we are continuing to work on them here, continuing to pressure the Senate and the President to try to work with us to get this stuff done, because these pillars—tax reform, regulatory reform, energy exploration, getting the Federal Government to live within its means and hav-

ing a commonsense budget, and as part of that, addressing our infrastructure issues, all those together, they all relate to jobs. So we'll keep fighting for jobs.

I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 2010

FREEDOM UNDER ASSAULT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

These are the best of times and in some ways the worst of times. Our freedoms are under assault, and some people in places of leadership do not appreciate the threat to our freedoms and therefore are naively assisting those who would take them away.

We know that in recent days in Afghanistan we had some soldiers who were given the responsibility to burn Korans which were being used by prisoners to write messages of an incendiary nature to other prisoners. Well, it's my understanding of shari'a law that to write in such a Koran could be considered a desecration; yet there's been no protest, no outrage over prisoners using the Koran to pass inflammatory messages to other prisoners.

We've also seen the death of Americans as a result. Two officers, along with others, have been killed and injured. Our Commander in Chief has seen fit to apologize to those who house the killers of our two American officers.

When I think about the feelings of the family members of the two American officers who were serving, to have a commander not do as Lincoln and so many Commanders in Chief have done in the past wherein they sent those troubling letters to grieving families to thank them for their service and to truly grieve with the families, no, in this case, the Commander in Chief sent messages instead to the home of the killer.

Now, we're led to believe by some internationally that, gee, it just overwhelmed the killer of the two officers. But then we hear that he may have taken a silencer with him to work. Well, where I come from, courts that I've been in to prosecute, my court as a judge, my region as a chief justice, that would be considered evidence of premeditation, of first degree murder; and yet we apologize to those who think like the murderer.

I haven't heard a demand for an apology from Afghanistan and from the leaders of Afghanistan, who would not be in office but for the lives and sacrifice of American soldiers. They wouldn't be there but for American soldiers, yet no apology from Afghanistan. So I think we have to look a little deeper at what is really going on here.