

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 12, 2013.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have received a subpoena, issued by the United States District Court for the Eastern District of California, purporting to require certain responses to a questionnaire in connection with a civil case.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined under Rule VIII that the subpoena seeks information that is not "material and relevant" and that it is not "consistent with the privileges and rights of the House." Accordingly, I intend to move to quash the subpoena.

Sincerely,

F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, JR.
Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 13, 2013.

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DOUG COLLINS,
Member of Congress.

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K. MICHAEL CONAWAY,
Member of Congress.

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JOHN CAMPBELL,
Member of Congress.

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DARRELL ISSA,
Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Emporia, VA, March 13, 2013.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
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Sincerely,

J. RANDY FORBES,
Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 11, 2013.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

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Sincerely,

TREY GOWDY,
Member of Congress.

BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CRAMER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr.

WOODALL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I thank you, and I thank the majority leader for allowing me to utilize the time today.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of folks, as votes have finished for the day, have headed for their flights back home. A lot of folks are back in their offices trying to finish up work for the week. I appreciate your being here because what we've heard, when we haven't been debating the SKILLS Act—that fantastic bill that consolidates so many important job training programs from the multiple, duplicative programs that we have today down into a few, effective, targeted programs—when we haven't been talking about that important work today, folks have been taking shots at the budget process.

I'm a member of the Budget Committee, Mr. Speaker. And, in fact, I'm the chairman of the Budget Subcommittee on the Rules Committee, Legislative and Budget Process, and I believe what we do here with the budget is so important. I know my colleagues who will be debating this next week share that same view.

I brought with me, Mr. Speaker, a copy of "Path to Prosperity: A Responsible, Balanced Budget."

□ 1330

This is the budget that we produced in the Budget Committee. We went from about 10 a.m. on Wednesday through almost midnight. We took every amendment that folks had to offer. We took a vote on every topic that folks wanted to consider, and we produced a responsible budget that deals with the fact that spending is the problem.

I heard my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, over and over again today on the other side of the aisle talk in terms of heartlessness, of callousness, talking in terms of the production of this budget in a way that does not reflect American values. I tell you, that's just patently false, which is why I had to come down and speak to it this afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

What I have here is a chart that shows taxes. This begins in 2006; it runs out to 2041. It shows taxes as a percent of the size of the economy. You know, population grows, inflation devalues our currency. Quantitative easing devalues our currency. That's a different topic for a different day.

But we measure that in terms of size of the economy what our burden of taxation is, and, historically, that burden of taxation has been about 18.1 percent. We had a dip in the recession back in 2009, 2010 that took that level of taxation down below historical norms.

And so when we talk about that here on the floor of the House, we, together—Republicans, Democrats, moderates, liberals, conservatives—everyone agrees we need revenue at historical levels to fund the historical obligations of the government.

But here's the thing, Mr. Speaker. You look out from—here we are in 2013, on out across the horizon as far as the eye can see, you see a level of funding of our tax burdens. You then, here, in this blue line, see a graphical representation of every single tax increase that the President proposed. I mean, hear that, because so often on the floor of the House, Mr. Speaker, we talk about spending reductions on one side of the aisle and tax increases on the other side of the aisle. This blue line represents every single tax increase proposed by the President of the United States.

So we have all the taxes we have today. We have all the taxes in the blue line proposed by the President. And then in the red line, we have a reflection of the promises that this Congress has made to the American people and future generations in terms of spending.

Now, again, Mr. Speaker, green represents historical taxes; blue represents all the taxes imagined by the President of the United States; and the rest represents the spending that is flooding the town of Washington, D.C.

Spending is the problem, Mr. Speaker. If we took everything from everybody, if you and I got together with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle and we decided we needed a 100 percent tax on everything that everyone in America has or will have and we took it all, we still couldn't fund this red line.

There's no level of taxation—this is 40 percent of the economy we're talking about here, Mr. Speaker. There's no level of taxation that we could have that could pay for the spending promises we've already made, and there are some on the floor of this House who want to make new promises tomorrow and the next day and the day after that.

It's not a function of where our priorities are. In terms of taking care of one another as Americans, we share that priority. It is a function of whether or not we can afford to do it all from Washington, D.C., and we can't.

Spending is the problem, Mr. Speaker. This is hash tag spending is the problem. You'll see that trending on Twitter as folks come to the realization that we can't tax our way out of this circumstance.

So what do we do in the Budget Committee, Mr. Speaker? What did we do for 12 hours on Wednesday and, in fact, months and months and months of preparation?

Well, this is one of my favorite charts, Mr. Speaker. It's a chart that tracks the deficits. Sometimes we get confused as we're talking about it, Mr. Speaker. Of course, the deficit is what you're adding to your credit card each year. The debt is what that total balance on the credit card is. This is a reflection of what we're adding to the credit card each year. And what you see, Mr. Speaker, is a dramatic reduction in those deficits in 2013, 2014, and 2015, and let me tell you why.

You're part of this new freshman class, Mr. Speaker. I'm part of the freshman class that came in just 2 years ago. And we have a natural suspicion of all of these wonderful plans in Washington, that they're laid out over a 10-year timeframe. And we say, Oh, goodness. Out there in years 8, 9, and 10, we're going to do all these wonderful and difficult things. But today, in years 1, 2, and 3, what we really need to do is raise your taxes to get there.

If I make a promise to you about what I'm going to do in year 10, you need to be suspicious. You need to ask me what I'm going to do between now and the next election, between now and your next opportunity to vote me out of office, if I'm making the wrong decisions.

And what you see reflected here in this red line, which represents current law, Mr. Speaker, you see the path that current law has our deficits on. Folks say, Golly, ROB, that looks kind of good. We're headed straight down. Looks like Congress is doing a lot of good work.

Well, yes and no. We are headed down. We're headed down from record deficits begun in the Obama administration, record deficits, deficits four times higher than the worst deficit ever experienced in the Bush administration. The Bush administration was the former record holder for the most deficit spending in this country. President Obama dwarfed that annual budget four times higher.

So I came in this freshman class, Mr. Speaker, this freshman class of almost 100 folks on both sides of the aisle who decided to run for Congress because they wanted to solve problems. They didn't want to talk about who to blame for the problems. They wanted to talk about how they could solve the problems. And we got together, over the last 2 years, and we turned the corner on those rising deficits, began to bring deficits back down.

But when these tools that we've been able to put in place, Mr. Speaker, expire, those deficits start heading right back up under current law. What can we do about it?

We can change the way we do business in Washington, D.C., which is what we did in the budget that we've passed out of the Budget Committee, the budget that's going to be on the floor of the House next week. And as you see represented by this green line, Mr. Speaker, we go from the record-setting deficits of 2010 and 2011 down to a budget that balances for the first time since the Clinton administration. First time since Bill Clinton and Newt Gingrich, Republicans and Democrats, came together on the floor of this House to balance budgets; the first time in about 15 years we're doing that, Mr. Speaker. And we're not doing it out in year 10.

This budget, Mr. Speaker, that I'm so proud of that I've had just a small part in helping to craft, it begins the tough decisions today, because we don't need

to make promises about how we're going to fix things 10 years from now. We have certainty about how difficult things will be 10 years from now. We need to fix those things today. Every day we put it off it gets harder.

But we're having a tough time finding agreement, Mr. Speaker. And I don't mean agreement on how to reduce the deficit. I don't mean an agreement on how to eliminate the debt. I mean an agreement on whether or not the debt, in fact, needs to be eliminated.

Now, at the end of this presentation, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to get to why this is important. This is not a mathematical exercise. This is not a green eyeshade exercise. This is an exercise that impacts the quality of life of every single family in America. Every child growing up in America today is going to have their opportunities curtailed by the debt that their parents and grandparents are leaving to them if we fail to act today, a debt that is growing faster and faster and faster.

This isn't about numbers. This is about real lives and real opportunities. But I want to talk about the numbers before we get to the real lives and the real opportunities, because I want you to understand the magnitude of the challenge.

This is World War II, Mr. Speaker. This is a chart that reflects the debt, the debt held by the public. In World War II, when we were fighting for freedom around the globe, when, literally, the future of the world hung in the balance, we borrowed an amount of money theretofore unheard of in America, almost, well, just over, in fact, 100 percent of the size of the economy America borrowed to win freedom around the globe. We began to pay that back, of course. And over the years, that debt became lower and lower and lower and lower and lower and lower.

Well, here you see the spike in modern times, Mr. Speaker, that spike in the end of the Bush years, the beginning of the Obama years, running on until today; and you see the red line that projects the current path of debt, again, if we do nothing.

Folks often tell me back home, Mr. Speaker, they say, Congressman, why don't you just go shut the government down and save some money?

Well, I have some bad news. If we closed the Congress today, if we locked the doors to the White House this afternoon, if the Congress and the President never passed another law, never made another promise, this red line represents the promises we've already made.

□ 1340

This red line isn't what happens if we act poorly. This red line is what happens if we fail to act at all. It takes affirmative action in order to bring that debt crisis down.

Look at the green space, Mr. Speaker. That's the path to prosperity. Remember, this chart represents debt.

Debt. Not the deficit when you try to bring a budget to balance, but the debt that we're trying to pay back when you bring a budget to balance, when you create a surplus and use that surplus to pay back the folks from whom you've borrowed.

The Path to Prosperity, this budget, Mr. Speaker, that we've crafted in the Budget Committee that I hope this House will pass next week, puts America on track not just to eliminate annual deficits, not just to end the increase of our \$16.7 trillion in Federal debt, but to begin to pay that debt down so that we owe the world zero. Zero. Balancing the budget is not an exercise in and of itself. Balancing the budget is what has to happen first so that you can pay back the folks from whom you've borrowed. We take debt down to zero.

This is what the President said on Sunday morning television, ABC's George Stephanopoulos, March 13 of this year:

We don't have an immediate crisis in terms of debt. In fact, for the next 10 years, it's going to be in a sustainable place.

Here it is, Mr. Speaker. That red line you see rocketing towards the top of the page, it doesn't actually end up here at the top of the page; I just ran out of ink, Mr. Speaker. That red line continues straight up off the chart in perpetuity. This is what the President calls "a sustainable place."

But this is what's even more important. And every mom and dad in America knows this. When you're planning for your children's future, you don't begin with what you want for them today. You begin with what you want for them 10 years from now and you begin to plan and work and save and scrimp so that it will be a reality 10 years from today. And not just 10, but 20 and 30. To achieve the goals we want in the future, we have to begin today.

And, Mr. Speaker, when I quote the President back home, folks often think I'm mean-spirited. They say, Rob, why do you say those awful things about the President? I say, I'm not saying awful things about the President. I think the President is a good man. He's got some awful ideas, but he's a good man. And I'm just telling you what his ideas are. And if he were here, he'd tell you the very same thing. I don't need to engage in hyperbole on the floor of the House, Mr. Speaker, because the President believes that we don't have a debt crisis. The President believes that it's all right if the debt continues to go higher and higher and higher forever. Forever. That's not hyperbole. He would tell you that if he was standing here today.

In fact, we can look at every budget the President has ever submitted. Now he hasn't submitted a budget this year. He's going to go down in the record books as the President who has introduced his budget the longest past the legally required deadline in the history of Presidents presenting budgets.

That's not a title that folks aspire to, but that's where we're going to be today.

He has never introduced a budget that balances. But more importantly, he's never introduced a budget that stops raising the debt. Not only does the President not pay back a penny of debt in any budget he's ever introduced—and I just don't mean a 1-year window, a 5-year window, and a 10-year window; I mean in a 75-year window. He increases that debt more and more each year. And he believes—again, I'm not trying to say anything that he wouldn't tell you himself, Mr. Speaker—he believes that what our goal should be as America is not to actually pay the debt back, as we try to do in our budget, taking that green line down to zero, but what our goal should be is just to slow the rise of the debt below the rate of growth of our economy.

What does that mean? In practical terms, it means if you have a credit card, your goal should not be to pay your credit card back. In fact, your goal shouldn't even be just to pay the interest on your credit card. What your goal should be is to make sure that as that balance on your credit card continues to rise, it rises slower than whatever your income is rising to be. If your credit card balances go on in perpetuity and get higher and higher, it's as if your goal as a family is to keep that rise from going any faster than your paycheck is rising.

It's a crazy philosophy, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely no family in America shares that philosophy. That's what the President said on George Stephanopoulos, that's what he believes today, that's what he told the Republican Conference when we met together this week.

So let's talk about what those alternative ideas are. The President's plan is not to balance, our plan is to balance. Again, when the President says a balanced approach, that means he wants tax increases and spending reductions. That's the definition of a balanced approach. But it's an approach that never balances.

Our friends in the Senate have not passed a budget for 4 years. But it looks like they're at least trying this year. And I applaud them for that. This is an editorial from The Wall Street Journal this morning, Mr. Speaker, that talks about that outline of the Senate budget that was shared with America yesterday. The Wall Street Journal says this:

The bill manages the unique achievement of offering no net non-defense spending cuts and no entitlement reform worth the name while proposing to raise \$1.5 trillion in new tax revenue in such a way that would ruin the prospects for bipartisan reform.

Spending, Mr. Speaker. Spending is the problem. The problem we have is spending. And what The Wall Street Journal observes is that the budget that's being proposed over in the United States Senate—and, again, I ap-

plaud them for at least beginning that process. The law requires them to do it every single year. They haven't done it for 4. I hope they'll do it this year. We passed the No Budget, No Pay Act. So at least if they don't do it, they won't get a paycheck for that dereliction of duty. But this is what they have proposed: a bill with no net spending cuts, no entitlement reform, and tax increases of \$1 trillion, so says The Wall Street Journal:

Democrats admit to raising taxes by \$975 billion over 10 years by increasing the fairness and efficiency of the Tax Code. Ms. Murray provides few details. The real tax increase is closer to \$1.5 trillion because the budget omits about \$480 billion in more unspecified taxes to replace sequestration and \$100 billion to offset the cost of the new stimulus.

New stimulus.

Spending, Mr. Speaker, is the problem. The House budget puts us on a track not just to a balanced budget within 10 years, but paying back every penny of debt that we've borrowed from Americans and the world. And the Senate budget has yet to pass committee—it remains to be seen if they can pass it in the Senate—but the proposal is to increase spending and increase taxes.

We're not up here bickering about how to name a post office, Mr. Speaker, or whether or not we ought to meet on Tuesdays or Thursdays or Fridays. We're up here arguing about whether the future of the Republic, whether opportunity for our children and grandchildren, lies in a future where you have paid back all of your debts or lies in a future where you allow those debts to rise forever. That is a legitimate discussion. Only in Washington—there's not a kitchen table around the country where that would be the discussion that we'd have.

I read from The Wall Street Journal, and I know there might be some folks back home, Mr. Speaker, who say, Rob, that Wall Street Journal, that's a conservative publication. No wonder they don't like what the Senate is doing. What do the liberal publications think? Well, it just so happens, Mr. Speaker, since you and I are in Washington today, I had a copy of The Washington Post in my office. They're no fan of conservatives. That's certainly no conservative rag.

This is what the official editorial from The Washington Post said this morning about the Senate budget:

Partisan in tone and complacent in substance, it scores points against Republicans and reassures the party's liberal base—but deepens the Senators' commitment to an unsustainable policy agenda.

They go on. The Washington Post says:

It is on the issue of entitlements that the Democrats' document really disappoints. There is literally nothing—not a word—suggested of trimming Social Security, whether through greater means-testing, a more realistic inflation adjustment, or reforming disability benefits. The document's fuzzy call for \$275 billion in "health savings" is \$125

billion less than the number President Obama has floated.

□ 1350

There's plenty of exhortation of the GOP "premium support" plan. But there's no explanation of how the Democrats would pay for their "promise"—nary a hint of the many cost-saving reforms that would extend Medicare's life without embracing the GOP plan.

Washington Post.

It scores points, but it deepens an unsustainable policy agenda. There is literally not a word suggested of reforming entitlements. It's less ambitious than even President Obama's agenda. It excoriates the GOP's plan, but provides no explanation of a Democrat alternative.

And it closes with this, Mr. Speaker:

In short, this document gives voters no reason to believe that Democrats have a viable plan for—or even a responsible public assessment of—the country's long-term fiscal predicament.

That's The Washington Post talking about the Democrat plan in the United States Senate. "In short, this document"—and to be clear, Mr. Speaker, the first budget to be produced by the Senate in 4 years; it remains to be seen if they can actually produce it, but at least they're suggesting they're going to produce one. The Washington Post assessment of that plan is that "this document gives voters no reason to believe that Democrats have a viable plan for—or even a responsible public assessment of—the country's long-term fiscal predicament."

Mr. Speaker, that's what we're talking about here. This isn't a bunch of children bickering about who gets to take home the ball. We're talking about whether or not opportunity will exist a decade, two decades, three decades from now. There's not a family in America that believes they can borrow in perpetuity without consequences. There are terrible, terrible consequences.

Lest you think—and I'll be the first to say, Mr. Speaker, I have been suspicious of newspaper editorials. I don't believe the media always gets it right, so I brought a quote from actually the hearing that was going on yesterday.

Senator MIKE CRAPO is over on the Senate side. He was questioning the Democratic staffers who put together the budget. I know, serving on the Budget Committee, Mr. Speaker, what happens is budgets are very technical documents. When you craft one, they take all the committee counsel and they put them at a table in front of all of the Members, and all the Members get to ask the staffers who helped to prepare all the complicated numbers about the details of the document. So it's a give and take with the folks who actually prepare the document.

This is what Senator CRAPO asked:

"In terms of overall deficit reduction that is to be achieved, whether through taxes or spending reductions that are claimed in the budget, what percentage of those are achieved in year one?"

This is what he says. He says, I'm not asking whether you're raising taxes or

you're cutting spending. What I'm asking is what are you doing in year one to begin immediately to put this country on the path to paying its debts?

The committee staffer says, "There are spending savings in year one, but in total, it's about no in the first year."

"It's about what?" Senator CRAPO asks. The staffer says, "It's zero in the first year in total because there are spending savings and spending costs."

You're thinking that sounds like Washington double-speak, Mr. Speaker. Well, Senator CRAPO thought so too. He says: "So I didn't understand you. It's zero in the first year?"

The staffer says: "Yes, sir. On net, sir."

Senator CRAPO says: "That confirms my worry."

Understand, here's a budget that is increasing taxes by \$1.8 trillion, and changes our deficit for next year by nothing. It does not put us one dollar closer to a balanced budget. It does not put us one dollar closer to stemming the rise in debt. Taxes going up in this budget by \$1.8 trillion, and they want to spend it all as it's coming in, such that they change nothing about our fiscal condition in year one.

It's one of those back-loaded budgets, Mr. Speaker, we hear so much about. It was Wimpy, I think, in the Popeye cartoon who said, I would gladly pay you tomorrow for a hamburger today. That's what we have going on right here—I'll gladly make the tough decisions 10 years from now if only you'll let me keep spending today. Mr. Speaker, it is that mentality that got us here. You can't measure budgets by what they do 10 years from now; you have to measure by what they do today.

I'm not alone saying this. This is President Obama, President Obama in 2008. He said adding \$4 trillion to the national debt was irresponsible and unpatriotic. I want to read you the whole quote, Mr. Speaker. He said:

The problem is, is that the way Bush has done it over the last 8 years is to take out a credit card from the Bank of China in the name of our children, driving up our national debt from \$5 trillion dollars for the first 42 presidents—number 43 added \$4 trillion dollars by his lonesome—it was \$5 trillion for all Presidents combined up until President Bush. President Bush added \$4 trillion over his 8 years as President.

President Obama goes on:

So that we now have over \$9 trillion dollars of debt that we are going to have to pay back—\$30,000 for every man, woman and child. That's irresponsible. It's unpatriotic.

President Obama rightly noting that during 8 years of the Bush administration our Federal debt rose from \$5 trillion to \$9 trillion. Through the first 4 years of the Obama administration, it rose from \$10.6 to \$16.6; \$6 trillion in 4 years. President Bush, \$4 trillion in 8 years, President Obama calls it irresponsible and unpatriotic. The President is running up debts twice as fast, and since he has been in office has produced not one budget plan that would stop that rise.

In case you couldn't follow it, Mr. Speaker—I blew it up in red because I didn't want it to be missed at all—the national debt under President Obama has risen \$6.1 trillion, from 10.6 when he was sworn into office in January of 2009 to 16.7 today; a 57 percent increase. It was irresponsible and unpatriotic, the President said, to increase the deficit \$4 trillion over 8 years; \$6.1 trillion for the President over 4.

I say this, Mr. Speaker, because we're not supposed to be arguing about this. I mean, it's so frustrating. You're here in your freshman year; I'm here just 2 years into the job. We didn't come here to find out who to blame; we came here to make a difference. Tell me what that is. Tell me what on the mandatory side of the ledger folks want to begin to reduce, Mr. Speaker, what they want to reform, what they want to do to guarantee that Medicare and Social Security survive for another generation. I will partner with them to do it. Not one budget that has saved one dollar in 5 years of this White House, not even a budget plan from the Senate in the last 4.

I don't want to tell the American people who to blame, Mr. Speaker. I want to tell the American people who got together and worked with one another to solve the problem. But what the President knew was a problem—a problem he called irresponsible and unpatriotic while he was running for President—he seems to have forgotten all about after getting elected President.

Here he is in 2009, Mr. Speaker. In 2009, the President believed that a failure to control the deficit would make it harder for the economy to grow. How often have we been on the floor of the House talking about jobs, Mr. Speaker? This is the part that really gets me excited—and I don't mean excited because I'm happy about it, Mr. Speaker; I'm getting excited because I'm energized about it. This is not a green eyeshade exercise. We want to pass a budget so that we can pass on a more prosperous America to our children and our grandchildren. The President knew that. He said this—newspaper article, Bloomberg, February 2009:

"President Obama wants to reduce the deficit because he's concerned that over time Federal borrowing will make it harder for the U.S. economy to grow and create jobs," said the official, "speaking on the condition of anonymity."

□ 1400

Now, you shouldn't have to be anonymous about the fact that you believe a growing debt is going to curtail job opportunity in the future. Of course it is. We all know that to be true. Every economist in this town knows that to be true. The President, before he was President, and the President, right after he became President, knew that failing to act on this would put the America that we all know in peril and would put the opportunities that we have all had out of reach for our children and our grandchildren.

If you don't believe it, Mr. Speaker, go to the Department of Labor—not conservative Republican ROB WOODALL's Department of Labor, not the U.S. House's Department of Labor, but President Obama's Department of Labor. They said this. They keep a record of entrepreneurial activity in this country. I love that, Mr. Speaker. That's who we are. At our core, we're not big corporations; we're individual mom-and-pop operations who go out and risk it all because they have a good idea that they think through the sweat of their brow and their hard work, they'll be able to succeed. The Department of Labor keeps statistics on that.

Sure, we're an entrepreneurial country. The Department of Labor is tracking entrepreneurs. As the President was implementing his spending agenda, that agenda I said that took us from the record high deficits of the Bush administration to deficits three times higher in the Obama administration, the Department of Labor told us this: the number of new establishments—that's the new entrepreneurial activity—for the year ending in March 2010 was lower than any other year since the series began, since they began keeping records, Mr. Speaker.

In 2010, under this administration's stimulus policies, entrepreneurial activity was at the lowest level in America since we began keeping records. I don't mean at the lowest level of people succeeding. I mean at the lowest level of people trying—the lowest level of people trying, Mr. Speaker. What does it mean about us? What does it mean about our future when we have beaten the enthusiasm to try out of our people, frightened it out of our people?

Mr. Speaker, that's not just a Department of Labor report. We talk a lot about that. What is it that the guys down at the agencies are producing, those technical reports? I'll tell you what they're producing. I'll tell you the impact it's had. The Federal Register, Mr. Speaker, I don't know if you've picked up a copy since you've been here. The Federal Register measures all the new regulations coming out of Washington. In fact, they have to publish them there.

In 2012, last year, you and I—well, you weren't here yet, Mr. Speaker, I've been here for 2 years—we were not passing a new regulatory agenda. Those department agencies, they were not implementing a new congressional regulatory agenda. They were implementing the old one. They hadn't gotten the old one out yet, and last year, \$33 billion, 34, really, 33.9, \$33 billion is what those own agencies estimated the cost of complying with their new government regulations would be. Those agencies, those agencies that put out their regulations are required by law to explain to the American people whether it's worth it or not. And so they have to certify how many hours it's going to take the American people to comply with all of their new regulations.

Last year, Mr. Speaker, 81 million hours, 81 million hours just last year were added to the Federal regulatory code book in new work for men and women across this country. Why is that entrepreneurial activity low? Well, the Federal Government is borrowing all the money to spend here; there's no prospect for tax relief on the horizon. In fact, taxes keep going up. There's a brand-new health care bill in place that folks don't understand. They're frightened it's going to destroy their health care system, not to mention to add to their costs of their business, and the Federal Government last year in the midst of this terrible recession, in the midst of this difficult economy, added \$33.9 billion in additional costs through regulatory activity that's going to take 81 million hours to complete.

Now, let's just do some back-of-the-envelope math, Mr. Speaker: 81 million hours, let's say the average work year is 40 hours a week. If you work 50 weeks a year, that's 2,000 hours—2,000 hours. That's 40,000 people who will spend every working hour of every working day all year long just to meet the new Federal regulatory burden.

Mr. Speaker, I don't wonder why it is that entrepreneurial activity is the lowest it's been since we began keeping records. The wonder is that folks are still trying at all. I had someone say that to me, Mr. Speaker. I was visiting with a group of honor students in Forsyth County there in the north metro Atlanta area, and we were talking about what do you want to do when you grow up. We were talking about America as a land of opportunity where you can do anything that you want to do, where it's our birthright to be filled with opportunities that our parents never dreamed of having. A young woman on the front row raised her hand. She said, Congressman, you're talking so much about going out and hanging out your own shingle and being an entrepreneur. She said, It looks really, really hard. She said, Why would anybody even try today?

One of the best high schools in my district, an award-winning high school, honor students in that school, asking the question, In America why is it even worth trying today? You're making it so hard. Those aren't just the words of a naive 18-year-old. Those are the words of some of the most successful entrepreneurs in America today.

Up here in orange, Mr. Speaker, it's not quite Home Depot orange, but it's orange. Home Depot is one of those great companies that was founded down in my part of the world. It's grown across the country. It's just a tremendous success story. We're so proud. They're a great corporate citizen. They give back to us so much in the community. Ken Langone, one of the four founders of Home Depot, wrote an open letter to the President in *The Wall Street Journal*. Again, one of the captains of industry, one of the most successful companies in America, this

is what the founder of that company wrote in an open letter to President Obama:

If we tried to start Home Depot today under the kinds of onerous regulatory controls that you have advocated, it's a stone cold certainty that our business would never get off the ground much less thrive.

These budget exercises are not about numbers. They're about families and opportunities. And when the captains of industry in America, those folks who risked it all with their ideas and every hour of their day for years of their life to try to get something to grow their idea from a concept into an actual business, into an international enterprise, those folks, the most successful among us, say if they were trying to do it today in the America that Washington, D.C., has created today, they would fail.

Folks, this isn't about dollars and cents in a Federal budget. This is about dollars that are going to regulatory agencies that are crushing dreams and opportunities. This is about the failure of government to weigh benefits and burdens, to do those things that don't encourage opportunity but restrict it. And these are not the words of folks who are here trying to pursue a partisan agenda. It's the words of folks who put families to work and put food on the table.

It is not just Ken Langone. We heard it from the founder of Subway. Just this month, late last month, in fact, February, being interviewed on TV, Fred DeLuca said this—again, you see a Subway on every corner in America. The \$5 Foot Long happens to be one of my favorites. It's a bargain in this town, and the \$3 Six Inch, but the founder of Subway said this just last month:

If I started Subway today, Subway would not exist.

If I started Subway today, one of the most successful restaurants chains in all the land, Subway would not exist.

He didn't say that because he thinks Americans are unwilling to work today. Americans work harder than any other people anywhere on the planet. He didn't say that because we, as a people, are unwilling to take risks today. There is no more entrepreneurial culture on this planet than the American people. He said it because Washington, government, has structured a landscape in which opportunity cannot thrive—tax burdens, health care burdens, regulatory burdens, labor burdens, on and on and on.

□ 1410

Folks, there is nothing special about America that exists in our landscape. What is special about America is the idea of who we are, that we could break ties with the motherland such that we could come here and try it our way so that we could take the risk that maybe we succeed and maybe we fail, but the chance to succeed is such a great motivator, hope is such a great motivator, that family after family

after family for over 200 years has risked it all to come here and risked it all to make sure their kids have more opportunities tomorrow than those parents have today.

Our captains of industry, our entrepreneurs are telling us that government regulations, government over-spending, government borrowing, rising debt is crushing that dream for the next generation of America. That's not news. President Obama knew it when he was running for election and he knew it after he got elected. We just need a willing partner to work with us today to solve that problem.

I'll go back to Home Depot again. It's just a fantastic Atlanta company that has grown around the world. Bernie Marcus, a tremendous philanthropist in Atlanta, gives of his time and his resources to every worthy cause in town to try to make sure his neighbors are taken care of. He believes to whom much is given, much is expected. He lives up to that model every day. He says this:

Having built a small business into a big one, I can tell you that today the impediments that the government imposes are impossible to deal with.

Bernie Marcus, a huge philanthropist, a wildly successful entrepreneur, looks out at the landscape today and says the impediments put forward by government are impossible to deal with. He goes on to say:

Home Depot would never have succeeded if we tried to start it today. Every day rules and regulations from a group of Washington bureaucrats who know nothing about running a business—and I mean every day—is becoming stifling.

Let's go back to that chart, Mr. Speaker. This is what Bernie Marcus is talking about, regulations coming out every day.

The Federal Register is published every day. You can pick it up at your local Federal depository library. Sometimes it's this thick and sometimes it's this thick. And for the last year, and last year alone, this government, the Federal Government—not the State governments, not the local governments—the Federal Government, and the Federal Government alone, imposed \$33.9 billion in new requirements on Americans, requirements that, by the government's own estimation, are going to take 81 million hours to fill out. That is 40,000 full-time workers working every hour of every day for a year creating nothing, no productivity, only complying with Federal regulations.

I'll finish, Mr. Speaker, where I began, and that's why it matters.

This is that chart of debt in America, borrowing from the Federal Government. I read the President's words, Mr. Speaker, where he said it was irresponsible to allow our children to have amassed a \$30,000 per child debt under the Bush administration. That debt, Mr. Speaker, is fast approaching \$60,000 for every child under the Obama administration. And if we do nothing,

this red line of debt, Mr. Speaker, that destroys opportunity, that destroys America as we know it, continues if we do nothing.

We can't ignore this problem away, Mr. Speaker. We must do something. So year after year, Mr. Speaker—it makes it sound like I'm an old hand at this. In the 3 years I've been here—2 years and 2 months—this House has presented a budget every single year, budgets that make tough choices, budgets that challenge each and every one of us to set those priorities of things that must happen versus those priorities of things that we would like to happen versus those priorities of things that we could really do without if it means a better America tomorrow.

Three years in a row, Mr. Speaker, we've been touching things that the prognosticators said would never be touched. Folks said Medicare was doomed to failure, Mr. Speaker, because no Congress would ever be bold enough to do those things necessary to save it for another generation. But all 3 years I've been here, all three budgets I've had the pleasure of helping to produce, we made those tough choices and made those vital changes.

To fail to reform Medicare is to destroy it. To fail to reform Medicare is to end it forever. In 2023, it runs out of money, Mr. Speaker. We all know it. Those aren't my numbers. Those aren't your numbers. Those are the numbers from the Medicare actuaries downtown working for President Obama. In 2023, there is no more money.

How many of us have family members who rely on that program, Mr. Speaker? We do them no favors by ignoring the problem and careening towards that failure. We do the responsible thing, the hard thing, by making those tough choices, as we have in this budget, that will save that program not just for my mom and dad, not just for your parents and your grandparents, but for more generations to come.

Our responsibility here, Mr. Speaker, is not to scare America. Our responsibility here is not to tell America whom to blame. Our responsibility here is to serve America and make the tough decisions that previous Congresses have not.

There are two paths, Mr. Speaker, two paths. I'm not going to tell you the path we've laid out in the Budget Committee is an easy path. It's not. When you've been living beyond your means—and I mean \$1 trillion beyond your means each year. Thirty-three cents out of every \$1 the Federal Government spends is borrowed. When you've been living that far beyond your means, change is hard; but it's the right thing to do and, I tell you, it's the only thing to do.

This chart, Mr. Speaker, that shows the red chart of where America is headed today. I only ran that chart out to 2023. The truth of matter is—and you can see for yourself the Congressional Budget Office numbers at www.cbo.gov, Mr. Speaker.

The models we have that predict economic growth in this country, they stop working in about 30 years because they cannot calculate, they cannot see, they cannot imagine in those models how America could still exist as an economy having borrowed as much money as it will have borrowed in 30 years if we do nothing. The models break—there is a little asterisk. At cbo.gov—see it for yourself—there's a little asterisk that says we can't predict that we could even continue beyond this point.

PAUL RYAN is fond of saying that this is the most predictable crisis America has ever faced. Everyone, every man and woman in every seat from the most liberal Democrat to the most conservative Republican, every Congressperson knows the economic destruction that awaits us if we choose to do nothing.

Folks have been asking all day, Mr. Speaker: What's the “there” there in the PAUL RYAN budget, and what is the House Budget Committee budget? What I hope next week will be the House budget, what I hope before the April 15 deadline will be the law of the land, will be the American budget, the “there” there is that we shift directions from a pathway that will most certainly mean the end of opportunity for our children to a pathway that will mean more opportunity for our children than even you and I have had, Mr. Speaker.

We are not in this Chamber talking about numbers. We are in this Chamber talking about people. And if we fail to act, the devastation, the destruction is not going to be measured in red lines on a ledger. It's going to be measured in real pain for real families, and it doesn't have to be that way.

I urge all of my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, to give prayerful consideration to the House budget. Dig deep into these numbers, dig deep into these choices. That is what America is. It is about making the tough choices.

We have the freedom to succeed, and we have the freedom to fail. To date, Mr. Speaker, Congresses have been adopting the freedom to fail. We can change that this year. And I urge my colleagues in the Senate and I urge the President to join us in that quest.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

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THE BUDGET AND THE ADMINISTRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's always an honor to be recognized here on the floor of the United States House. I want to follow up on what my dear friend Mr. WOODALL was pointing out.

With the amount of red ink that we've had, there is no person, there is