

The Budget also provides the resources we need to act on our commitment to and interests in global development, by promoting food security that reduces dependence and increases prosperity; by investing in the increasingly successful drive toward an AIDS-free generation; and by maintaining our leadership as a global provider of humanitarian assistance that saves lives and reflects American values.

We must also confront new dangers, like cyber attacks, that threaten our Nation's infrastructure, businesses, and people. The Budget supports the expansion of Government-wide efforts to counter the full scope of cyber threats, and strengthens our ability to collaborate with State and local governments, our partners overseas, and the private sector to improve our overall cybersecurity.

The Budget also focuses resources on the Asia-Pacific region, reasserting American leadership and promoting security, stability, democracy, and economic growth.

Importantly, the Budget upholds our solemn obligation to take care of our servicemembers and veterans, and to protect our diplomats and civilians in the field. It keeps faith with our veterans, investing in world-class care, including mental health care for our wounded warriors, supporting our military families, and giving our veterans the benefits, education, and job opportunities that they have earned.

The Budget does all of these things as part of a comprehensive plan that reduces the deficit. All of these initiatives and ideas are fully paid for, to ensure they do not increase the deficit by a single dime.

By making investments in our people that we pay for responsibly, we will strengthen the middle class, make America a magnet for jobs and innovation, and grow our economy, which will in turn help us to reduce deficits. But economic growth alone will not solve our Nation's long-term fiscal challenges.

As we continue to grow our economy, we must take further action to cut our deficits. We do not have to choose between these two important priorities—we have to do both.

Over the last 4 years, both parties have worked together to reduce the deficit in a balanced way by more than \$2.5 trillion. That is more than halfway toward the goal of \$4 trillion in deficit reduction that economists say we need to stabilize our finances. As we wind down two wars, we have protected our military families and veterans while cutting defense spending on outdated military weapons systems. Domestic discretionary spending is approaching its lowest levels as a share of the economy since President Eisenhower was in office; and we have moved aggressively to cut waste, fraud, and abuse. And together, we have begun to ask the wealthy to do their fair share while keeping income taxes low for middle class families. Overall, we have cut the

deficit in a balanced way that protects the investments in education, manufacturing, clean energy, and small businesses we need to grow the economy and strengthen the middle class. There is more work to do, and this Budget is designed to finish the job.

But we should not do it by making harsh and arbitrary cuts that jeopardize our military readiness, devastate priorities like education and energy, and cost jobs. That is not how to grow the economy. We should not ask middle class senior citizens and working families to pay down the rest of our deficit while the wealthiest are asked for nothing more. That does not grow our middle class.

The American people understand that we cannot just cut our way to prosperity. That is why I have repeatedly called for a balanced approach to deficit reduction. And that is why I have offered proposals on multiple occasions that cut wasteful spending, strengthen entitlements, and eliminate special tax breaks and loopholes so the wealthiest pay their fair share.

In my negotiations with House Speaker BOEHNER in December over the so-called "fiscal cliff," I again offered a compromise proposal that was balanced and comprehensive, and would achieve our \$4 trillion deficit reduction goal. That proposal is still on the table. I am including it in this Budget to demonstrate my commitment to making the kind of tough and balanced choices that are needed to put our Nation's finances in order.

To be clear, the package I am offering includes some difficult cuts that I do not particularly like. But these measures will only become law if congressional Republicans agree to meet me in the middle by eliminating special tax breaks and loopholes so millionaires and billionaires do their fair share to cut the deficit. I will not agree to any deal that seeks to cut the deficit on the backs of middle class families. I am willing to make tough choices that may not be popular within my own party, because there can be no sacred cows for either party. And I look forward to working with any member of Congress who takes a similar, balanced approach. This plan is built on the kind of common ground that Democrats and Republicans should be able to reach.

In total, the Budget will cut the deficit by another \$1.8 trillion over the next 10 years, bringing the deficit below 2 percent of GDP by 2023 and putting our debt on a declining path. This is not an end in and of itself—the best way to grow the economy and cut the deficit is by creating good middle class jobs. But this plan to reduce the deficit in a balanced way is a critical step toward ensuring that we have a solid foundation on which to build a strong economy and a thriving middle class for years to come.

Finally, this Budget continues my commitment to reforming and streamlining our Government for the 21st

Century. It builds on my Campaign to Cut Waste by further targeting and eliminating wasteful spending wherever we find it. It reorganizes and consolidates agencies and programs to make them leaner and more efficient. It increases the use of evidence and evaluation to ensure we are making smart investments with our scarce taxpayer dollars. And it harnesses new technologies to allow us to do more with less.

No single Budget can solve every challenge and every problem facing the country. But this Budget shows how we can live within our means while growing our economy, strengthening the middle class, and securing our Nation's future. It is not a Democratic plan or a Republican plan. It is an American plan. And it is a plan that I hope can serve as an outline for us to write the next great chapter of the American story . . . together.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, April 10, 2013.

ACCESSING NATURAL GAS

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, yesterday it was reported that the United States has 2.4 quadrillion cubic feet of natural gas that can be recovered by current drilling techniques, according to a study by companies working in various shale basins across the country. That's 26 percent higher than the previous assessment, and at current consumption rates, a 90-year supply. The Marcellus shale has the largest share of resources, with an estimated 741,320 billion cubic feet.

What has caused such a jump in resources and production? Not the Federal Government, that's for sure. According to the Congressional Research Service, production of natural gas has decreased on Federal lands by 33 percent. It's the hard work and innovation of private industry, a combination of technological and drilling advances that have allowed us to access resources that were previously inaccessible, all in a responsible and environmentally friendly way. In fact, just last week, the Energy Information Administration stated that expanded use of natural gas has driven down energy-related U.S. carbon dioxide emissions to their lowest level since 1994.

America is just beginning to realize the opportunity of this growing and economically beneficial resource.

□ 1610

RECOGNIZING THE WORLD'S FOREMOST CLIMATOLOGIST, DR. JAMES HANSEN

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the storied career of America's foremost climatologist, and the world's, Dr. James Hansen. Last week Dr. Hansen retired from his position as head of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies. After 46 years at NASA, he's leaving the agency to focus his efforts on the political and legal efforts to limit greenhouse gases.

He started his career by working on the atmosphere of the planet Venus in the sixties. Luckily for the world, he changed his emphasis to the atmosphere of the Earth.

Dr. Hansen is perhaps known best for his 1988 testimony to the Senate committees that helped raise the initial broad awareness of global warming across the United States. He sounded the warning bell of the effects of climate change, and can be credited with bringing the issue to the forefront of the American conscience.

Dr. Hansen, who fittingly called the proposed building of the Keystone XL pipeline akin to the "lighting of the carbon bomb," is one of the world's leading advocates of decreased fossil fuel consumption.

While his departure from the Federal climate research community will undoubtedly leave a gaping hole in NASA's climate program, I look forward to the role Dr. Hansen will take on his retirement as he pursues actions to limit emissions and his fight against the development of Keystone and other tar sands pipelines.

The future of our planet rests in the hands of scientists like Dr. Hansen, and I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing him the best of luck in his retirement. I truly hope he can continue the work that he has successfully pursued throughout his storied career in this new capacity.

THE SAFE CLIMATE CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MULLIN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments we just heard on the floor from my colleague from Tennessee talking about Dr. Hansen's retirement, a gentleman who has faced a great deal of criticism, including many from this Congress, because of his forceful presentation of his point of view. And time after time after time, Dr. Hansen has been proven correct.

This is the most important issue that we're really not debating in Congress. There are a group of us here who have formed the Safe Climate Caucus to be able to promote this discussion. Today we extended an invitation to the leadership of the Commerce and Energy Committee to join us on the floor of the House for a bipartisan debate, encouraging our Republican colleagues to come to the floor to be able to deal with this issue that, frankly, deserves to be in the spotlight.

We're not aware of any Republican Member who's spoken on the floor of the House about the dangers of climate change or the need to reduce emissions and prepare for its impact in this entire session of Congress. In fact, as near as we can determine, no Republican Member of Congress has even uttered the words "climate change" on the floor in this Congress.

It's, I suppose, better that they're not talking about it at all than what we had in the last Congress where the Republican-led House of Representatives voted 53 times to block action on climate change. My Republican colleagues voted to defund research, to block action by the EPA to control pollution, to prevent energy efficiency measures from going into effect.

Remember, one of the most comical was the assault on light bulb efficiency, an efficiency standard that was developed, admittedly, when Democrats were in charge, but signed with legislation that we worked out with the Bush administration. That was certainly a travesty.

It was interesting. The industry looked at them and shrugged and said, we're moving on, we're not going back to produce less energy-efficient light bulbs.

They voted to stop the administration from encouraging developing countries to do their part.

This year, the Republican members of the Energy and Commerce Committee, which is the committee of primary jurisdiction over energy policy, even voted against holding hearings with scientists who could explain the role of climate change in causing extreme weather, drought, heat waves and wildfires. That's why we've created the Safe Climate Caucus, to work to end the conspiracy of silence here in the House about the dangers of climate change.

But we hope, we sincerely hope, that our Republican colleagues would join us here on the floor of the House in one of these Special Orders to discuss our various approaches. If they don't agree with human-caused impacts of extreme weather events, engage in the debate to explain why. If they do agree that we are at least having extreme weather events, whether or not they're human-caused, let's debate what we should do to be protecting us from those impacts. The American public deserves no less.

So until we're able to engage our Republican colleagues in a spirited, thoughtful debate on the floor of the House, we will continue pointing out the problems that we face, the risks, the danger, the paths forward, because in 2012, there were over 3,500 weather-related records set due to extreme heat, rain, drought, cold and wind. The American public has seen that. They've suffered the consequences. They're concerned.

Hurricane Sandy was one of just 11 weather disasters last year in the United States that caused more than a billion dollars in losses, a total of over

\$60 billion, which taxpayers are being forced to help assume the burden.

Here in Washington, D.C., we set another record, 90 degrees today, for April 10. At the same time, there are snowstorms in Colorado.

2012 was the 36th consecutive year with a global temperature above the 20th century average. The last time there was a year with a global temperature that wasn't above average was 1976, before Jimmy Carter was elected President. We were celebrating the Bicentennial. Most of our staff here in Washington, D.C., on Capitol Hill, has never experienced a year where temperatures weren't above average.

Now, just because our Republican friends don't want to debate it, just because they have fought to prevent our initiative, doesn't mean that it's not having an economic impact. The United States Congress has appropriated \$188 billion for climate-related disasters over the last 3 years.

Just 2 months ago, the Government Accountability Office released a GAO report listing the Federal Government's vulnerability to climate change impacts as one of its greatest areas of potential risk. Climate change could increase investment portfolio risk by 10 percent over the next 2 decades by disrupting supply chains.

Those of us in Congress who are noticing these problems, these changes, these challenges, are not alone. According to the Gallup poll last month, 58 percent of the American public worry a fair amount or a great deal about climate change and its impacts. Sixty-two percent of Republicans believe that America should take steps to address climate change.

Monday, Arnold Schwarzenegger joined the list of Republican politicians who now acknowledge that climate change is a serious concern, speaking at the Price School of Public Policy in California. Governor Schwarzenegger said, if we're smart, we listen to our doctors. If we're stupid, we ignore our doctors, and it takes a heart attack to realize that we should listen.

Schwarzenegger said the national climate assessment report is our physical, and these scientists can give us a prescription for what we need to do to improve our climate. It's our duty to listen to them and encourage action, action all over the country. And Republican Governor Schwarzenegger is to be commended for his vision and stepping forward.

Another of my colleagues from California is with us here this evening, and I notice that he may be willing to step in. He's been greatly concerned about infrastructure, climate, the environment in a long and distinguished career in California politics and now here in Congress.

□ 1620

We're honored that you would be willing to join us, and I would be happy to yield to you if you would like to join in this conversation.