

shall have been confirmed by the Senate, the Supreme Court issues a decision on the constitutionality of the appointments to the Board made in January 2012, or the adjournment sine die of the first session of the 113th Congress, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

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

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to be here. We are re-establishing the 30-Something Working Group, which some may remember. Many—it seems like many years ago, Congressman Kendrick Meek and I and Congresswoman DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ came to this floor in 2003 and 2004 and 2005 and 2006, and we were talking about issues of the day and how they applied to people in their thirties or people in their twenties, and tried to take, at that point, some of President Bush's policies and make them understandable to young people in our society.

And so we had many conversations, many late night conversations here on this House floor, sometimes an hour a night, sometimes 2 hours a night, sometimes 3, 4, 5 hours a week, coming to help deliver the message. And at that time, back in 2004 and 2005 and 2006—and let me just take a second to thank all the staff that was here for those late hours, for always being around for us, and some are still here today, as we are still here today. But today, we want to re-establish this.

Back then it was the privatization of Social Security, Mr. Speaker. And President Bush wanted to take the Social Security program and privatize it, put it in the stock market and allow that to be a part of the private investment system and not the insurance system that we have with regard to Social Security. And fortunately, we were able, through the leadership of Minority Leader PELOSI, at that time, before she was Speaker, encouraged us to go out and do this, and we were able, with her leadership, the 30-Something Group and other Members going out across the country, we were able to put a stop to the privatization of Social Security.

And fast forward just a few years, to 2008, 2009, I think there were a lot of Americans who were very happy that we did not, at that time, have the Social Security program in the stock market. Many people would have lost their retirements.

So today, we have a whole new set of challenges, and we have a new crop of very talented, young Members of Congress, members of the Democratic Caucus, who want to come to the floor and talk about the issues of the day as they pertain to young people and people who have been around a little bit, and how some of these proposals that are com-

ing from the Republican Conference, the Republican Study Committee, the Republican Budget Committee, how some of these policies will hit the ground.

In my opinion, we seem to be governing by bumper sticker. So we want smaller government, we want less of this and less of that, and more of this and more of that, that can be phrased to sound really good on a bumper sticker to where you would drive by and you would look at the bumper sticker and you'd think, it makes a lot of sense.

But what we want to do with this working group and the folks who will be joining me here tonight and over the next several weeks and months is to say, how does this hit the ground? How does the Republican budget hit the ground?

How does it affect you? How does it affect your family? How does it affect your mom and dad? How does it affect your grandma and grandpa? And that's what we would like to talk about here today.

I think, and say this, knowing that many of the folks on the other side of the aisle are friends of mine, dear friends, good friends. Some I like to hang out with, some I don't get an opportunity to hang out with, but are all good people trying to do good things.

But why we need to come here and have this debate and discussion and conversation is that we need to figure out how we're going to move forward as a country. And our arguments on our side are that the Republican budget, the Republican approach, the Republican philosophy has caused a lot of the problems that we have in our economy today. The financial deregulation, looking the other way while Wall Street turned into a crap game, without any regulation at all, no cops on the beat keeping an eye on things.

We saw two wars put on a credit card, Afghanistan and Iraq, no taxpayer, no citizen, other than the families of the military, were asked to make any sacrifice at all, and funding for the two wars was put on a credit card. And then you throw in a prescription drug bill that was not paid for on the credit card.

So this is what happened from 2000 to 2008, where we were running up the deficit, running up the national debt. And here we arrived in 2009, after having to save the banks and do the TARP program in order to plug this trillions of dollars of a hole in our economy to make sure that the banks don't lock up and not loan money and everything else, so we had to go to the taxpayer, and the taxpayer had to foot the bill for the two wars, the prescription drug bill, and the massive deregulation of the financial markets, the too-big-to-fail, and then they failed. And so the taxpayer was asked to foot the bill.

What we are saying here on our side is that that's the wrong approach. Cutting taxes for the wealthiest in our society, this is not to punish the wealthy,

this is—our approach is not to punish anybody, but what we're saying is, when the income for the top 1 percent goes up over the last 10, 15, 20 years so dramatically that the average CEO is making 300-plus times what the average worker is making, when you have the rich people that are making hundreds of millions of dollars, the top 1 percent, but then you also have the top .1 percent of the Americans who are making massive amounts of money, hedge funds and whatnot.

□ 1730

What we're saying is, when you have that imbalance and that level of inequality or it becomes a threat to the democratic way of life, that's the democracy piece, but we also have the economic piece. When you get a high concentration of wealth, then the average person doesn't have the amount of money in their pocket to be able to go out and spend in the economy.

So this is a supply side argument, cut taxes for the wealthy, this approach that our friends on the other side, the Republican Party, the Tea Party, has been pitching since 1980: cut taxes for the rich and hopefully something positive will happen for the middle class.

Democrats are saying we've got to invest in the middle class. We've got to help the middle class with health care costs, with the cost of going to school and going to college, getting a trade, going to a community college, helping poor school districts, making sure that families who send their kids to college and take out a student loan, that those loan repayment rates are reasonable. Those are the reforms we made as Democrats here while the Democrats were in charge of the Chamber in 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010, and those are the investments we made.

We're talking about two separate philosophies. One philosophy on the Republican Tea Party side is to cut taxes for the wealthy, deregulate Wall Street, and look the other way while there's a crap game going on on Wall Street; have two wars, one of them very questionable in why it started in the first place, and a prescription drug bill that all went on the credit card.

So cut taxes, start two wars, and put a prescription drug bill on the credit card, drive up the debt, deregulate the financial markets until the taxpayer has to come in and bail out and the economy collapses, that's what happened. And so we don't really have to have the argument. Those are the facts of a Republican Presidency, House, and Senate that got to implement their tax package. They got to implement their financial regulatory packages. They got to pass budgets that did or did not make certain investments. And what happened is, after a decade of that philosophy being implemented, the economy collapsed. It was not just a normal recession, it was a financial recession, which a lot of economists now are telling us how difficult and how much longer it takes to get out of these financial recessions.

So the discussion that we've had in the last Presidential election and the discussion that we want to have here in this Chamber as to what philosophy should prevail in the United States of House of Representatives, the body that is most directly elected—the Federal piece, anyway—most directly elected, every 2 years, by the people of this country, what philosophy shall we take? And the Democrats are offering, under the leadership of Leader PELOSI, a different world view, a world view that says we make investments in the infrastructure, we make investments in education, we make sure that we have a fair Tax Code that is simpler and fairer, that it doesn't take forever to fill out your taxes. Keep it simple. And at the same time, we ask those people who have benefited so much over the last decade or two, whose income went up and they now make 300-plus times what the average worker makes, that they help pay their fair share and help us pay for the debts that the Republican Party has incurred by putting two wars on a credit card and a prescription drug bill.

So that's the discussion. That's what we want to do. And the President and the Democrats have made these investments. And if you think that things like only paying a certain percentage of your income back for your student loan is what is part of your philosophy, then you fall in our camp on that issue. If you think that the CEO that's making 300 times more, or \$300 for every dollar the person on the factory floor is making, needs to be balanced out, maybe they need to help us pay down the debt more and shouldn't have all kinds of tax loopholes, then you're going to side with what the Democrats want to do.

So long story short, we are now in a position where we can talk about the Republican budget. And we all are in agreement, I think, Democrats and Republicans, that budgets are documents that represent our values. And we all are in agreement that we need to take care of our long-term debt. We need to reduce our deficits. It is an issue, and one that we all need to take very seriously.

Now, the Republican plan is presented to the American people, and it is taking needed investments and cutting them so deeply that we are going to get leapfrogged by China and India and Europe in some of the coming industries. These cuts, in order to try to balance the budget in a short period of time, are going to be pushed off. The burden of these cuts will be on the middle class—education, economic development, which are the kind of investments that we need to make. Also, these cuts are going to be cut out of programs that help the poorest among us, and that is not a recipe for success.

We have 300-plus million people in the United States. We are competing against India and China on who's going to determine who's going to shape the future of the global economy. Is it

going to be the United States? Is it going to be China? Is it going to be India? Is it going to be Europe? That's the question. Who's going to shape this future? And America has always had a recipe, from post-World War II until roughly in the 1980s, where we made investments in infrastructure, we made investments in research and development, we made investments in education, because we knew that those were public investments that would yield huge benefits for the United States of America.

And now we have a Republican philosophy that says those investments are a waste of money and that any investment that the government makes must be a bad one; that the space program, that the research investments that we make, that making sure that school is affordable, the public-private partnerships that lead to new developments, the research that no one company will make must be made by the public. Those are quality investments that help build our economy for a generation, whether it was post-World War II with the GI Bill and we take all of these soldiers and we make sure that they can go to college, we make sure they can go to law school, we make sure that they can go to medical school, we make sure they can become engineers.

□ 1740

Or the space program, in which public money, with private ingenuity and know-how, came together. That investment in the space program led to a booming economy in the high-tech sector, the other public investments that led to the Internet and satellites and all of these other things, and private companies come in and benefit from that and then invest in a workforce that can take those technologies and make them better and increase productivity so that we have a strong middle class.

Invest in our infrastructure, make sure that we rebuild our country. We've got combined sewer systems, we've got roads, we've got bridges that need done. We need to make sure that we invest in the smart power grids so that we can get alternative energy pumped into our grids, so that we can have a more conservative approach to how we expend energy, a smarter approach because of a smart grid where we're wasting less energy. These are the kind of investments that we need to make, and all the while protecting what's happening and what may happen if the Republican budget would be signed into law.

The dramatic cuts in the Medicare program, asking those going into their senior years to not have a guaranteed benefit that they paid into. Many of those folks who would be hurt by the program, the Republican budget program, would be women, many of them older women. Fifty-five percent of the Medicare population—women. The oldest Medicare beneficiaries, 85 and over,

70 percent of those are women. So as we age, women will see those cuts.

We have proposals from the other side about abolishing Planned Parenthood, about saying that Planned Parenthood does not serve women well. It's many, many women who get basic health care from Planned Parenthood—screenings, birth control, family planning, all done through Planned Parenthood. The other side wants to abolish it, defund it completely.

These are some basic things that we need to do in order to protect the middle class.

So here we are, in the next few weeks and months, we're going to have a discussion about where this country goes and where the House of Representatives goes and what's our philosophy. So we will be coming here week after week after week to compare this philosophy, the philosophy of cut taxes for the top 1 percent, to keep the Tax Code very complicated so the wealthiest benefit from it, or Democratic philosophies and Democratic proposals that say we want a fairer Tax Code, we want a simpler Tax Code, and we want a Tax Code that doesn't have so many loopholes that only if you have high-powered accountants will you be able to take advantage of the Tax Code.

The Tax Code should benefit middle class families. We all need to contribute, but it shouldn't be so complicated that if you have a lot of money or you're a big corporation you're somehow going to get out of paying taxes or you're somehow going to be able to hide your taxes overseas and not pay your fair share. That's one group's philosophy versus ours.

We are saying that, yes, we need to balance the budget, but we want to do it like President Clinton did it and the Democrats did it in 1993. We want to do it in a fair way that continues to make investments in those essential investments that will lead to long-term economic growth.

One of the things we're doing in Youngstown, in my congressional district, is a program that President Obama had to put together administratively—that we want to push for more of these—public-private partnerships and innovative institutes. The innovation institute that we have now in Youngstown is in additive manufacturing, three-dimensional printing, the cutting edge of manufacturing, the cutting edge of additive manufacturing, partnering with big companies like Lockheed and Boeing and other smaller companies in the Mahoning Valley. But public money from the Department of Defense or Department of Energy, the Department of Commerce, public-private partnerships to help position America—not just our region—in the next generation of additive manufacturing help drive the cost down for these printers so that everyone that has a desktop computer now can have a desktop printer that prints products that could revolutionize health care, revolutionize energy, revolutionize

manufacturing in the defense industry. But this is a public-private partnership.

What we cannot do is say, "Oh, my God, that's government money; it's got to be bad," these investments that we make for the poor in the Medicaid program so we can make sure that these kids have basic health care in the United States of America.

And, yes, we do need education reform; yes, we do need innovation within the health care system. We've got a long way to go, even with the health care reform bill and how we can revolutionize health care, how we can revolutionize education, how we can revolutionize the way we take care of our veterans. I will be back on this floor talking about some of those ways that we can go about doing that.

But the issue I have with the Republican proposals are they're all about the budget. Listen, we all know we have a demographic problem—we all know we have the baby boomers moving into the Social Security and the Medicare system—but how are we going to drive down Medicare costs? How are we going to drive down health care costs? That's the question. That's what's important. Of course we need to bring the cost down of health care, but you just don't say, well, we're not going to have any reforms, the free market is somehow going to take care of it and it should be pushed off on the backs of the citizens. That's not going to work. That's not humane. There is a better way to go about it, when you look at the field of integrative health care, for example, how you can help prevent a lot of issues from arising that make people sick.

When you look at 70 or 75 percent of health care costs are caused by things that are behavioral in nature, so how do we shift the health care system to even more prevention like we tried to do in the health care reform bill? How do we make investments into areas in medical schools and hospitals that are looking into driving down health care costs in these other ways? Not just talk about, oh, we're going to have draconian cuts to the Medicare program and then we're going to push it all off on the Medicare recipient to foot the bill and we're going to give them a voucher.

Ladies and gentlemen, that is what happens with this Republican Tea Party budget. You will get a voucher, Mr. Speaker. These folks will get a voucher. My friends on the other side say, well, yeah, but that voucher will help you pay for it. The problem is the voucher that the seniors will get doesn't go up, doesn't rise with the cost of health care. So the voucher only goes up a small bit while health care costs have been going up four, five, six, seven, depending on the plan, more percent. So you get a voucher today and it's worth \$100 and your health care bill is \$150, but next year your voucher is worth \$102 and health care costs are \$170. That happens every single year.

That voucher becomes worthless at some point. The cost will be pushed off onto seniors. They're going to have to come out of pocket. Their kids are going to have to help them.

You see these huge cuts in the Medicaid program, which in many States help senior citizens get into a nursing home and pay for a nursing home.

□ 1750

So the middle class, again, people 40, 50, 60 years old who have parents in a nursing home, are going to have to come out of pocket. That's bad for the economy, less consumer demand.

All of these things fit together. We're going to come back and continue to talk about many of these issues over the course of the next few weeks and months and compare. As I said at the beginning, I've got a lot of Republican friends in this Chamber, I've got a lot of Republican friends in my congressional district, but I also have a lot of Republican friends in my congressional district that would disagree with the approach of the disinvestment in the United States that's coming from the other side.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to coming back in the next week and months, and I'm sure you're excited for that, too.

I yield back the balance of my time.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

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

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address this Chamber and to address an issue of great concern to me. I just heard my colleague and friend from Ohio and what he had to say, and certainly there is a debate that's going on that's worth being had, a debate about the progression of this great country, the greatest on this Earth, in the history of this Earth, a country that has distinguished itself in just a few short years, 236, 237, as a Nation that understands what liberty is about, but also understands the authority that we come under.

Mr. Speaker, I have wrestled with coming to the floor tonight, because since I first began my legislative career back in 1982 in the Michigan House of Representatives, and when I stood in front of people and asked for their opportunity or their support to give me a privileged position in that great body, I stated clearly, and I have from that point in 1982 to this very day, I've stated that, as a Christian and as a former pastor, while I would not flaunt my religion, I would not hide my faith.

I've continued that in coming to the U.S. House of Representatives as well. I truly believe that all laws are moral. Some of us would consider morality one way and others of us would consider it another. We all come through filters in life. I understand that, and I

respect that. I believe that the Framers and Founders of this great country, its ideals that were based upon truth as they determined truth to be, as they understood it, truth coming from the revealed word of God that they declared to be found in the Bible at that time, and they were not ashamed to say that and quoted many times from Scripture, even without reference, because it was clearly understood by the citizens of that day that the basic ideals that this new government was established upon were ideals found and written down in the Bible and clearly understood to be the word of God.

I'd wrestle with the fact that I understand that there are filters, and the moment that I let it out of the bag, as it were, Mr. Speaker, that I'm a pastor, I'm a Christian, I come from a Judeo-Christian value system, that that's my filter, that I would lose the opportunity to speak to society in general. Well, I assume that risk this evening, because we have come to a time in our history where the unified understanding, whether we acknowledged it or fully agreed with it or certainly lived by it, because I know, as one who has feet of clay, that though I understand truth, I don't always live by it, yet our country is at crossroads in a battle along those principles.

I read in this greatest man-made document ever penned, the Constitution of the United States, I read the First Amendment, the Second Amendment, the Third Amendment, and on through the Tenth Amendment, which are classified as the Bill of Rights, Bill of Rights that were given and acknowledged by the Framers and Founders and the implementers of these amendments, the Bill of Rights, as really stemming from God, Himself, unalienable rights, God given, not man given, recognizing these rights as above simple human reasoning.

In recent days, I've read and reread our First Amendment that says:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for redress of grievances.

And I go on to the final, the 10th, that gives the States the authority that they should have. And I see what's taking place in relationship at this point in time to one complex bill that was passed, called the Affordable Health Care Act, but with specifically one mandate that I clearly believe runs roughshod of this First Amendment when it, in fact, is a law that prohibits the free exercise thereof of religious beliefs. Now, again, that's my perspective, but it's a perspective I think is backed up by the Framers and Founders in their writings and their speeches and their beliefs that they implemented into this great, great country.

Just recently I read an article that, more than just simply being an article, gave names of fellow citizens,