

for our family back home, and I saw an older gentleman. I was thinking about what I was going to say here in Congress. He was in the supermarket and he had his cart, and he was all bent over. He was trudging along aisle after aisle, and he had quite a bit of trouble even raising his neck to look at what the prices were. He seemed to be going around, and I noticed he wasn't putting a whole lot in his cart, but he was putting some things in, watching every penny. And when I finished with my shopping, I saw him out in the parking lot. I thought, Is he going to his car? Where's he going? I watched him push his shopping cart, and he had put all of his groceries in two backpacks. I saw him pushing his grocery cart across the parking lot way to the corner by the sidewalk, and I realized what he was doing: he wasn't going to a car—he didn't have a car. What he was doing was, he was putting his groceries in these backpacks to put on his back, and then in his condition walk to wherever his home or wherever he was residing. I looked at that, and I thought, you know, I have to go back to Congress and tell that story because that's exactly the kind of person that the chained CPI would impact the most.

These senior citizens shouldn't have to have this Congress debating about their benefits because they get scared all across our country. We should never do anything that upsets our seniors, who are dealing with so many issues in their own lives that each of us someday will have to deal with. And I find it sad, really, that this issue of Social Security has been included in the budget debates that we are about to get into. Social Security is separate. It has its own trust fund. It is sound. It has a formula that works. The best thing we can do for future generations is to get everybody back to work so that the FICA trust fund works 50 years down the road. But right now, we shouldn't be worrying our seniors.

We shouldn't be asking them to take cuts in senior meals. The people who go for senior meals are senior citizens who actually need better nutrition. I've gone to many senior sites. One image that remains in my mind at one site in my own district is a very thin senior woman who is probably 85 years old, and the senior center served a small sandwich for lunch. They served a little bit of warm corn. There was a little pudding, and an apple and a can of milk on the tray, and that woman ate everything but half her sandwich, and she took that half of the sandwich that she didn't eat and she wrapped it up and put it into her worn purse, and she left that senior center and walked home. Those are the seniors that we have to see here and care about.

I'm just glad and I'm very grateful to the citizens of my region that they've sent me here, and I urge my colleagues to oppose any Social Security cuts for current or future beneficiaries in any deficit reduction package, especially that contained in the chained CPI pro-

posal. My vote will always be to give our seniors freedom from worry, freedom from the chains of the CPI proposal that would pull them down if they're thrown overboard.

□ 1710

The American people would not want to do what is being proposed in this chained CPI to the senior citizens of our country if they really understood what it means. \$100 to a senior in a monthly check is doled out penny by penny by penny.

We have a program in the Department of Agriculture where, in the summer months, our seniors can go to some fruit stands around our country and they get a little coupon and they can buy fruits and vegetables. And the owner of this one fruit stand in Ohio said to me, you know, Congresswoman, I never realized, among seniors, how much they had to sacrifice. They can't buy things that normal families buy.

I said, tell me more. And the farmer said, you know, I had a woman in here last week who stared and stared at a container of raspberries. And the price on the raspberries at that stand was \$4. That senior woman had not eaten raspberries in 25 years because she couldn't afford them.

And that farmer said, you know, when I saw her coupons, I told her, ma'am, I will cut the price in half. And her total bill came up to, like, I think he said it was like \$10.96, and he was going to give her the four pennies back. And he said, you know what? How about if I give you some green beans to put in your sack for the extra 4 cents? And that's exactly what happened at that one transaction.

Multiply that times millions of seniors across this country and get a sense of what they face. I can tell you in Ohio, and I'm sure it's the same everywhere, the largest increase in the number of people coming into our food banks across this country are senior citizens. You can say, why is that?

Well, you know, if they had a bank account, if they were able to save a little bit, it doesn't pay anything in interest now, after the crash of 2008, so they're not making anything off any savings that they might have.

A lot of them, if their kids are unemployed, they've let them move in with them; and so grandma and grandpa are the ones that are holding millions of families across this country together until their kids and grandkids can get back on their feet again.

And I think what the seniors are doing, because prices are rising, prices haven't gone down, they're going into these food banks and they're getting a bag of groceries to help them stretch the meager dollars that they have.

So as we move into this deficit debate and into the budget debate, I want my colleagues to think about the citizens that they represent and how vital that Social Security check is, and to do nothing to those who have not asked for any reduction. They can't afford any reduction.

There are so many other places in this economy where we can go in order to try to balance the budget. We should not do it on the backs of our senior citizens.

So I would say, free our seniors from the CPI. Oppose any proposals to change the formula that would cut their benefits. We already tax those who have significant assets if they earn over a certain amount on Social Security with other income. We don't need to harm the millions of Americans who just get by month after month.

I thank my colleagues for listening.

I ask the Members of this Congress to oppose the chained CPI and to stand with our senior citizens to give them the dignity in their retirement years that they have earned.

I yield back the balance of my time.

COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the privilege to address you here on the floor of the House of Representatives and take up the topic that has come to the forefront of the American discussion, and do so again.

And that is that on the night of November 6, as people across America watched the election returns come in, there were many Republicans, people on my side of the aisle that watched with, I'll say, shock and disappointment, as the great predictions that Mitt Romney would be the next President of the United States fell by the wayside in swing State after swing State from the east coast. By the time it got west of the Mississippi, it was pretty clear the final result of the Presidential election.

And many of the predictors, who are self-assigned experts on polling and politics and the decision of the American voters, had predicted that Mitt Romney would be President, that Republicans would win the majority in the United States Senate, that there would be a three-way majority between the House, the Senate and Presidency, and we could put America back on the right track.

I hoped for that, Mr. Speaker. I prayed for that. I worked for it. But I watched as those election results came to be untrue, as we lost some seats here in the House and lost some seats in the Senate, and, of course, the President was re-elected that night.

The plans of probably half, very close to half, of the American people had to be changed and altered, because we planned to put free enterprise back in place. We planned to repeal ObamaCare. We planned to do some other things.

But one of the things we didn't really plan so much to do was take up the immigration issue in the 113th Congress.

And even though immigration was hardly a blip on the Presidential debate that took place—and being from Iowa, Mr. Speaker, I will tell you that if it was debated in the Presidential race, it likely was debated in Iowa, likely debated in Iowa first, and likely debated in Iowa the longest.

Yet as I tuned my ear to these issues, I didn't notice that it was a paramount topic or a significant plank in the platform of either Mitt Romney or Barack Obama, and I don't think the American people did either.

Nonetheless, the election polls closed on the night of the 6th of November, and those results are clear. And the morning then of the 7th of November, some self-appointed experts woke up and decided—oh, probably they didn't sleep very well because it was clear that they were wrong on their predictions. And so how would they then describe why they were so wrong in their bold predictions, even as high as 60 or more Republican seats in the Senate, and Mitt Romney sweeping swing State after swing State?

It didn't happen, of course, Mr. Speaker. How would they describe why they were so wrong?

It didn't take them very long, after the sun came up, or maybe even before they went to bed that night, to decide they were going to tell the American people that the election loss—and I wouldn't characterize it as a loss—it was a failure to achieve the goals we had set, but the President maintained his seat in the White House. But that election loss, as they characterized it, came about because Mitt Romney said two words—“self-deport”—and that explains it all, almost as logically as the video explains the violence in Benghazi.

No, it wasn't because Mitt Romney said those two words, and it wasn't because we had failed to achieve as large a percentage of the Hispanic-Latino vote, although that number dropped off from about 31 percent that JOHN MCCAIN achieved, down to 27 percent, according to the exit polls, that Mitt Romney achieved.

It wasn't even the low. The modern-day low percentage for Hispanic vote went to Bob Dole; and if my memory serves me correctly, that was at 22 percent.

I noticed that as they began to spin the narrative that it was all about immigration, along with that came the position that many of the advocates had had for a long time. These were the people that were the promoters of—and I put it in quotes—“comprehensive immigration reform,” and that's the language that emerged during George W. Bush's administration when they first advocated the amnesty, the modern-day amnesty that is a policy that much of it was written off of the 1986 Amnesty Act that Ronald Reagan signed.

But their argument was Mitt Romney would be President if he had just had a better outreach to the Hispanic vote. And so those of us that heard

that, first I realized that the open-borders people have always had the agenda to suspend the rule of law and grant amnesty and the path to citizenship for people that came here illegally, many times at the expense of those who came here as legal immigrants. But it always was their agenda.

So it was a pretty convenient excuse to analyze failed election results and put it all in the package of: if we had just passed comprehensive immigration reform. Now we must pass comprehensive immigration reform, or the party will become irrelevant electorally in the future, and we'll never win another national election.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, the President of the United States, President Obama, came before Republican House Members in a conference about a month ago and said just that. He said that we would never win another national election if we don't pass comprehensive immigration reform.

And here's the one that's the hardest to accept as being delivered with a serious look on his face, although I'm sure there had to be a little snicker in his mind. He said, to you Republicans, I'm trying to help you. The President said he's trying to help us by advocating for an amnesty plan, comprehensive immigration reform; and that's going to fix the problem of falling a little short in winning the Presidential election last November 6.

□ 1720

Well, there are a few facts that should be known, Mr. Speaker, and one of them is that, according to my team of staff as they sat on their Blackberrys, Barack Obama received 8 million fewer votes than he did in 2008 and Mitt Romney received 1 million fewer votes than JOHN MCCAIN did in 2008. That means there are 9 million people, at least, that stayed home—the electorate should have gotten larger—9 million people that stayed home altogether. Why were they not energized? Why didn't Barack Obama energize them? Why didn't Mitt Romney energize them? We need to know the answers to those questions just to begin this discussion.

Another one would be, how important was the immigration issue to people in this country? Not important enough that the Presidential candidates would make a debate issue out of it or campaign on it. So it wasn't on the radar screen of the Presidential candidates, who have the most extensive and expensive polling of anybody in the country.

So why was that an issue? I'd point out Republicans lost an even larger share of the Asian vote than they did the Hispanic vote, but what was the list of priorities that they had, and was immigration at the top? No, actually, it was fifth or sixth along the line.

Like everybody else, we are all human beings and we're all deserving of respect and we're all created in God's image. But people think the

same way, regardless of what their race or ethnicity. They want to take care of their families. They worry about jobs and the economy. They want to have safe streets. They want good education. They want opportunity. They should want lower taxes and less government intrusion into our lives. But that same poll yielded a bit of a surprising result to many of the advocates that had spun the yarn the morning after the election that the constituency that they were losing was, naturally, Republicans. Because I'll say this: we know they are good family people, they're good faith people, they're good entrepreneurs and they can start a business with less and make it go very, very well with that network of family and work ethic. That's what we see in front of us. But if you ask the question in a setting that is the perspective of a good and effective and thorough, objective poll, you'll find out that Hispanics are about 2-to-1 in favor of larger, more government involvement, more government services, which results in higher taxes.

Well, that's the other party that advertises we need more government, more taxes, more government services. They do that because they are in the business of expanding the dependency class in America. They want, Mr. Speaker, more Americans to be dependent upon government, even if we have to borrow the money from the Chinese and the Saudis in order to provide these “services” because it empowers their electoral base and empowers them here in this Congress.

We're on the other side of this issue, Republicans. We want to expand personal responsibility. We want to expand all of the human potential that we possibly can. We want this American vigor to be unleashed and to grow this economy and to grow our gross domestic product. They are two competing ideologies. One is John Maynard Keynes, who believed you could borrow money and hand it to people and ask them to spend it, and somehow that spending would create this giant, endless chain letter that would stimulate the economy. The other side comes out of the Adam Smith side, or you might say the Austrian economic side, that believes that you need production on the production side of our economy for it to grow and has less emphasis on the consumption side, and if you let people invest capital and get a return on that capital investment, they will do their best and contribute and the economy will grow. That's a competing philosophy that's different between Republicans and Democrats. Republicans want to empower the individual. And to empower the individual, you have to respect and appreciate and encourage this free enterprise economy that had built the United States.

Mr. Speaker, if you take a naturalization test there are a series of flash cards, a stack of them that you can get from Citizenship and Immigration Services so that a legal immigrant can study to be naturalized as an

American citizen. These glossy flash cards are read, and they will have on them questions like, Who's the Father of our Country? Snap it over and it's George Washington. Who emancipated the slaves? Republican Abraham Lincoln. Actually, it just says Abraham Lincoln on the other side, Mr. Speaker. What's the economic system of the United States of America? Flip that flash card over and it says free enterprise capitalism.

This is not a secret. We want people to be empowered by freedom, by God-given liberty, not dependent upon some political party that's going to hand out the largesse of government at the expense of other people and actually at the expense of borrowing money from foreign countries to drive us into debt of now nearly \$16.8 trillion in national debt.

So the cynical effort to expand the political base erodes the rule of law, erodes free enterprise, puts America in debt. So now that the babies that were born today in the United States of America owe Uncle Sam more than \$53,000 each. That's what we have and that's what we're dealing with. And we have a country that we need to pull back from the brink of bankruptcy. We're moving in that direction under I think good, strategic leadership here in the House. We have a budget that we've approved that balances. And it's too long for me. I don't want to wait that long—10 years. But meanwhile, the President's budget balances exactly never and drives us deeper and deeper into debt and raises taxes, Mr. Speaker.

So how do we bring out the greatness of America? The greatness of America was described by Ronald Reagan when he talked about the shining city on the hill. But Ronald Reagan never spoke about the shining city on the hill as being our destiny. He spoke about it as the America that we were and presumably the America that we are. I will argue that our job is to refurbish the pillars of American exceptionalism, to strengthen us in all of those pillars. We know what they are. They're very clear. Many of them are in the Bill of Rights. Freedom of speech is a pillar of American exceptionalism. I'm exercising it at this moment, Mr. Speaker. Freedom of speech, religion, the press and assembly; the right to keep and bear arms; the right to face your accuser in a court of law and be tried by a jury of your peers; single, not double jeopardy; the right to property; the right to see that the enumerated powers that are exclusively to the United States Congress, those other powers devolve to the States or the people respectively. Those are some of the pillars. I mentioned free enterprise capitalism as another pillar of American exceptionalism. But wrapped up within this, within this Constitution that I carry in my jacket pocket, is the supreme law of the land, our Constitution, and we would not be America if we didn't have all of these pillars that

I have described and also have the rule of law.

Now why would thinking people that were elected to come to this United States Congress and make good value judgments and good policy judgments, why would they be so willing and some of them eager to sacrifice the rule of law in an effort to cynically reach out and ask for a vote? Why would someone vote for someone who's willing to sacrifice the rule of law? It defies my logic application, Mr. Speaker. And amnesty is a sacrifice of the rule of law. And once you give it, once you grant it, it's almost impossible to restore it.

I remember when Ronald Reagan signed the Amnesty Act of 1986. And I was not in politics at the time. I was operating my construction company that was 11 years old at the time, raising three young sons, struggling through the farm crisis decade of the eighties. But I'm watching the news, and I'm seeing this debate take place that we have 800,000 to a million that are in the United States illegally. Generally, most of them at that time came across the southern border and stayed. And there was such a big problem that we needed to address it—800,000 to a million that were here illegally then.

So Ronald Reagan, I think under great persuasive pressure from some of the Cabinet members around him, conceded that he would sign that 1986 Amnesty Act. And when he did that, my frustration level went over the top. I believed that in spite of all the pressure that was brought on Ronald Reagan as President, he would see clearly that you can't sacrifice the rule of law in order to solve a problem that came about because of not enforcing the law, and that the promise of enforcement in the future was not going to be upheld adequately to compensate for the amnesty that they were granting in that bill.

Now the promise was this: every employer was going to have to fill out for each applicant an I-9 form. That I-9 form had—I gave it shorthand and called it name, rank, and serial number, but other data, too, of the job applicant. I remember my fear that the INS, the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the time, would come into my office and go through my files and audit me and make sure that I had every I-9 form exactly filed right, and I want to make sure I didn't miss it with anyone.

□ 1730

We religiously followed the new 1986 Amnesty Act requirements that there would be I-9 forms. We expected that there would be enforcement and penalties for employers that violated that because the premise was the Federal Government, enforced by the Justice Department at the time, would be there to audit employers and enforce the rule of law. That was the full-blown premise that came with Ronald Reagan's signature on the Amnesty Act of 1986.

I don't have any doubt that Ronald Reagan intended to follow through on the enforcement of the Amnesty Act. I can tell you that I followed my part. I've still got some of those records in my dusty files back there somewhere. Many other employers were concerned that they would not be able to follow the letter of the law. It didn't work out that way. They didn't show up in office after office, company after company. And after 20 years of the Amnesty Act that was 800,000 to 1 million. Because of document fraud and just a misestimation of the numbers, that 800,000 to 1 million became 3 million people that were granted amnesty in that act that was signed by Ronald Reagan in 1986.

Now, what did we learn from that, Mr. Speaker? And those who fail to learn from history are condemned to repeat it. Well, I have this document that's written by Attorney General Ed Meese, who was Ronald Reagan's Attorney General at that period of time and charged with enforcing the immigration law that was passed in Amnesty in '86. This is an op-ed that he wrote, published in Human Events on December 13, 2006. Among his dialogue here is this—and I'll read some of it into the RECORD, Mr. Speaker. I think it's worth our attention. It's Attorney General Ed Meese writing of Ronald Reagan's Amnesty Act.

From the article, he says:

Illegal immigrants who could establish that they had resided in America continuously for 5 years would be granted temporary resident status, which could be upgraded to permanent residency after 18 months and, after another 5 years, to citizenship. It wasn't automatic. They had to pay application fees. They had to learn to speak English. They had to understand American civics, pass a medical exam and register for military selective service. Those with convictions for a felony or three misdemeanors were ineligible.

Mr. Speaker, this language is almost verbatim the language that was plugged into the 2006 Amnesty Act and into what is likely to come out of the Senate.

I would be happy to yield for an announcement.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 716. An act to modify the requirements under the STOCK Act regarding online access to certain financial disclosure statements and related forms.

COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM—CONTINUED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may proceed.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I had to pause for a minute there. I was concerned that might be the Amnesty Act coming over from the United