

he's a television celebrity with his role as judge on "Top Chef"; but most recently, and more importantly to millions of Americans who may never have the opportunity to eat at one of his restaurants, Tom is an advocate for the hungry and for those who are trying to improve their lives.

He was a vocal supporter of the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act that increased funding for school meals in order to improve the nutritional quality of food served at schools. But he's also a producer of the documentary "A Place at the Table," a beautifully filmed, heart-wrenching movie about hunger in America. His role in our fight to End Hunger Now cannot be understated, and his efforts are needed and appreciated.

Then there is my dear friend, Chef Jose Andres, who brings a passion and a commitment to ending hunger. He has dedicated himself to raising awareness, challenging policymakers, and giving back to the community in ways, both large and small, that have really made a difference to ending hunger in America and around the world.

And he's not alone. Chefs like Mark Murray, Rachael Ray, Bryan Voltaggio, and Charlie Palmer, just to name a few, all lend their names, their restaurants, and themselves to the fight to End Hunger Now. Working through antihunger organizations like Share Our Strength, founded and run by my good friend Billy Shore, these chefs are reducing hunger in so many different and unique ways.

But it's not just the famous celebrity chefs who are helping. Share Our Strength has a program called Cooking Matters, where chefs teach low-income families healthier ways to cook food. Together with their Shopping Matters program, where these same families can learn how to navigate their local markets to purchase the healthiest food they can afford, these programs are fighting hunger at local levels. And the chefs involved, from Arkansas to Colorado to Massachusetts, are using their expertise to teach these families the healthiest ways to cook food.

Chefs are just one of the nontraditional groups that are out in the real world fighting hunger. They are leading by example. And their actions need to be highlighted not just on the House floor, but at the White House, at a White House conference on food and nutrition. Chefs should absolutely be part of such a conference where they can talk about their efforts and ways they can help low-income families improve their cooking and eating habits.

These chefs and the organizations they partner with are a key part of our fight to End Hunger Now. I commend them for their dedication, and I look forward to working with them in this effort.

HONORING THE LIFE OF LILLIAN KAWASAKI

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from

California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of Lillian Kawasaki, who proudly served the Los Angeles community for more than three decades, working tirelessly to protect our environment.

Lillian was an inspiration and a trailblazer. In 1990, she was named general manager of the Department of Environmental Affairs for the City of Los Angeles, becoming the first Asian American in city history to be appointed a department chief.

It is because of Lillian's leadership and her vision that Los Angeles launched major initiatives in air and water quality protection and environmental cleanup. Local businesses began investing in renewable energy thanks to Lillian Kawasaki.

I had the privilege of working with Lillian when she served as board director for the Water Replenishment District. It would be hard to find a public official more involved in her community than Lillian was.

On a personal note, it was an honor for me to call her a close friend. Lillian was an extraordinarily giving person. She always remembered birthdays and anniversaries. She asked me often how my family and my son were doing because she truly cared.

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I offer my condolences to Lillian's husband, to her family, and to her loved ones. She was a tremendous public servant, a shining example for others, and a generous and truly kind human being, and I will miss her greatly.

DETROIT BANKRUPTCY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, last week, the city of Detroit, Michigan, became the largest municipality in our Nation's history to file for bankruptcy. Without a doubt, the situation in Detroit is extreme. Their problems in part have been driven by local mismanagement. But it would be an oversimplification, and I think a dangerous oversimplification, for folks to continue to lay the entire responsibility for Detroit's situation on the failure of management.

Since last week, Detroit has been on the front page of America's newspapers and has become the recent, I guess, poster child of municipal decline and insolvency. But for the few cities like Detroit that have actually filed bankruptcy, there are many other legacy cities in this country that continue to struggle day in and day out to provide basic services for their residents.

Many municipalities are facing not just fiscal insolvency but service level challenges, perhaps not on the same scale as Detroit, but that does not

mean that they are immune to the problems that Detroit is facing. My own hometown of Flint, Michigan, is on that same path and is struggling every day to provide basic services in an increasing period of fiscal stress.

Detroit's bankruptcy should be a call to action to have a much bigger conversation in this country about how we support and fund our cities and our great metropolitan areas. Cities are where our creativity takes place and where much of our wealth has been generated in the past, and that can and should be the future for America's cities. Let me be clear: bankruptcy for Detroit will not be a solution to its problems or for any other city.

While it is arguable that this bankruptcy may be necessary, it will not be sufficient to solve the problem. It may bring order to an otherwise chaotic situation, but it will not solve the problem itself, and it will have real consequences for people in Detroit and southeastern Michigan and the entire State.

You can simply dissolve a corporation through bankruptcy, but you can't dissolve a city, which is a place where hundreds of thousands of people, in this case, live and raise their families.

Lots of factors have contributed to the decline of a whole subset of America's cities—population laws, trade policy that moves jobs out of those communities overseas or out of those cities into the metropolitan areas through land use practices, a municipal finance system that fails to recognize the realities of the 21st century. This is a big issue, and it is one that calls for a much larger national conversation about how we support our cities.

First, Mr. Speaker, we have to make sure to do no harm to these places that are struggling. The Republican budget that will come to this floor within the next few weeks proposes deep cuts to programs like the Community Development Block Grant program and the HOME program—a 40 percent cut for programs that are intended to help communities reposition themselves in this challenged economy. Yet, at a time when cities are facing distress, like the city of Detroit, my hometown of Flint, and many others, when the Federal Government could provide some help that would be in our national interest, we see cuts proposed to these really important programs.

So whether at the State or Federal level, we all have a role to play. It is time that all levels of government start thinking about the long-term sustainability of our cities not because it is good for those places, but because it is in our national interest. Detroit's bankruptcy should be a day of reckoning for all of us, not just for the residents of the Motor City, but for everybody.

Rethinking the way we support our cities and our metropolitan areas is not an easy conversation for us to have. It will be tough. It will cause us to challenge conventional thinking and

challenge our own views of the importance of cities.

These may be tough conversations, but they are absolutely necessary that we have to take on as a Nation. We cannot sit idly by and pretend that Detroit won't matter and that it won't affect us and wait for the next Detroit to happen. It is important for our Nation, it is important for our people, it is important for our competitiveness, it is important for our economy, it is important that we be a competitive place. And the only way we do that is with vital and rich growing communities, and we have to get places like Detroit and Flint and Saginaw and Pontiac and other places that are important to this economy back on that trajectory.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND JOBS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw attention to the recent rising unacceptable unemployment numbers in some regions of our Nation. The fact is Republicans control this House, and they are not only doing nothing to create jobs in America, they are actually creating more unemployment.

In my home State of Ohio, the unemployment rate jumped up to 7.2 percent. In the city of Cleveland, the unemployment rate rose from 9 percent to 10.1 percent over the past month. In the city of Lorain, unemployment dramatically rose from 8.7 to 10.6 percent. In the city of Toledo, we saw an increase in unemployment from 8.7 to 9.3 percent.

Nationally, the unemployment rate remains stalled, stuck, at 7.6 percent. But in too many neighborhoods across our country unemployment is a daily reality.

When you incorporate labor underutilization, the real national unemployment rate is actually 14.3 percent. There are currently 11.8 million, nearly 12 million, unemployed people in this country—4.3 million people have been jobless for 27 weeks or more and are considered long-term unemployed.

New Federal Government employment has declined by 65,000 persons over the past 12 months—65,000 more people spit out.

The unemployment rate for the construction industry is 9.8 percent. Manufacturing employment has declined in the past 4 straight months.

Do those job numbers sound like an economic recovery to you? What is the Republican response to these dubious unemployment and jobs numbers? Block the President.

So what do they do? Let's repeal the Affordable Care Act 38 times. And they've tried again and again to do that.

Let's not appoint budget conferees so we can negotiate a budget deal that puts people to work and strengthens the middle class. No. Sequestration is

arguably the primary driver of these poor job numbers. So, let's ignore the harmful effects of sequestration. The Congressional Budget Office estimates just the unemployment resulting from sequestration costs our economy an additional 1.5 percent in lost economic growth.

Remember when the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimated that sequestration would reduce economic growth and cost about 750,000 jobs? Well, they were right. We are seeing the effect of that today. The sequester was the largest cause of the negative growth numbers in the fourth quarter of last year.

According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the economy is growing far slower than expected, despite the fact that personal consumption and business inventory spending has increased recently. You would think that if consumer and business spending is up, we would see strong GDP growth, given that our economy is based on consumer spending.

Unfortunately, this is where the sequester and the Republican policy of cut and run, cut and run, cut and run comes into play. Government spending has declined in 11 of the last 13 quarters since the first quarter of 2010.

We may have seen robust growth if we took a sensible, long-term approach to deficit reduction instead of using the Republican shortsighted sequester and steep unfair budget cuts. They are even kicking thousands of mentally ill citizens out of their assisted housing—thousands—over 27,000 people who can't make it on their own being kicked out of their humble shelters across this country.

With the Republicans refusing to replace their mindless sequester, 600,000 civilian defense workers are currently being furloughed. The economic impact of these defense furloughs will be the loss of over an estimated \$2 trillion for our economy; just in Ohio 22,000 furloughs in the civilian defense sector. The policies of this Republican House are hampering robust economic growth across our country.

The Federal Reserve agrees with what I am saying. In a recent hearing the chair of the Fed said, "the economic recovery has continued at a moderate pace in recent quarters despite the strong headwinds created by Federal fiscal policy."

Unfortunately, Republicans will likely continue to refuse to compromise and focus on slowing the economy even further. Congress has already cut spending by \$2.5 trillion. That has real impacts on job creation. Discretionary spending is at its lowest level in 45 years. The Federal deficit is projected to be at its lowest level in recent memory. And the Treasury has actually even recently made payments on the national debt.

We need a jobs bill here, not more reckless cuts. The President has a plan; the Republicans don't. I would urge my Republican colleagues, bring to the

floor the President's jobs agenda. Let's show America which party is committed to job creation in this country, not more stalling.

UPDATE ON PUERTO RICO'S POLITICAL STATUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, as we approach the birthday of the late Dr. Jose Celso Barbosa, the father of the statehood movement in Puerto Rico, I rise to update my colleagues on the progress that has been made to resolve the territory's political status.

Last November, Puerto Rico held a referendum. As I described in a floor speech the following week, the results show that a majority of the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico do not support the current territory status, a supermajority favor statehood among the three alternative options, and more voters want statehood than any other option, including the current status. These results are now part of the historical record, and they cannot be dismissed or diminished by those who find them inconvenient.

Now that American citizens living in an American territory have informed their national government, in a free and fair vote, that they do not consent to a political status that deprives them of the most basic democratic rights, it is incumbent upon the Federal Government to take appropriate action in response. For the President and Congress to do otherwise would be to contravene the principles that have made this country a light to the world.

Today, I can report that positive steps have been taken. In April, the administration requested an appropriation of \$2.5 million, which would be provided to the Puerto Rico Elections Commission to conduct the first federally-funded status vote in the territory's history, with the specific purpose of resolving this issue. The administration's action was favorably received by Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle, who rarely find common ground. Earlier this month, thanks to the leadership of Congressmen WOLF, FATTAH, and SERRANO, that funding was approved by the Appropriations Committee, confirming that the effort to secure fair treatment for Puerto Rico is not, and should never become, a partisan issue.

The committee's report endorses the conditions proposed by the administration stating that Federal funding will not be obligated until DOJ has certified that the ballot and voter education materials are compatible with U.S. laws and policies, thereby ensuring that the vote will deal with one or more status options that can actually be implemented and that would settle the issue.

I will continue to fight for the approval of this appropriation by the full