

□ 1015

Well, my letters went unanswered week after week after week. So I sent numerous emails and made phone calls to the Treasury Department, requesting a reply to my letter. Finally, finally a letter came. Unfortunately, rather than simply answering my questions and putting to bed any appearance of impropriety, Lew chose to not answer any of my direct questions.

Now 3½ months have passed since I asked those very simple and direct questions. I still cannot get an answer from him. So I'm here today to encourage you to join me in the fight to get answers from Secretary Lew.

You see, the President's memo was very clear—his government is to be the most transparent in the history of this great Nation. Well, then, we have to bring Secretary Lew up to speed on that memo.

Jack Lew served as chief of staff to the President while some of the most egregious, reprehensible behavior ever displayed by the IRS took place. The American people have the right to know what he knows about the IRS scandal, when he knew it, and what involvement he had, as chief of staff, with personnel at the IRS.

It is essential to the functioning of a representative government that the citizens—the voters who are represented—have confidence in the integrity of the system. If they don't, the government won't be trusted. Government must earn that trust. That means that the men and women who manage the day-to-day affairs, such as him, must be trustworthy people. And to maintain that confidence, the public—the men and the women must avoid even the appearance of impropriety. It is that principle that judges adhere to when they recuse themselves from cases where it may appear that they would have an interest in the outcome.

The public must be assured that the outcomes generated by the men and women in Washington are not influenced by the conflicting interests. Otherwise, the system—whether it's corrupt or not—will have the taint of corruption; and that's just as bad.

The President was right to emphasize transparency, and it is essential to the proper functioning of a representative government. It's up to the citizens and their representatives to demand that transparency and the propriety that it maintains.

So again, I ask my colleagues and you, the American public, to join me in demanding the openness that President Obama promised. And to Secretary Lew, I am still waiting for those answers.

THE MORE HUNGER, LESS OPPORTUNITY ACT

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to strongly oppose the deep

and extreme cuts to nutrition programs that, once again, are being brought to the floor by the Republican majority. H.R. 3102, what we call the "More Hunger, Less Opportunity Act," takes a bad idea and makes it worse, cutting billions—literally billions—of dollars in aid for the working poor, people who struggle every single day, literally, to put food on the table.

This bill is heartless. It has gone from bad to worse. We've seen this movie before. In June, when the Republicans brought \$20 billion in cuts to the floor as a part of the farm bill, it derailed the farm bill, broke what had been a bipartisan effort for as long as anybody around here can remember. And now, \$40 billion in cuts.

Three-quarters of the households receiving SNAP include a child, a senior, somebody who is disabled. This legislation literally punishes those folks. Republicans desire, for whatever reason—incomprehensible to many of us—to deprive even the neediest Americans with a basic necessity: food. It has, as I said, derailed the farm bill process and now has the chance to risk hurting more Americans. This bill would shamefully and literally take food out of the mouths of nearly 4 million children, seniors, and disabled.

I urge my colleagues—Republicans and Democrats—to join me in opposing this legislation.

HEALTH CARE PROMISES HAVE BEEN BROKEN

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to relay disturbing, but not surprising, news about the President's health care law, news that is coming back from my district in Pennsylvania.

Countless neighbors of mine employed by Sesame Place—which is a division of SeaWorld Entertainment—have been told that their hours will be cut back, presumably to comply with the crushing costs and regulations associated with the so-called Affordable Care Act. Adding insult to injury, they're being told that their health care is being terminated.

Simply put, Mr. Speaker, President Obama made promises to the American people; and right now, those promises are not being kept. People were told that if they liked their plan that they could keep it. We were told that the health care law would not raise taxes, only to later see that 20 taxes are being used to fund this law.

These promises have been broken, and my neighbors are seeing it. And they are seeing it up close, and they are seeing it personally. This law is hurting real people in my district and around the country. And it must be repealed, and it must be replaced.

NAVY YARD SHOOTING

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise to remember three of my constituents who tragically lost their lives in Monday's shooting along with nine other innocent victims at the Washington Navy Yard. The entire Washington metropolitan area is still in shock at the horrific news.

In Maryland's Fifth District, home to many who serve or who have previously served in military and civilian roles at the Navy Yard, communities are grieving the loss of Sylvia Frasier, Frank Kohler, and Kenneth Proctor. In addition, Michael Arnold, Kathy Gaarde, John Roger Johnson, Vishnu Pandit, Martin Bodrog, Arthur Daniels, Mary Frances Knight, Gerald Reid, and Richard Michael Ridgell also lost their lives in this senseless attack.

I, along with all my colleagues, offer my condolences on behalf of all who live in the Fifth District and in our country. And I wish to take a moment to reflect from this floor on their lives of hard work and dedicated service.

Sylvia Frasier had been an information assurance manager at the Naval Sea Systems Command since 2000. Because she loved interacting with people so much, Sylvia took a night job at the Walmart in Waldorf, Maryland, where she was beloved by her coworkers and members of our community. Sylvia is survived by her parents, James and Eloise, and six brothers and sisters.

Frank Kohler. Frank was a defense contractor at the Navy Yard. He and his wife, Michelle, who works at Pax River Naval Air Station, also in my district, lived in Tall Timbers, Maryland, and loved to go boating and fishing on the Chesapeake and in Florida. He was a past president of the Lexington Park Rotary Club and served as King Oyster at the St. Mary's County Oyster Festival, welcoming visitors to the annual celebration. I live in that county. It's a wonderful celebration. Frank will be missed. Frank also leaves behind two college-aged daughters, Alex and Meghan.

Kenneth Proctor worked as a civilian utilities foreman at the Navy Yard and was in building 197 on Monday morning to get breakfast on his way to work. He had been a Federal employee for 22 years; and his eldest son, Kenneth, Jr., just recently enlisted in the United States Army. He is also survived by his former wife, Evelyn, with whom he was still very close, and their younger son, Kendall, who is in high school.

I want to thank the first responders. I want to thank them for quickly and courageously answering the call on Monday morning and putting their own lives on the line to stop the shooting and prevent further loss of life. They demonstrate the best of America, along with all the dedicated men and women who serve in the Navy Yard and in the Navy, in uniform and civilian. They

continue to enrich our Nation through their outstanding service.

Mr. Speaker, it is particularly poignant for me because my father-in-law and my mother both worked at the Navy Yard during the course of their careers. I've been on the Navy Yard numerous times. It should be—and we thought was—well protected. Twelve people found that it was not protected enough.

My thoughts and prayers are with the families of those who lost their lives and with all who are recovering from their injuries.

MADE IN THE USA

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the importance of manufacturing to our Nation cannot be overstated. Creating products domestically supports local economies and creates family-sustaining jobs. But so many domestic companies also serve as a source of pride for towns, cities, and regions of the country.

The Zippo Manufacturing Company and their iconic lighter are headquartered and manufactured in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District, which I have the honor of representing. It is McKean County's largest employer, with 900 hardworking men and women in a city of 8,000. Zippo has been making lighters since 1895; and today, 160 countries around the world buy Zippo products.

Zippo is a part of Bradford's community identity. Part of this identity comes from the fact that American companies were once renowned for building things to last. Zippo backs its lighters with a "forever guarantee."

Parade Magazine, a national publication, made note of this fact in a recent article titled, "Putting America Back to Work: 5 Ways 'Made in the USA' is Staging a Comeback." It's companies like Zippo that give "American made" a great name, that keep the world buying U.S.-made products and ultimately keeps jobs in America and expands the American workforce.

The key to our economic recovery is tapping into these gems, utilizing domestic energy, technology, and innovation, as well as a homegrown workforce to revitalize American manufacturing.

SNAP CUTS VERSUS CROP INSURANCE

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

Ms. DELAUR. Mr. Speaker, later today, this body will vote on the House majority leadership's plan to cut \$40 billion from food stamps and force over 4 million low-income Americans—citizens, veterans, seniors, and children—to go hungry.

This bill is immoral. It is wrong to take food from the mouths of hungry people. It is especially cruel when, at the same time, the House majority continues to support crop insurance subsidies for wealthy farms and agribusinesses.

Let us be clear about this so-called "nutrition bill" we are voting on today. The majority's leadership is making an explicit choice. They want us to force the poorest families in America to go hungry at a time of great need, while continuing to support and even expand giant government subsidies to the wealthy. This is reverse Robin Hood.

This makes no economic sense. Even as it left anti-hunger programs in limbo, the farm bill passed in July by the majority expanded crop insurance subsidies. According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, these crop insurance subsidies will cost taxpayers \$90 billion over the next decade. USDA, the United States Department of Agriculture, reports it spent \$14 billion on crop insurance last year alone. Keep in mind that means we will spend over twice as much on these subsidies as this proposed cut to food stamps will save us.

Some Members of the majority like to argue that these deep cuts to food stamps are necessary and that we, the richest Nation on Earth, cannot afford to help feed the most vulnerable members of our society. This is untrue. A decision is being made to cut \$40 billion in food aid to the poor while giving \$90 billion in subsidies to the wealthy.

□ 1030

That is not right.

So who exactly are receiving these subsidies?

That is a good question. Right now, U.S. taxpayers pay, on average, almost two-thirds of crop insurance premiums for high-income farmers: 62 percent, we pay, for these crop insurance premiums. And according to the Congressional Budget Office, the Federal Government paid \$1.4 billion in crop insurance administrative costs to financial and insurance companies, including a bank in Switzerland.

Last year, over 10,000 farmers each received over \$100,000 in crop insurance subsidies. And because the program is not means tested or capped, 26 farmers made over \$1 million from the Federal Government; 26 wealthy farm owners whom we are prevented from identifying, and they could even be Members of Congress. We can't get their names. They are statutorily protected. And as I stand here, we are going to fight every day to get the names of these 26 individuals.

Meanwhile, the bill that we considered today would deny SNAP benefits to jobless adults without children whose incomes average only about one-fifth of the poverty line; and that, my friends, is \$2,500 a year. Let's say "no" to them for food on their tables.

We also know that crop insurance subsidies have a higher error rate,

meaning more waste, fraud, and abuse, than the food stamp program, one of the most efficient programs the Federal Government undertakes. And sadly, we know that there are Members of the majority arguing strenuously for these deep cuts to food aid who, at the same time, are pocketing millions themselves in crop insurance subsidies. They should be ashamed.

Families on food stamps are struggling. We hear about seniors who have to choose between buying food and medicine, veterans trying to get back on their feet after serving their country, students in the classroom who can't even concentrate when others are eating because they're actually going hungry. These are the Americans this bill would see go hungry, even as we subsidize handouts to wealthy farmers.

This is immoral. If this is not wrong, nothing is wrong.

But even if that doesn't sway you, consider the math. This bill would cut \$40 billion from food aid, while the majority in this body voted to keep \$90 billion in crop insurance subsidies. It would deny over 4 million low-income individuals a chance to eat, even as we are giving 26 faceless individuals \$1 million each. I cannot support a bill that hurts millions of low-income citizens, children, seniors, veterans, as the majority continues to subsidize wealthy agribusiness.

Historically, addressing hunger in America has been a bipartisan effort, Democrats and Republicans who come together to say we have a serious problem of hunger in America; let's work to eradicate it. That was McGovern and Dole, Javits, Kennedy, and so many others.

I urge my colleagues in both parties to vote this heartless bill down.

OBAMACARE FAILS TO LIVE UP TO ITS GUARANTEES

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

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, when President Obama sold his health care law to the American people, he made many promises. He promised—he guaranteed—that if you like your doctor or your health care plan, you could keep it. He promised that his law would not raise your health insurance costs.

My constituents will tell you that the health care law has broken these promises, that these guarantees are no good. Nearly every day I hear from folks, moms and dads, teachers, bus drivers, small business owners, health care providers, who are being hurt by the health care law.

A woman I met recently, who had just started a new job, making \$8.50, learned that her hours would be cut from 35 to 29. If you do the math, that's about \$50 a week, \$200 a month, \$2,500 a year. That may not sound like a lot of money to the elites here in Washington, D.C., but for a working person