

we can, that invests where we must, that grows jobs, and ends the painful consequences of sequestration.

The absolute misery here is that all of this dysfunction could have been avoided. We could have avoided the reach to yet another kicking of the can down the road if we would come together at the conference table and do a real budget. We could reach through a budget process; we could reach to regular order.

With many of my colleagues, I have urged them that the leadership in the House resort to naming the panelists who will sit at that conference table to realize regular order through a budget process, a real budget process. That request has been turned down time and time again. The statements made in the past were, Well, the Senate hasn't moved on a budget, or We haven't heard from this entity about what their plans are.

Well, the truth be told, this year, the United States Senate passed its version of a budget. This House passed its version of a budget. The President and his administration have advanced their fiscal blueprint for the coming fiscal year.

□ 1015

The entities have spoken. The process needs to be addressed and respected. We need to bring those panelists to the conference table—those who will represent Republicans and Democrats in the House of Representatives and in the United States Senate—to come to terms, to develop the compromise in the spirit by which our Founding Parents developed this wonderful blueprint of a Republic, guided by the democracy.

Why are we rejecting that opportunity?

A sound budget could allow us to escape the terrible consequences of sequestration.

I have witnessed what that sequestration has meant in my own district. During our 5½-week district work period, I visited with many of those Head Start programs, with Early Intervention, with nutrition programs, with food banks that address the nutrition needs of the people of this great Nation. I have worked with the small business community to understand more fully what the impact of sequestration might mean to them—cuts to research, to programs that have furloughed my Federal employees if given the opportunity to serve this Nation through their workforce.

All of that consequential damage could be avoided if we would resort to the soundness of the tool called the “budget.” The sequestration issue is painful. It's a hidden attack. It's mindless, thoughtless, and it has pervaded itself into the fabric of our communities—into the quality of life of the people who place within us the trust to be their voice in Washington.

So we need to do better than this paralysis that has stalled the process

that finds us at the midnight hour, searching for answers in the most unusual format that will resort to yet another kicking of the can down the road, that would use the smoke and mirrors to balance a budget for some uncertain period of time, that doesn't provide the predictability to the business community or to the working families of this Nation. The partnership with their government should be real. It should be stated in terms that allow for the respect of businesses to invest and hire and be productive.

We have had a plan in this House coming from the Democrats. Representative VAN HOLLEN has introduced a plan that will reduce the deficit in greater fashion and will avoid the painful consequences of sequestration.

PROTECTING THE FINANCIAL SOLVENCY OF THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I want to begin my remarks with a couple of comments about the budget process. I think my colleagues could be a little bit confused on this.

I will remind my colleagues that it is this body that every single year meets our statutory duty and our constitutional duty to bring forward a budget that funds the operations of the United States of America. We do not miss our deadlines, and this year, we did it. I know that the White House did their Sweet 16 bracket before they did their budget, but we were still pleased to see that they were willing to participate in that process, and we were pleased that our friends in the Senate, for the first time in 5 years, decided they would enter into the budget process.

We were very disappointed, quite frankly, when they said they would not move to the conference table with us until we agreed to a tax increase. That is what they want—an agreement to a tax increase in this kind of economy and with about 8 percent unemployment and with 20 million Americans either un- or underemployed? They want more taxes—more control over people's lives? We were not willing to do that.

We are continuing to stand and fight for the American people—for responsible government, for getting this budget balanced within the next decade, and for getting this country back on the road to fiscal health.

I will also remind my colleagues that one of the things we continue to hear from this White House and this administration is that they want a government shutdown. Now, they try to blame us—we realize that—but I've got to tell you that I've got a titanium backbone. Let them blame. Let them talk. It's fine. They want a government shutdown. For my colleagues, I would direct their attention to the Congressional Research Service for the summary of what happens in a government shutdown.

For the interest of my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, I will just walk through some of these points.

One of the reasons they want it is that the President wants control of the checkbook. Right now, the U.S. House of Representatives has that control, and we want to keep it. We don't want a government shutdown. We want to keep the government open and keep cutting it. We want to keep the government open so we can delay, defund, repeal, and replace ObamaCare. This budget process of going into a shutdown gives control to the administrative branch.

There is another little tidbit when you read this circular, and it directs you to the 2011 revision of Circular No. A-11. OMB's current instructions would have agency heads use the Department of Justice opinions. I can tell you the American people and a Republican-led House do not want Eric Holder and Barack Obama making the determination of who and what will be open in this Federal Government, what will be funded and what agencies are going to be working. We don't want to give them that responsibility. I know they want that. I know they're trying to get a government shutdown, but I have to tell you that that is not what we want.

What we are for, as I said, is of making certain that we protect the future and the financial solvency of this great Nation. One of the reasons we have worked so diligently on a budget for this body is that we know the cost and the impact that ObamaCare is going to have on the Nation's fiscal health, and we are very concerned about it. We see what is happening in our communities.

I just want to reference some of the correspondence and conversations I am having with my constituents in Tennessee.

Yesterday, I spoke with a gentleman who went to a check cashing store, borrowed \$400, started a retail business, now has 45 employees in five locations—a great business. What he is looking at is he can't expand. He can't hire anybody else. He is having to deal with all of the hoops that really weigh this business down, and it is because of ObamaCare.

COMPROMISE

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

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to be able to follow the rank, partisan remarks of Mrs. BLACKBURN's, because I wanted to speak this morning on the subject of compromise.

Compromise is not an easy subject to speak on because, of course, we all have it in our minds here that the right thing to do is to lead great ideological battles—to stand unbending by your principles, to stand up for what you think is right—and it is the right thing to do to stand up for what you think is right.

Compromise is a hard thing to discuss because, of course, those on the

fringes, those on the extreme—those who are unbending—will accuse us of not standing by our ideals if we compromise; but the fact is that most, if not all, of the accomplishments in the history of this country that have been achieved by the United States Congress have been achieved through compromise.

Let's talk for a moment about one of the reasons I am happy to represent the State of Connecticut.

The Congress in which Mrs. BLACKBURN and I serve—the very structure and architecture of that Congress—was formed by something known as the Connecticut Compromise of 1787, when Roger Sherman and a group of people who disagreed on stunning issues of the day—and some of the people who were disagreeing were inviting foreign powers in to stand with them—came together and said, Do you know what? We will have a bicameral legislature—a Senate and a House—that will balance the big States and the small States.

And Roger Sherman's statue is here in the Capitol.

By the way, the capital is here because Madison and Jefferson and others of our Founding Fathers made a compromise in which they said the Federal Government will assume the remaining Revolutionary debt of the States in exchange for putting the capital in the Southern States. Compromise is how we get things done around here.

For those who might challenge my own credentials on compromise, I will point out that I was one of 38 Members of this body—less than 10 percent of the House of Representatives—who voted for the Simpson-Bowles' budget. Everyone else said, No, I am not going to compromise because that's too difficult.

So what about the crossroads at which we find ourselves today—the possibility of a government shutdown that would hurt our economy and certainly hurt an awful lot of Americans and the even more egregious possibility that we would not honor the full faith and credit of the United States Government for the very first time in our 240-year history?

Is this a great national battle between North and South? between Republicans and Democrats?

No, it is not. It is something far more unnecessary and uninspiring.

On one side of this debate, we have got, actually, the majority of Republicans and the majority of Democrats who say, Let's come together. Let's not bring an unnecessary crisis to our country—a manufactured, artificial crisis. Let's compromise. On the other side, you've got a handful of, maybe, three or four Senators and of maybe 30 or 40 Members of the House of Representatives who are so possessed of the Lord's wisdom—they so embody the tradition of our Founding Fathers—that they will listen to no one, and they will refuse to compromise.

But who are these people?

These are people who believe that the best way today to spur economic

growth is to put in place savage cuts that will fire teachers and firefighters and nurses, because that will help—despite all evidence to the contrary. These are people who believe that the storms and the tornadoes that have ravaged just about every State in this country have absolutely nothing to do with climate change—despite all evidence to the contrary. These are people who believe that ObamaCare today is doing great damage to this Nation—despite all evidence to the contrary. These are people who don't believe that the President of the United States was born in this country—despite all evidence to the contrary.

So much could get done—comprehensive immigration reform, a budget that looks a little something like the Simpson-Bowles' budget for which I voted. So many things could get done, Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman from Ohio would set aside this small rump group of dead-enders and say, We will govern. We will govern this Nation in the tradition of Roger Sherman, of James Madison, of Thomas Jefferson by listening to the other side, by shutting down the extremes and by thinking about the long-term interests of this great country.

A COMMON COURSE FOR COMMON GOALS

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

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, a crisis is not a good time for inflammatory rhetoric or ad hominem attacks. I believe that my colleague from Connecticut just missed the mark a moment ago when he threw out terms such as "dead-enders" and "extremists." I will simply say that, yesterday, the President missed an opportunity to bring both sides together. That responsibility now rests solely with us.

Nobody on the Republican side of the aisle wants to see a government shutdown or a credit default—let's make that clear—and I am confident that nobody on the Democratic side wants to see millions of Americans lose the health plans they were told they could keep or see their health care costs skyrocket or lose their jobs or work hours because of the unintended consequences of ObamaCare, but these events that nobody wants to see are now unfolding. They will do great damage to our Nation that nobody wants to see happen.

If we agree on these fundamental issues, our course should be clear, and it is only blocked by the kind of partisan division that we heard yesterday from the White House and a few moments ago. We can avert these calamities and redeem this institution if we can put aside the name-calling for a few days and get down to business.

The good news is we have a process of government that has evolved over centuries that is very good at resolving

differences of opinion between the two Houses of Congress and within the two Houses of Congress. In this case, there shouldn't even be much to resolve. All of us want to see the government stay open. All of us want to see the government's credit preserved. All of us want to see Americans protected from losing health plans that they want to keep or from being socked with crushing premium increases or from losing their jobs or from having their hours cut back.

□ 1030

If we're all agreed on these objectives, isn't the appropriate course self-evident? Senator MANCHIN seems to have laid it out very clearly the other day: a temporary continuing resolution to keep the government open, a temporary increase in the debt limit while we complete the normal appropriations process, and a temporary delay in ObamaCare until the unintended consequences of its mandates can be corrected.

Is that so unreasonable?

After all, this administration has already exempted big corporations and more than 1,000 politically connected groups from ObamaCare mandates. More revealingly, the administration has protected Members of Congress from its crushing costs. That ought to be the ultimate wake-up call. If Members of Congress can't afford to meet ObamaCare's costs, how do we expect the average American to do so? Why not give everybody the same relief by delaying these mandates until the law can be replaced with provisions that actually fulfill the promises made to the American people when it was enacted.

I don't like continuing resolutions at all. The Congress has a responsibility to superintend the Nation's finances, and it's developed an appropriations process that requires painstaking review of every expenditure of this government. That review involves countless hours of committee work, scores of hours of floor debate, and hundreds of individual amendments. Continuing resolutions cast aside this work and abandon Congress' responsibility over the Nation's finances. They shift enormous authority to the executive branch that the Founders never intended. I had hoped to be done with continuing resolutions.

Those who enacted ObamaCare no doubt hoped it would lower health care costs and help the economy. Sadly, events in this imperfect world can often disappoint and transfigure our fondest hopes. We've not completed the appropriations process. We need additional time to do so, and we need to correct the damage being done to existing health plan holders and employees of ObamaCare. If we could all agree on these objectives, then our course should be clear to all of us. We should fund the government long enough to complete the normal appropriations process, and we should delay