

that we should live within our means as a Nation, that we cannot continue to borrow from the future to pay for the present.

And so we arrived at this budget negotiation, this way to fund the government, the continuing resolution. What should happen is that we pass 12 different appropriation bills funding the government, one unit at a time, with great insight coming from both points of view, both parties, both sides of the aisle.

About three or four or five of those have been passed out of committee. Some have been sent to the Senate. Those have not been processed, but the House hasn't finished its work. So we were forced into a circumstance caused by both houses, both parties that said, we'll fund the government with a continuing resolution. That is, we will resolve to continue how we spent before. Those are sometimes inadequate, inaccurate reflections of current spending problems, current spending needs. But that's where we were.

Now on the one side, the President said, We want you to just give us the money to spend. Our side said, We will do that, but we want things in return. If we're spending more than the Nation can bring in, if we're spending more than the government has, then we would like to check that spending. We would give attention to the Affordable Care Act, to ObamaCare, that we would choose that in order to relieve the pressure.

The bill is unpaid for. We are printing the money to make government work now. About \$1 trillion a year is being printed.

□ 1030

We call it quantitative easing because printing sounds so crass to the American public. So we're quantitative easing \$1 trillion a year; and yet we're bringing on another program which is unaffordable and which we do not have the trillion or \$2 trillion to spend.

So our side said, initially, we will give you the funding for the government, but on our side, we would like to defund the entire program. That position simply was never responded to by the Senate.

In good faith, we said, okay, we understand your unspoken communication, so we notched down a bit. We will still continue the government funding at the price that you, the President, are asking for. And this time, we'll simply delay the program for 1 year. It's not working. It has problems in many different States. We still aren't certain where the funding comes from.

And, again, the President and the Senate remained silent, not even bothering to show up for work for a couple of days before they sent our first opinion back, simply rejected. The second was sent back.

Last night we were faced with another quandary. We said, we'll notch down one more time. We said, we'll fund the government at the level

you're requesting, but we should, on our side, suggest that we would delay the individual mandate.

The President has given many individual exemptions. He's given waivers to companies, to unions. He said to all employers, we're going to delay your input for a year.

Last night the Senate rejected that. That's the reason we're here today.

I call on the Speaker, the President, and Mr. REID, to gather publicly in front of TV cameras and work the differences out.

THIS IS A SAD DAY FOR AMERICAN DEMOCRACY AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, this is a sad day for the American people and for American democracy.

For weeks, I've told my constituents that I know things look bad, but the Republicans won't shut down the government. There's too many adults on that side of the room to let this happen.

And now, after watching what happened yesterday, I can barely explain this to myself. The best I can say is I feel like I'm serving in the Nation's largest kindergarten, only we're in charge of the Federal checkbook and the nuclear arsenal.

The fact that so many Republicans are holding their breath because they don't like the Affordable Care Act—Congress passed the Affordable Care Act. The President signed the bill into law. The Supreme Court has upheld the law.

And yet this body keeps voting to try and repeal the Affordable Care Act, not just once or twice, getting the message, but 46 times. And it's still operational today.

What happened last night, in the final half hour before closing down our government?

The Republicans came up with a last-ditch effort: let's go to conference committee.

I serve on the Budget Committee. We have been asking, for 6 months, to have the Republicans appoint conferees so we could have a budget in this country. The only obstacle between this country having a budget and not is the fact that the Speaker would refuse to appoint conferees to a budget.

Last night, with 15 minutes to spare, the best idea the Republicans have, after 46 votes to repeal the Affordable Care Act, is to have us go to a conference committee.

What are the results of what happened?

Well, one, government is shut down. Thank you, Republican Party.

Two, the Affordable Care Act is implementing today and is the law of the land.

And, three, I'm guessing the Tea Party had a pretty good fundraising week or two.

But here's what happens to the people in my district. People who are trying to get small business loans from the Small Business Administration are going to be halted; \$1 billion a month that happens is halted right now, so we can't grow the economy.

People trying to get housing loans for rural families and low- and middle-income families are going to be put on hold.

The Women, Infant and Children program for low-income, pregnant women will be put on hold, after this Congress has already tried to cut \$39 billion from food stamps.

We're going to block the Centers for Disease Control from tracking influenza, something that could potentially have devastating impact across the country.

And more than 800,000 Federal employees are going to be furloughed because some Republicans couldn't get their way on the 46th try.

I served in the Wisconsin legislature for 14 years before coming here, and we had our differences, but we always moved on. We did our jobs.

Now it's time for Congress to do our job. It doesn't matter what party you belong to. America deserves better.

The adults in the Republican Party need to take the keys back from the Tea Party before they have to call a tow truck to take the country out of the ditch. It's time for the country to act, and we need the Republicans to get behind something that gets a budget done.

DISASTER RELIEF FOR COLORADO

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

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, over the weekend, this House worked to find a solution to the impasse over the continuing resolution, sending over various options to the Senate to try to jump-start negotiations to work through an agreement to find a solution to keep our government funded.

In the early hours of this morning, we finally said to the leader of the U.S. Senate, HARRY REID, let's find a way to meet face-to-face, through a conference committee, to negotiate a solution and avoid a government shutdown. We've passed, three times now, measures to keep the government funded and a way to find solutions to this critical issue.

But there are many people in Colorado who are struggling now because of the shutdown and who are worried about what happens to their situation, particularly those who may have been impacted by the flood. And that is why we must find a way to get government funded to find a solution to get government going back on track, while preventing policies that we know are bad for the economy.

So let's work together and find solutions but also, at the same time, ensuring certainty to people who are suffering from Colorado's greatest natural disaster.

That's why I bring to your attention a statement that the Vice President made on September 23 in Greeley, Colorado, after touring the damage and devastation that those floods caused.

I stood 2 feet away from the Vice President of the United States as he addressed the people of Colorado and said this:

None of the Federal assistance that we're providing, none if it is going to be impacted even if there is a government shutdown.

So while people may try to use this as a scare tactic, try to politicize a disaster, the Vice President himself stood before the people of Colorado and said there will be no impact on flood recovery.

And yet we have seen in the newspaper people are trying to scare people to try to take away any kind of certainty that exists, but you can't take those words back.

That's why I also sent a letter this morning to the White House reminding the White House, Mr. Speaker, of the promise that the Vice President made to the people of Colorado. And we, as elected officials in Congress, in the Senate, the Governor of Colorado, we have a responsibility to make sure that the Vice President and the President keep their word, they're true to the people of Colorado; that we make sure that, indeed, this statement:

None of the Federal assistance that we're providing, none of it is going to be impacted, even if there is a government shutdown.

So while we work to resolve this issue before the government right now, while we work to make sure that policies are put in place to return to normal operations, we cannot let this be politicized. We cannot let the people of Colorado be forgotten, and we must hold the Vice President and the President accountable and true to their word.

Mr. Speaker, I submit for the RECORD the letter that I sent to the White House this morning, and also the statement, in full, of the Vice President's comments.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, October 1, 2013.

President BARACK OBAMA,
The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: As you know, Colorado is recovering from some of the most devastating floods in state history. Catastrophic water levels caused over \$1 billion in damage to infrastructure and property throughout my district and other areas in the state. More than 20,000 homes were damaged or destroyed, eight individuals lost their lives, and overflowing rivers left a path of devastation. I am grateful for the recovery efforts led by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), National Guard, and others involved in this process. Federal assistance is critical in this time of need and I have fought to ensure that funds are available for disaster relief. On September 30th, my legislation that would raise the cap on disaster-related transportation funds successfully passed the House.

Unfortunately, Congress has not yet come to an agreement to fund the federal government and the nation is now facing the effects

of a government shutdown. While I am working diligently with my colleagues to resolve this funding gap, it is vitally important that the people of Colorado do not suffer as a result of gridlock in Washington. To this end, I was pleased to hear Vice President Biden pledge to the people of Colorado that "none of the federal assistance that we're providing—none of it—is going to be impacted even if there is a government shutdown." This commitment from the White House is reassuring for my constituents and others in the state worried about the impact a shutdown might have on disaster funds. I appreciate your support in this recovery and look forward to working on behalf of the thousands affected by these recent events.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

CORY GARDNER,
Member of Congress.

VICE PRESIDENT BIDEN IN COLORADO—9/23/13

Now a lot of you will hear probably on the national news about the potential for a government shutdown. And it's probably going to scare the living devil out of you. Well the truth of the matter is there is reason to be scared but not in terms of disaster relief. None of the federal assistance that we're providing, none of it is going to be impacted even if there is a government shutdown. I don't want folks that are here in shelters watching on TV seeing the dysfunction of Congress thinking that all, all the relief efforts that they are now benefiting from or (inaudible) are likely to continue to benefit from are going to shut down. They will not shutdown even if the Congress doesn't fund the federal government in a continuing resolution.

THIS IS NOT POLITICAL?

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, well, here we are. The gentleman who just preceded doesn't want this to be political. It's totally political.

The Republicans spent billions on the last election. They lost badly in the Presidential. They didn't take over the Senate. They even got 1.4 million fewer votes for the House but, because of gerrymandering, they're still in charge.

So now they're attempting to usurp the constitutional order in the United States of America. They're saying that one-half of one branch of the government of the United States, that is, the Republican majority in the House, should dictate policy to the rest of the country. They should be the rulers. They can change laws. They can ignore the Senate, ignore the President.

They are making unequivocal demands. They've taken the country, the government hostage. This is disruptive. It's expensive. It's inconvenient for a lot of Americans who need to access these agencies.

I was just meeting with the chief of the Forest Service. It's going to delay their capability of planning salvage and restoration activities on the hundreds of thousands, millions, of acres across the West that burned. They're going to have to stop all that. And then

winter sets in, and then you're going to have big problems that you can't undo.

But they don't care about any of that because this is totally political.

Now, we're in the shutdown phase now, but their objective is to drag this out and hitch all of their demands—and if you've seen the list of demands, it's every bill that the Republicans have passed since they took over in 2011 that has not seen action in the Senate or been rejected by the Senate—would be appended to the debt limit of the United States.

Now, shutting down the government, pretty radical. But we are really dealing here with, for short, "Cruzites," I guess I would call them. They're sort of anarchist radical Libertarians who don't believe in government.

They don't believe in evolution. They believe in devolution; devolve all the duties to the States, dissolve the Union, essentially, go to some loose federalism, and we'll reach some ideal point somehow.

It's crazy stuff. But they're in charge. It's not even a majority of their caucus. It's a minority of their caucus who are dictating to the majority, because, with 211 fully-red Republican districts, this is all about politics.

Those people know that if they act reasonably here that they will get an ultra right-wing nut case Tea Party primary challenge, funded by the likes of the Koch brothers and others, very, very generously funded.

So they've even managed not only to take the government hostage, but to intimidate their own truly conservative members, those who aren't "Cruzite" anarchist radical Libertarians.

Now, default is unbelievably irresponsible. Even a tiny threat of default, as they did a couple of years ago, downgraded our credit and drove up interest rates just a little bit. But we were much better off then.

Today, if they do this, interest rates for everything in America will go up dramatically. That means tens of billions of dollars more per year just to retire the Federal debt. They supposedly care about the debt. Well, they're going to raise the debt immediately by adding interest costs.

It means home mortgages bump again, stalls out the housing recovery. Cars go up again for loans.

But, you know, they don't really care because they don't borrow money for things. Most of these people are rich, so they don't care. So what if it impacts hundreds of millions of Americans in their daily lives with their credit cards, with their car purchases, with their attempts to get at housing?

They don't care. No, let's not make it political, guys. No, this isn't political. Come on. You want to be responsible? What's it about?

If it's about the problems with ObamaCare, there are a lot of us over here who would like to fix it. You came in with repeal and replace, repeal and