

or whether they are veterans or a person in our police departments or military, that we can alleviate the suffering they are feeling and we can again have taxpayers receive the services for which they are paying by passing the Senate short-term budget this afternoon.

It's pretty clear to me that a significant majority of House Members would vote in favor of that budget. It should be put on the floor. If I am wrong, it will fail. But we will have a vote. I think I'm right. I think the bill will pass, the government will reopen, and the shutdown will end. That's the way we ought to proceed. If a majority of this House believes that that's the right thing to do, the majority should be given the chance to vote on that particular piece of legislation.

I hope we can also focus on the long-lasting damage that's being done to the way we govern our country by what has happened here. I want to say from the outset that I feel strongly that the Affordable Care Act is a good thing for our country. I really do believe that that's going to do many good things for our country. But I completely respect and admire those who have a completely different opinion.

I know that there are many Members of this Chamber, and many people in our country who believe that the Affordable Care Act is very bad for our country. They would like to see it repealed. They believe it will do harm to the country. I respect and admire their zeal and their passion. This is the essence of the democratic process. We are fortunate to live in a country where when we disagree over something we resolve our disagreements with voting, with elections, with peaceful and civil processes.

But when that peaceful and civil process protects the rights of those who have lost an argument, as frankly those over the Affordable Health Care Act have, when it respects your right to continue to come back and pursue your views over that argument, you also have to respect that process in return. And grave damage is being done to that process because of this practice of threatening a shutdown of the entire government, in fact causing a shutdown of the entire government, and now threatening a default on the country's obligation to pay its bills by tying the health care debate to the extension of the Federal debt ceiling.

And I want you to think about what is happening here. The health care legislation came to this floor and passed. It went to the Senate floor and it passed. The President signed it. It was challenged in the United States Supreme Court. The United States Supreme Court said it complied with the Constitution. We had an election a little less than a year ago, where one candidate promised that the very first thing he would do would be to repeal the law, and the other candidate promised he would implement the law. The candidate who wanted to repeal the law

lost, lost in the Electoral College by a substantial margin, lost the popular vote by about 51 to 47 percent.

That does not mean that those who agree with Governor Romney have to abandon their efforts and try not to repeal the law. The democratic process says they have at their means every legitimate mechanism to try to win the next time around. That's part of the beauty of American politics, there is always a next time around. But it is not a legitimate means to shut down the entire government of the United States because you lost the last time around.

Let me draw some analogies here. Virtually everyone on our side believes passionately that the Senate immigration bill, which would provide legal status to 12 million people, the vast majority of whom are decent, tax-paying, hardworking people who are benefitting the United States, we believe passionately that that bill should become law. Sixty-eight Senators voted for that law. It has never been put to a vote on the House floor. We feel passionate that should become law, but we did not threaten to shut the government down if we didn't get a vote on that. It looks like we may lose that argument. If it doesn't come to a vote, we are not going to shut the government down because we can't get our way.

A huge majority of people on our side, a huge majority of the American people, if you believe the polls, believes that there should be a background check before someone can buy a gun. Before a wife beater or a terrorist can buy a gun, there ought to be a background check that says whether they can buy one or not. Again, we are damaging the political process by this, and we shouldn't do it.

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INTELLECTUAL CONSISTENCY FROM THE LEFT NEEDED

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

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, this is one of those moments where you come to the floor—I am unscripted—and I want to sort of share something from the heart that actually has really, really disturbed me watching this debate over the last few days.

I am from Arizona and I like to say I am a friend of Gabby Giffords, and I have known her for a very long time. Do we all remember 3 years ago when this House came together, when my media in Arizona and the media across this country said, whoa, maybe it is time to actually take a step backwards and reflect on our use of language, reflect on our tone, reflect on our civility.

Yet look what you have heard over the last two or three days, over this last week. I have a President that got

behind the microphones and was literally talking down the stock market, asking why hasn't it gone down. I have one of the heads of the intelligence services fearful that the intelligence service officers are bribable now because some are on furlough. I have had Members come to the microphone right off to the side of me here and use language like "terrorist." The White House has stood behind the use of the language of "gun to the head." You want to talk about something that is offensive? And this is to all my brothers and sisters here in Congress and for the blogs and the reporters and the political operatives around this country, you are better, we are better than this.

A good example is you just heard the Representative from New Jersey come to the microphone. I can only say nice things about his tone. He made his argument in a rational, constructive way. We have different views of the world. There was none of the flailing of the hands and the screaming into the microphone. And you have to start to take a step backwards and wonder, why the theater, why the viscousness and the theater coming from the left.

I hope we don't look back a month from now and find out that some of this was about money, fund-raising, the politics of cash; because the reality is this argument is actually pretty darn simple. Those of us on the conservative side believe we have and we have reached out over and over. And if you really want a solution, and this is to Senator REID, send over some Members to that conference committee. Put them in a room and let them start talking.

I am from that view of the world that a big deal is healthiest for the country; but then I will hear language like, well, we are heading toward the debt ceiling and you are going to default. Anyone that says that is looking you in the eyes and lying to you, either that or they don't own a calculator. You have got to understand the math. This country takes in 18 percent of GDP in taxes, and we pay out 2 percent in debt coverage. And in 2014 we have, what, \$1.6 trillion in refinancing.

The fact of the matter is any way you ladder the model, we are never, ever, ever—and I am also quoting Bill Gross from a couple of days ago—we are never never, ever, ever, it is implausible that we won't make our interest payments. You have \$3.1 trillion we are going to take in in tax revenues. We are going to spend about \$3.7 trillion. So using language like, well, we are going to default, has the left decided that they are hungry to scare the markets, hungry to scare the world debt markets, and is this how you leverage politics?

Look, I understand we have different views. I actually believe the Affordable Care Act, ObamaCare, is part-timing America, is destroying so many people's opportunities. But I also do believe we do have to come up with solutions and continued solutions for pre-existing conditions for someone with

severe asthma. But we have our vision, we want to get to the same goal.

So to my friends on the Democrat side, particularly over in the Senate, 2 years ago you lit up my phones in my office demanding that we talk and negotiate on other issues. So that rhetoric was acceptable in the summer of 2011, but today it is not? How about just a little bit of intellectual consistency from the left?

SETTING ASIDE POLITICS AND PUTTING NEEDS OF CONSTITUENTS FIRST

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

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, it is day four and I am just amazed that this government shutdown has been allowed to continue even though we have the votes to end it right now. A bipartisan majority of this House supports the Senate-passed so-called "clean continuing resolution," but for some reason Speaker BOEHNER won't allow a vote. People back home in Oregon and across the United States don't understand this. The majority of the House, a majority of the Senate, and the President agree on a deal that would reopen the government, but it is not going to happen because the Speaker won't allow a vote.

This is hurting our constituents. One of mine wrote about her family's effort to save enough money for a house, but she is on indefinite furlough, unpaid time that she didn't ask for, didn't deserve and can't afford. Another had planned a trip to visit the Grand Canyon; but after making reservations and buying tickets, the park won't be open and her family's trip will be ruined. Someone else wrote about her pregnant daughter who relies on WIC and won't receive the nutrition assistance she needs.

Yesterday, a volunteer at the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge said that years of conservation and restoration work could be set back because there will be no staff on duty to manage the water levels. Researchers at our State's universities, like Oregon State University, had to put projects on hold. They have been unable to collaborate with Federal agencies, important deadlines are being missed, new grant applications aren't being processed.

These are just a few of the stories I am hearing. The shutdown hasn't just affected one agency or one constituency. It has affected everyone who relies on a functioning Federal Government. And, Mr. Speaker, it is chipping away at what is left of the respect for this institution. We can't afford to use any more precious time on piecemeal bills that we know won't go anywhere. It is time to set aside the politics and put the needs of our constituents first.

Mr. Speaker, I understand, as does America, that you and some of your Members do not support the Affordable

Care Act. We understand that. We got that message. But it passed both Chambers, was signed into law, and was upheld by the Supreme Court.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't like the across-the-board cuts caused by sequestration. They are harming my district and this country, and I will continue to fight them. Yet I am ready now to vote for the clean continuing resolution that contains those cuts. Why? Because it is critical to get the government open now. And every indication is that a majority of this Chamber will do the same.

Mr. Speaker, let us reopen the Federal Government. We can do it today. Mr. Speaker, please let us vote.

MAKING WASHINGTON, D.C., LESS IMPORTANT AND LESS POWERFUL IN THE LIVES OF AMERICANS

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

Mr. STEWART. Mr. Speaker, this is a frustrating time in Washington. For the first time in 17 years, our government has been shut down. I believe the political gridlock is at a discouraging high mark. I empathize with those who are feeling its devastating effects, especially those hardworking people who have been affected by furloughs, including some members of my own family.

So I rise today in defense of the American people and I ask one simple question: Why won't the President and HARRY REID sit down and talk to us? The American people are hurting. They want to see progress. They want to see us work and fix this in a bipartisan way. So why won't the President and the Senate leader sit down and engage us in a simple conversation? What are they afraid of?

The President of the United States is the President of all of the people. He is not just the President of the Democratic Party. He is not just the President of those States in which he won. He is the President of the United States. He is the President of everyone. He owes it to the American people to listen to their voices. So let me ask again, what is he afraid of? Why won't he sit down and talk with us?

I represent more than 700,000 people in my home State of Utah. They want the government to stay open, but they do not want ObamaCare. They know what a horrible piece of legislation it is. They know and they already see that it is destroying jobs. They know it is hurting working families. They know that it is driving up costs. They want the President to know this. They want HARRY REID to listen to their concerns, but both of them refuse to talk to us.

So let me ask again, what are they afraid of? Are they afraid that they might be actually convinced that we are right? Are they afraid that they might have to compromise just a lit-

tle? I am the father of six children. I know what it is like to have teenagers in the house. I know what happens when they get angry because they don't get their way. They run to their bedroom, they slam the door, and they refuse to come out and talk.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for our President to take out his ear buds, to open the door, to come out and talk to us. He has canceled his trip to Asia. But I ask why, for what purpose, if he still refuses to come out and talk to us.

My goal throughout the last several weeks has been to find a way to fund the government operations, other than ObamaCare, and to avoid a government shutdown. But once again, unfortunately, President Obama and Senator REID have expressed no willingness, no willingness at all to compromise.

We have to understand that we are engaged in a generational fight over our debt and spending as it goes far beyond ObamaCare. Our current national debt is approaching \$17 trillion, and it is growing every moment. During this administration, we will more than double our national debt; but it doesn't just end there. This is about the reach of government into our lives, with ObamaCare just being one example of how our government has grown too large and too powerful. In addition, this law will come with something like a \$1.3 trillion price tag. That is something that we simply can't afford.

It is critical that we work together now to reduce the size and the power of government in our lives. House Republicans have repeatedly come to the table to negotiate over the past several weeks. So once again I ask, what are they afraid of? Why won't they sit down and talk to us? As a former President, one of my heroes, John F. Kennedy said, let us never fear to negotiate.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to do everything in my power along with my other colleagues to find a solution to reopen the government while fighting to make Washington, D.C., less important and less powerful in the lives of American citizens.

PUTTING FEDERAL EMPLOYEES BACK TO WORK

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

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, we are in day four of the Republican shutdown, an irresponsible and manufactured crisis designed to promote ideology at the expense of the American people.

Let's be clear about why House Republicans have so knowingly, carelessly, and recklessly shut down our government. We have heard it on this floor today, Mr. Speaker. It is because they continue to be obsessed with eliminating the Affordable Care Act, the law of the land that is being implemented right now. It has become apparent that they are willing to sacrifice the basic functions of the U.S.