

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.

Government just to prove that point. Again, ideology and politics over people.

Right now there are nearly 1 million men and women who work for the Federal Government, good people, my neighbors and family, who signed up to do a job in the service of their Nation, and today they are not at work. They have had to either take a furlough, now missing four days of work, some of whom were already furloughed earlier this summer with the sequester. That means they are laid off, and they are not working because their work isn't essential. They are not getting paid.

Now, for those of us who are old enough to remember it, it kind of reminds me of the cartoon character in Popeye: I will gladly pay you Tuesday for a hamburger today. Now, the Capitol Police and many other Federal employees that are deemed essential are in fact working. We heard that yesterday with their courage and their valiant service to this Capitol. But they are not being paid. Many have worked what would equal overtime this week due to the various protest rallies and yesterday's car chase, but they are not being paid.

Now, this shutdown is not just about faceless bureaucrats. It is about real people, about public servants who are directly affected by the shutdown, and I want to tell you about a few of them who live in my congressional district.

Pat from Gambrills, he and his wife are both Federal employees so in that household it is about 8 days of furlough. They, like many of their fellow colleagues, will experience extreme difficulties if the government defaults in just another couple of weeks. Pat contacted my office and he urged the President, my fellow Democrats, and me not to bargain with Republicans in regard to increasing the debt limit and getting government operating. It is our job, he said. Though they are experiencing difficulty, Pat stated, I believe it is more important not to negotiate or bend to blackmail. Republicans must learn that they must follow the same rules as the rest of us or there will be consequences. Those are Pat's words.

But I also want to tell you about some others who contacted my office like Tracy out in Laurel. She works at the Department of Health and Human Services. She helps her mother pay bills every month; and when she called my office, she was crying, she was in tears, because she wants this to stop so that she can pay her bills.

Then there was Dini who lives in Oxon Hill—and I live in Oxon Hill—who is a single parent who was already furloughed earlier this summer, and now she isn't sure how she is going to pay the bills or take care of her child. In fact, some of these workers still have to pay childcare to keep the spot in daycare, even though they are not being paid and they are not working.

Then there was Christopher. He and his wife are both employed at the De-

partment of Homeland Security in support of the security of this Nation. They were both furloughed earlier this summer, and they are furloughed now.

So those are just some of the stories, and I could go on. I have sheets and sheets of calls from workers who live in my congressional district; and, you know, those Federal workers have already paid a great price. They are the folks out at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, which is located in the county I live in, in Prince George's County, a premier research institution; and 3,397 employees who would normally be at work aren't there. Only 104 of them are, and only 60 are working full time while the other 44 are working part-time. That means that also 250 of them are on call, and so 90 percent are actually furloughed out at Goddard Space Flight Center.

But it doesn't just affect Goddard. It affects all those small businesses, restaurants, shops, gas stations where civilian employees normally go to do their business, but they are not going there now. So the impact isn't just for the Federal workforce.

This is a really terrible situation, Mr. Speaker, and I really implore the leadership of Speaker BOEHNER. I know that he is a good man, and I want him to have the courage to put a clean Senate-passed CR on the floor of this House so that the majority of the House can work its will. Now, I know 40 or 50 won't, but the majority of the House should be allowed to work its will.

RETURNING AMERICA'S COMPETITIVE EDGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. RICE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, we are all concerned about the 800,000 Federal employees who have been furloughed for 3 days in the government shutdown. We can argue back and forth about who caused the shutdown, but the fact is that 800,000 people have been furloughed, and it could stretch into a week or two.

While we need to work hard to get these people back to work as soon as possible, we must remember that according to the Congressional Budget Office, ObamaCare is costing us 800,000 jobs permanently. We are not talking about working people being furloughed for a few days. We are talking about the permanent loss of 800,000 American jobs because of this job-killing health care law. Where is the outrage over that?

You see, the fact is the President and my friends across the aisle like to say that they are for the working man. They are for American jobs. But if you pay attention just a little bit, their actions belie their rhetoric. The truth is they are not the party of the working man; they are not the party of jobs. My friends across the aisle are the party of

Big Government and more regulation. They believe the American people cannot be trusted to make their own decisions, like how to invest their money or whether to buy health insurance. They know better than the American citizen. They want to make your decisions for you, to take care of you. ObamaCare is just the latest job-killing iteration of their Big Government expansion.

You see, it is only common sense. You don't have to be a genius to understand it. Big Government and Big Regulation do not grow the economy; they stifle the economy. They don't create jobs; they kill jobs. We have 7.3 percent unemployment right now, anemic growth four years after the recession ended; 15 percent unemployment among those under 25; 50 percent of recent college graduates are either unemployed or underemployed. I have got three sons who are recent college graduates. They have lived it. We are failing our young people.

Remember, Mr. Speaker, that the Democrats held the Presidency, the Senate, and the House for 2 years and out of that came ObamaCare and Dodd-Frank, two of the biggest government-expanding job-killing laws to be enacted in decades. It is no accident that the economy remains weak. It is no accident that unemployment rates are so high. And now when the Republican House asks simply for a conference, they won't even sit down to discuss it. They refuse to accept anything but the status quo. What is the status quo? Record deficits, high unemployment, and anemic economic growth. I guess with a record like that I wouldn't want to sit down and discuss it either.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think anybody here wanted the government to shut down, but perhaps it is good that we have come to this point. Maybe the government shutdown will be a catalyst that brings us together to make some hard decisions. We have got to stop thinking on six-month time horizons and create long-term certainty if we want our economy to thrive.

Tax reform, deficit reduction, entitlement reform—these are issues that everyone knows must be faced to push our economy forward and to return America's competitive edge. If we could resolve just a couple of these issues, we would lift a cloud of uncertainty, our economy would grow again, and all Americans would benefit.

Nobody wanted this shutdown, but let's take lemons and make lemonade. Let's use this crisis to come together for once and resolve some of these fundamental issues. These are the issues we were sent here to face. I plead with the Senate and the President to rethink your hard-line no-negotiation stance. America is counting on us.

KEEPING TOUGH IRANIAN SANCTIONS IN PLACE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from