

I was back home in Rhode Island this past weekend, and heard from many of my constituents who are disgusted with what they are seeing here in Washington. The American people expect their elected leaders to work together to get things done for our country, but there has been absolutely no cooperation since this shutdown began from our friends on the other side of the aisle who are committed to ending ObamaCare.

If the House voted right now on a clean funding bill, it would pass with support from both parties, and the government would reopen immediately; but instead, we are spending another day trading political rhetoric instead of working on the serious challenges facing our country.

Just yesterday, the U.S. Department of Education released a study of 23 industrialized nations that found Americans fall below international averages in basic problem-solving and reading and math skills. This problem demands a solution, but Congress can't work on this and so many other important issues until the partisan games end.

Let's open the government, raise the debt ceiling, commit to addressing the long-term budget challenges facing our country, and get back to work for the men and women who sent us here.

BLIZZARD OF 2013

(Mrs. NOEM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, this past Friday, a storm struck western South Dakota and dumped up to 4 feet of snow throughout the region. This has left thousands without power and devastating livestock losses in the area. Some estimate that hundreds of thousands of livestock have been killed, many of which are still buried in the melting snow.

The weekend's blizzard is expected to cost local governments millions of dollars. Those counties and the Governor are expected to petition the President for disaster status and for FEMA funds so they can clear the fallen trees and help ranchers remove all the cattle that died during that storm.

Some in South Dakota are wondering if this partial government shutdown will affect the timing of potential assistance. It certainly does not have to. There may be disagreement over certain parts of the Federal budget, but not on FEMA.

Last week, the House passed a bill to fund FEMA. It passed with Democrat support because there is bipartisan recognition that we should fund non-controversial aspects of our government and stop the attempts of some to make this partial shutdown as painful as possible. It does not have to be this way.

I call on our Senate colleagues to act immediately on the funding measures that we have sent them. It's time to negotiate, to work together, so that we can end this shutdown.

WE'VE GOT TO OPEN UP GOVERNMENT

(Mr. BERA of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BERA of California. Day No. 9, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today is day No. 9 of the government shutdown.

Enough with the games, the name calling, the finger-pointing. It's time we come together, open the government, pay our bills, and then begin negotiating a real budget. Yes, let's negotiate a real budget that begins to address our debt and the deficit. But first, we've got to open up government.

In my district, in Rancho Cordova, they've shown us what working together looks like. I spoke with Darcy Brewer, the executive director of the California Capital Airshow. They faced some challenges—high winds, bad weather—but they came together, worked into the night, and didn't shut down. They put on a spectacular airshow.

Mr. Speaker, that's what we do as Americans. When times get tough, we pull together, and we show up. We don't shut down.

THE TWILIGHT ZONE

(Mr. PITTENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTENGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask if we've entered the twilight zone.

Last Friday, a bipartisan coalition in the House of Representatives passed House Joint Resolution 75, which ensures the proper funding for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, better known as WIC. Senate Democrats have refused to take action on this legislation, choosing to play political games instead of providing nutritional assistance to low-income pregnant women, new mothers, infants, and young children.

Here's where it gets stranger. President Obama has actually threatened to veto the legislation. The President of the United States is threatening to veto nutritional assistance for little babies and preschoolers?

This isn't a game. Yesterday, North Carolina stopped using WIC benefits because of this unfortunate shutdown.

America elected a divided government, but they expect us to work together. Mr. Speaker, the President needs to convey to the Senate Democrats that they must come to the negotiating table. Senate Democrats must rejoin the normal legislative process. Let's talk.

FURLOUGHED FEDERAL CONTRACTORS

(Ms. TSONGAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I had a heart-wrenching conversation with a nurse employed at a military installation in my district. She has been furloughed because of the Republican government shutdown. As a Federal contract employee, she is terrified that she won't be able to recover her lost pay, putting her family at financial risk. "We are the ones suffering," she told me. "We are hard-working Americans working paycheck to paycheck. Something like this can destroy us."

No piecemeal approach, no temporary fix here or there is going to put an end to this reckless shutdown. Only one bill is guaranteed to reopen all of the government—or even any part of it today—and put this nurse and hundreds of thousands of Americans like her back to work.

It is time for the House to vote on the straightforward, Senate-passed funding bill. Mr. Speaker, let us vote.

PUTTING OUR TROOPS BEFORE POLITICS

(Mr. SMITH of Missouri asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, yesterday people across this country were shocked to learn that families of troops who died in combat are being denied death benefits, including a fellow Missourian. Like so many in my district, I was appalled to see news reports showing so little respect or care for the families of troops who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Many issues divide us in this body, but surely Democrats and Republicans can come together to support our troops and to support their families. This issue should rise above any political divide. Troops who lay down their lives in battle should never be forgotten or forsaken by their government.

Today, the House will vote on H.J. Res. 91, Honoring the Families of Fallen Soldiers. I am hopeful this legislation will then be taken up immediately by the Senate and then quickly signed into law by President Obama. We must correct this wrong.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I ask every American to join me in prayer for the troops we have lost and for their families who were forgotten by our government.

STOP THE RECKLESSNESS

(Ms. CHU asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. CHU. Mr. Speaker, JOHN BOEHNER says he doesn't have the votes to pass a clean bill that would keep government open. Yet 198 Democrats would vote for it; another 21 Republicans say they would, too. That's more than the 217 votes needed to pass a bill. That's basic math. The votes are there.

And yet so many people are suffering in this ninth day of the GOP shutdown,

people like Leo Finn, who had been scheduled to start a clinical trial at a cancer institute in Boston to battle his liver cancer, but last week, he was told he couldn't because of the shutdown.

The National Institutes of Health has furloughed 73 percent of its staff. Leo, a father of three, says:

Everyone talks about national parks, but the shutdown of the NIH is starting to affect people's lives and whether someone will survive a disease.

Now Leo's life is on hold.

It is time for Speaker BOEHNER to stop this recklessness. It is wrong. It is shameful. Bring a clean bill up for a vote.

PLAN FOR PAYING DOWN THE DEBT

(Mr. YODER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, the American people understand the importance of making tough decisions and balancing their budgets.

According to the Federal Reserve, over the past 3 months, Americans have worked to pay down their credit card debts by more than \$6 billion; yet the United States Government continues to operate in the red, as it has operated in the red 55 of the last 60 years. Our national debt now stands at \$17 trillion. Now the administration is asking Congress to increase our debt by trillions more.

Mr. Speaker, Americans do not want to raise the debt ceiling again unless they see a path towards paying down the national debt and balancing the Federal budget. American citizens cannot take out a loan without a plan to pay it back. How can our Nation continue to borrow money without any plan to pay it back?

Mr. Speaker, let's stop the culture of debt and despair in Washington, D.C. Let's put a plan in place to pay down our debt, and let's get our country back on solid financial footing.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN EFFECTS ON CONSTITUENTS

(Mr. LOWENTHAL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, as I awoke this morning and read my local newspaper, I realized that my dear friend Greg Taylor is lying in a medical bed, mostly paralyzed and barely able to breathe, as he copes with ALS, or Lou Gehrig's disease.

This past December, Greg lost his business. If this is not bad enough, Greg's long-time partner of 28 years, Albert Sanchez, was just furloughed, a member of the Department of Defense. Although he may now return back to work, this stress is unbearable as they both struggle to make house payments. I failed to mention, they also have a 19-year-old son.

Today is the ninth day of this government shutdown. We still must do something to stop this shutdown.

Speaker BOEHNER, the Democrats have compromised by agreeing to your budget numbers. Now it is time for you to compromise by giving us a clean bill to vote for.

Let's stop this nightmare. I urge us to move forward.

□ 1230

IT'S TIME TO STOP PLAYING GAMES

(Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, over 1 week ago, Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID shut down the government rather than have an honest conversation about the problems facing this country.

The House has passed not one, not two, not three, but four separate bills that would have kept the government running, while ensuring basic fairness for all Americans under the President's health care law.

And even after the United States Senate rejected every single one of these bills, still House Republicans asked to simply have a conversation, and the Senate said no.

So here we are. House Republicans are working and will continue to work to fund important government functions like medical research and benefits for our veterans. We hope the Senate and the President will join us in these efforts.

It's time for the President and the Senate to stop playing games at the expense of the American people.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF JOHN DOLAN

(Mr. WELCH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, often people overlook the treasures in their own backyards; and in Vermont, one of our treasures is the Vermont Institute of Natural Science, an institution that has provided environmental education for young Vermonters since the early 1970s. It has provided help through education, research, avian wildlife, and rehabilitation programs.

Thousands of children in New England have grown up with VINS and taken the lessons they've learned about environmental responsibility and sustainability with them into their adult lives.

Sustaining such a mission over the long term requires persistent work and agile leadership. Dolan has succeeded. He served as VINS president for 8 years and retired on October 1.

John led VINS through a transformation that made it more resilient.

He brought renewed focus to the environmental mission of VINS by enhancing the visitors center, expanding the nature camps, and hosting regional events focused on the environment. He created new partnerships, including an expansive research and education program with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Dolan's leadership helped VINS sustain its inspiring mission, and he leaves the institute stronger than when he came. On behalf of all who have benefited from VINS and who continue to enjoy it, I offer John my thanks and best wishes for his future.

Vermonters are proud of this backyard treasure and heartened that VINS is here to stay.

LET'S TONE DOWN THE RHETORIC

(Mr. WEBER of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans continue to call on Senate Democrats and the President to come to the table and negotiate.

Here's one way to start: let's tone down the rhetoric.

Is it proper to refer to someone you don't agree with as a "hostage taker" or as a "legislative arsonist"?

I don't think so. We may disagree on policy, but this kind of rancor will not solve anything.

Let's work together. It can be done. The House just passed a bill which was not just bipartisan but unanimous that guaranteed back pay for Federal workers, and the bill has the support of the Senate and the President. That's encouraging.

Now the Senate should take up the other bipartisan funding bills we passed here in the House to fund things like medical research and veterans benefits.

Let's negotiate. The American people deserve for us to get this government reopened.

I'm RANDY WEBER and I am proud to be an American.

LET'S MAKE D.C. LISTEN

(Mr. HIMES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, when Senator CRUZ took to the Senate floor for 21 hours to explain to the American public why the Congress had to shut down the government and breach the debt ceiling in order to repeal the Affordable Care Act, I listened carefully. One of the themes was, make D.C. listen. Make D.C. listen.

We know, from polling, that 70 percent of Americans oppose shutting down the government to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

But I went, on Monday, to listen to a couple of my constituents, Tamika Younger and Carla Carey, of Bridgeport. These are two young mothers who