

Today is the 15th day the Federal Government has been shut down, the 15th day national parks and memorials have been closed to the American people, the 15th day the NIH, WIC, and Head Start have not had the funding they were counting on.

Today is also 2 days shy of the deadline when America might reach its \$16.7 trillion debt limit. House Republicans, as we have for weeks, will continue to offer bipartisan common ground to reopen government and protect America's credit rating.

More than 70 Senators are on record as opposing ObamaCare's medical device tax. Let's put that tax on hold and reopen government.

It is not very fair that Members of Congress receive special help to pay for ObamaCare that isn't available to others. Let's remove the special treatment and reopen government.

It is not right that the American people are on the hook to provide health care subsidies to individuals whose incomes might not even qualify. Let's demand accountability for taxpayer dollars and reopen government.

Since the shutdown began, bipartisan majorities in the House of Representatives have voted to reopen government services and spare North Carolinians from Washington's dysfunction. We voted to open our parks and memorials because their closures are punitive, and they should never be disrespected by a theater of barricades.

We agree National Institutes of Health clinical trials should continue, so we voted to fund NIH. Similarly, we voted to ensure pay for all veterans and to restore FEMA, the FDA, Head Start, and the WIC program, among others; but most of our proposals to get government functioning again face Senate inaction and White House veto threats.

The our-way-or-the-highway mindset must stop. The challenges we face as a Nation require bipartisan solutions. Both parties need to work together to reopen government and manage our debt.

House Republicans remain committed to responsible, bipartisan solutions to end the shutdown and defend our credit rating. We hope our counterparts in the Senate are as well.

THE GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN'S HUMAN CONSEQUENCES

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

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to again speak about the human consequences of this reckless and irrational government shutdown. We have now reached day 15 of this foolishness.

Each day, I spend time speaking with people from my congressional district who are suffering through this through no fault of their own. Dorothy Lara, from Rockford, Illinois, shared the story of her family's history and their truly deep connection and commitment

to this country. Dating back to the early 1600s, her family has literally given their blood, sweat, and tears for America's freedom and democracy.

Nine generations ago, her family helped build the Mayflower, and not only that, they then helped coordinate its voyage. Her family's ancestors have served in nearly every war in this country—in the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War, both World Wars—and just recently, she welcomed home her son from Iraq.

Dorothy said it better than I ever could myself. She said—and these are her exact words—“All of my forefathers would be ashamed of what has been going on in this country today.” She went on to say, “What happened to a government by the people, for the people?” and then said, “What I want to see is what my forebearers have fought for: equality, job creation, honor, and respect. They are owed that much.”

We have the votes right now—right here—to reopen our government. We can end this madness and go back to governing our country the way we should be governing our country. Dorothy's family and so many other families throughout our country are, indeed, owed that much.

DEFICIT SPENDING AND THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate being recognized for the time, and I appreciate the recognition that this Chamber and my colleagues are putting on the issues before us.

As we look at Federal spending, what we have to do is say: What is causing us to be in a position where we are borrowing \$2 billion a day? And if we are borrowing \$2 billion a day, we have to ask: Is that a sustainable practice and something that we as a Nation can continue? Of course the answer to that is, no, it is not sustainable. Therefore, we have to look at what is causing us to spend more money than we are taking in, and one of the things that is at the top of that list that is too expensive to afford is the ObamaCare program, the Affordable Care Act.

What I would like to do today is focus my comments on what we are seeing from the Affordable Care Act and what has happened with the cost of this program and why it has become too expensive to afford and why we have to talk about it and focus on it and put it on the table as we talk about what our Nation spends.

Now, we all remember supposedly ObamaCare, the Affordable Care Act, was going to be a \$900 billion program, roughly, that was to give access to affordable health insurance for those who didn't have access to health insurance, but let's look at what has happened.

This was the estimate: under a trillion dollars, \$900 billion, when the pro-

gram was passed. But, oh, remember, we had to pass it in order to read it to find out what was in it. After we read it the first time, \$1.4 trillion. My source on this is the Congressional Budget Office, the CBO. Every time it has been reviewed, with some of the nearly 13,000 pages of rules and regulations, guess what has happened? The cost estimate has gone up. Now ObamaCare is a \$2.6 trillion program. So what we are looking at is a near tripling in cost before the program goes into effect. This is why we continue to say, as we look at fiscal health, fiscal restraint, you have to look at what is happening with the cost projections on ObamaCare.

Now, for those of us from my State of Tennessee, this is something that is not new to us. We had the test case for HillaryCare in our State. It is called TennCare. What happened with the TennCare program was it ended up quadrupling in cost in a period of 5 years.

Now, this causes us a little bit of concern because we look at what has happened with the cost of government-managed and -delivered health care services. Well, let's take a look at Medicare and where it was supposed to be in 1968 and then what has happened with its costs. You can look at these lines, the red line.

These are on my Web site for our colleagues that would like to go and look at the Web site.

You can see what happened in 1968, and the red line shows where it has grown to today. For something that was to end up being about \$12 billion a year, we are now spending over \$400 billion a year on. You can see what were to be the projections here on this bottom line, and you see how far it has exceeded its projections. So because of this, we are quite concerned with the growth and the projections of growth for ObamaCare.

Look at the track record of government spending. Do programs generally come in below their estimates? No. They generally exceed those estimates. So we continue to be very concerned about what will happen with the cost of ObamaCare and the impact this is going to have on our \$3.5-trillion-a-year budget, and we continue to say: We have to review this; it is too expensive to afford; and does it fit into what the American taxpayer is willing to pay for?

Because every penny we spend here in Washington, D.C., comes out of the taxpayers' pockets from money that they have earned and then have paid in taxes, sent to Washington, they expect us to be very careful stewards of those dollars.

Before my time expires, Mr. Speaker, I just want to point out one other concern that we have with the exchanges and the way they are going to handle information. Six hundred million dollars to build a computer system that doesn't work and doesn't protect the

identity and the information of enrollees in the health care exchange is another of the problems there that is worthy of discussion of this program.

THE GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN AND HEAD START

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I place a loving picture of a little one and the excitement that comes from a Head Start program to emphasize my story this morning and the discussion I want to raise this morning for a brief amount of time.

All of us have seen those western movies where the train is rushing down the track and coming to a point where the tracks are no more. Black-and-white television, we used to sit on the edge of our seats, wondering what would happen. For the aesthetics of the movie, we would see that train fall into a deep abyss, people screaming out of the window or some takeaway that doesn't see the final crash, or maybe it does.

So as I listen to my friends on the other side this morning, it seems as if I were watching that same movie. Today is October 15, the 15th day of a government shutdown.

Mr. Speaker, we are in crisis, and there are those who are rising to the floor of the House to misrepresent to the American people some discussion about ObamaCare, which is working every day in this Nation. Albeit as Medicare and Medicare part D, we all need to sit down and knuckle down and look at ways that we can make it work better for the American people.

But we are in crisis today, and I think it is important to know that there are thousands of Head Start teachers and Head Start positions for little ones like my good friend here, the son of Marlon. He is Hector, who is not able to be in a Head Start program right now today.

For my friends, let me say that we have reason to be able to engage in a reasonable solution, a responsible solution. Where are they in coming together to make sure that we don't default in the next 24 hours? Maybe I should educate them with a little graph that shows that, in actuality, the debt-to-GNP under President Obama has actually gone down, meaning the debt has gone down.

The sizable increase in the debt was in the past administration, of President Bush, under Afghanistan and Iraq—everyone knows that—with a Republican-dominated Congress, a Republican President, a war that many did not like, but no one saw the Democrats try to shut the government down. Why don't they acknowledge where this original debt has accelerated itself?

So now we want to move forward and invest in American infrastructure, and they are crying about giving Americans affordable health care. Where is the reason?

So our friends in the Senate, Senate Democrats, are leading on a proposal to which many of us yesterday would have said that we wanted a long extension of the debt ceiling.

Mr. Speaker, I have come here to be responsible on behalf of the American people. Let me read one sentence. On November 16, 1983, "Dear Howard." Howard was the majority leader, Howard Baker. "This letter is to ask for your help and support and that of your colleagues on the passage of an increase in the limit on the public debt." Signed, Ronald Reagan.

It is a misrepresentation to suggest that this is a political stunt. Raising the debt ceiling has been done year after year to pay the Nation's bills. While countries like our friends like China are pushing forward by saying maybe you don't need to rely upon America, which the world does because their currency is not flowing in the world cycle, we are watching while Rome is burning. So I am asking my colleagues to be responsible.

First, they could have put the Senate proposal of a short-term CR on the floor days ago, weeks ago. So now we have a proposal that many of us will probably find challenging to vote for, but I am ready to listen; and I am disappointed that our friends are not realizing the devastation that is happening with the government shutdown.

As a member of the House Judiciary Committee, it troubles me to hear that James Comey, the Director of the FBI, has said that he has laid off 3,000 people—3,000 FBI agents who are in the midst of law enforcement for America. What kind of country are we?

Judges—the Federal courts are saying they don't know if they are going to be able to go past October 15.

The greatest insult is the payments that are due the American people on Social Security and veterans' benefits that may be in jeopardy on November 1 if we don't do the work that we are sent here to do.

So I would ask my friends to lower the discord. Let's not wave Confederate flags in front of the White House, something that burns in my heart—individuals that want to divide America. Let's not call the President what is a faith that we should be respecting. Let's not denigrate ourselves by suggesting that our President worships Allah, but it is not denigrating the President as much as it is denigrating millions of Americans who are Muslims. I am outraged that we would raise it to this temperature.

So, Mr. Speaker, all I can say is let us be in the spirit of Abraham Lincoln, who wanted to bring America together, and let us pass a reasonable response to the government shutdown. Let's not be talking about imploding or tearing this country down.

A BATTLE FOR THE ECONOMIC SURVIVAL OF THIS NATION

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

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, you can never satisfy government's appetite for money and land; they always want more. Now we are \$17 trillion in debt and are headed to \$25 trillion in less than a decade under the best case scenario. Those are figures that are humanly incomprehensible; yet our estimates of our future unfunded pension liabilities are much, much higher. They are, probably, at least \$75 trillion or more.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office is the one that has put out these estimates, and they estimated recently that interest on the national debt will quadruple in less than 10 years to an astounding \$857 billion in just 1 year. If we allow that to happen, the Federal Government could then pay only for Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and interest on the debt—nothing for defense, national parks, interstate highways, and so forth. Obviously, future Congresses cannot or would not allow that to happen, so they will then come in with a combination of huge tax increases and a tremendous inflation of the currency.

The fight we are in now is over a lot more than the "Unaffordable Care Act." It is a battle for the economic survival of this Nation. Anyone who wants their Social Security or their Federal or military pensions in order to be able to buy anything—or buy much at all in the very near future—should be demanding much more fiscal conservatism now. We either bite some very painful bullets now or we face much more difficult times in the very near future that will make our present problems look small in comparison. We could end up with problems like Detroit has now, but multiplied all across this Nation.

President Obama, when he was in the Senate, opposed raising the debt ceiling and said we shouldn't do it to our children and our grandchildren; and when we are in this war now over this spending, this battle for the economic survival of our Nation, Mr. Speaker, surely we do not want to ruin the future of our children and our grandchildren.

THE GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN AND POTENTIAL DEFAULT

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

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I rise on this 15th day of the government shutdown, a shutdown which has put hundreds of thousands of Americans out of work, that will have untold damage on what is already a hesitant economic recovery; and I rise as we contemplate the last maybe 24, 36 hours before an event unprecedented in American history: the possibility that, for the first