

had to discontinue overtime, slowing our review of benefit claims. This has led to delays for an average of 1,400 veterans a day.

I say to my colleagues, rather than coddling those who wish to wave a Confederate flag in front of the White House, let us respect veterans whose lives are in cemeteries or whose lives have been recognized by being buried in America's cemeteries. Let us stop the foolishness and put on the floor of the House the reasonable response to opening the government now so that men who are mourning, those who have flags that are truly the American flag, are being respected, not those who wish to be in front of the White House. Open the government now.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN). The time of the gentleman has expired. Members are reminded to heed the gavel.

#### LET'S COME TOGETHER TO RESOLVE THE DEBT

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

Mr. MICA. Here we are, folks, my colleagues, fellow Americans. In just a few days, the United States may not be able to pay its debts. That would be horrible for the country and for leadership as we know it.

Mr. Speaker, how did we get here? The other side—and you are hearing from them—took control of the place. In 4 years, the spending went unchecked. The debt rose from \$9 billion to now \$17 trillion. They are asking for another trillion dollars to continue the spending unchecked to continue the indebtedness.

We can and we should come together to resolve this; but at some point, you have to be responsible as a parent, as a Member of Congress, as citizens to hold the line, to stop the spending, and to put a check on indebtedness to the future.

Barack Obama voted against raising the debt limit when he was a Senator and said that not addressing the debt was a lack of leadership.

#### PUT THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE FIRST

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, the deadline for preventing the United States from defaulting on our debt is growing closer, and the need to act is more critical.

The truth is, Mr. Speaker, we don't know the full extent of the damage that our Nation's economy would suffer.

But here is what we do know: a default would mean higher interest rates for over 278,000 New Yorkers with mortgages, a loss of disability benefits for over 100,000 New York veterans, and the

threat of being unable to pay Social Security and Medicare drug reimbursements to over 3,000 New Yorkers.

Mr. Speaker, the argument by some in this Chamber that defaulting on our debt wouldn't be a big deal is outrageous. Putting the full faith and credit of our Nation—not to mention the strength of the world economy—on the line simply to prove a political point is both reckless and irresponsible. This House must put the best interests of the American people first and avert this disaster so we can get back to rebuilding this economy and nation-building right here at home.

#### DEBT CEILING

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, this madness has got to stop. Yesterday, I heard from a local homeless shelter in Irvington, New Jersey, that is struggling to provide for the overwhelming number of homeless new mothers. These are new mothers who can't feed their babies now that their WIC benefits have been cut off.

Because of the government shutdown, homeless shelters across New Jersey are running low on baby formula, diapers, and the food they need to feed these mothers and their newborn babies. This kind of story is shameful, and it is happening all over New Jersey.

The pain I see in my district is very real, and it could get a whole lot worse. If we choose not to pay our bills on time, 1½ million people in New Jersey may not get their Social Security checks; 50,000 disabled veterans in New Jersey may not get their medical bills paid.

Congress has two simple jobs right now: one, to open the government; and, two, to pay our bills on time.

These are nonnegotiable. The Republican Tea Party shouldn't hold this country hostage.

Let's get to fixing America's problems again instead of creating them.

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#### BAN THE BOMB

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, it is incomprehensible to reasonable men and women everywhere that our colleagues across the aisle are threatening to nuke the American economy by refusing to raise the debt ceiling unless their demands are met. This is irresponsible and reckless behavior. "Nuke" is the right word to use here. As Warren Buffett noted recently, even the threat of default should be likened to nuclear weapons too terrible to ever use.

Allowing the U.S. to default on its obligations, whether it be an interest

payment on a Treasury bond, a check due to a Social Security recipient, or money due to a Federal contractor so they can pay their workers, would have a cataclysmic effect on our economy and would be felt around the world. It would be a mistake that would impoverish a generation and haunt us for a decade, and there could be no second opportunity to get it right.

Anyone who dismisses how great a disaster a default would be should not be taken seriously. They should not be listened to or given a seat at the table where responsible decisions are made. Let's open up the government now.

#### TIME FOR SOLUTIONS

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

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, America simply has a spending problem. That much is clear. Our national debt stands at nearly \$17 trillion; \$17 trillion. Let that number sink in for a moment.

Is it that kind of legacy that we want to pass on to our children and grandchildren?

This year alone our national deficit is projected to be around \$700 billion, and that is despite the President's \$600 billion tax increase this year. In fact, the government is going to collect more revenue this year than it has ever taken in before. How much sense does that make?

What is being done to address the real driver of our debt—runaway Washington spending? House Republicans want commonsense spending cuts and reforms. We want everyone treated fairly under ObamaCare, no special treatment, especially for big corporations or for Members of Congress. We want a secure economic future for all Americans. It is time to act. It is time for real solutions.

#### TRANSPORTATION SAFETY ISSUES

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as a senior Texan on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I am very concerned about the transportation safety issues created by the Republican government shutdown. For example, aviation safety is in peril as the Federal Aviation Administration has furloughed approximately 1,700 safety inspectors and drastically limited aircraft maintenance. These types of safety risks created by the Republican government shutdown are intolerable.

Further, the National Transportation Safety Board has been forced to furlough more than 90 percent of its staff. As a result, it has not been able to continue investigating deadly transportation incidents nor initiate new investigations of accidents that have occurred since the Republican government shutdown began.

Mr. Speaker, the political games being played by the Republican leadership are causing serious harm to transportation safety for all Americans, and it is totally unacceptable. We do have a spending problem created by the two Republican wars.

#### GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

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

Mr. LAMALFA Mr. Speaker, over the weekend, many of us were still stuck in Washington, waiting for a resolution, but one of the highlights was the opportunity to be with our veterans as we helped them to gain entrance to their national monuments, their memorials, here in Washington, D.C. It is just sad that they even have to wonder if they are breaking the law or need assistance to get into open air monuments and memorials that are theirs.

It is even sadder to hear the rhetoric on this floor today that all that would be boiled down and impugned to one guy at random bringing a flag that some people don't like.

Why don't we talk about those veterans and the great service they have made for this country and about the meanness of the Park Service's arbitrarily renting barriers to shut them out. Why aren't we talking about that as much? This shutdown situation is made much worse by the attitude of those in the White House—by exerting pain on people, by shutting down the things they do care about in order to play this political game.

So this isn't a Republican House shutdown. This is a U.S. Senate shutdown as we have sent, time after time, bill after bill over there. Let's get together and get this done right for the people in California, including for the students I met with from Lyman Gilmore Middle School, who are here with us today.

#### IMPACT OF SHUTDOWN ON EVERYDAY LIVES

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

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, it pains me to see the shutdown's impact on everyday lives. While ordering coffee the other day, I asked Diona, the hardworking woman behind the counter, how she was doing that day. She confided that she had been up all night taking care of her 3-year-old son, who was suffering from stomach pains. She was exhausted. She wanted to buy the Lactaid milk that settles her boy's stomach, but because of the shutdown, her WIC office was not open. Her WIC card was out of money, and she was a long way from payday.

There are probably tens of thousands of Dionas out there—women working hard and worried about their kids and not sure how they will make ends

meet. The media may be focusing on the rancor, the talking points of politics, but this shutdown is really about a little boy with stomach pains and a mother who cannot afford to give him relief. The Women, Infants, and Children program helps low-income women buy formula and other healthy foods, and it is one of our most successful nutrition programs. It is just one of the shutdown's many casualties.

Let us end this shutdown right now. Let us vote on a clean bill to fund the whole government. Let us restore vital problems like WIC, and let us stop this lunacy and get back to work for the American people.

#### REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, the Republican shutdown of government and their move to default on our debt are like forcing the wrong medicine on a sick patient—you might get them to take it, but it could kill them.

The only way America can pay back our Nation's debt is through economic growth and job creation, not bad medicine.

Let's not forget that we are still digging our way out from the Wall Street-induced Great Recession. Where did the \$17 trillion of national debt come from? The Wall Street recession cost American households \$19.2 trillion in lost wealth and the country 8.8 million jobs.

Under President Obama, we have had 42 consecutive months of job growth, leading to 7.5 million jobs being created, unlike in the Bush years when there wasn't a single job created. In fact, we lost over a half a million jobs. In the last 12 months of the Bush years, the country lost 4.6 million jobs. Let's not forget that America has accumulated an \$8.4 trillion trade deficit since 1975 and that we have racked up \$4 trillion in unpaid-for war spending.

So what is the Republican solution? Shut down the government. Don't pay the bills. The latest idea is to govern by supercommittee.

Mr. Speaker, we need to restore regular order, to move bills, to create jobs, and keep America's promises to our debtors. Let's nurse our Nation back to health, and stop continuing the economic pain with bad medicine.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired. Members are reminded to please heed the gavel.

#### RECKLESS GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN MUST END

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

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, it is time for us to come together. This reckless government shutdown must end.

Southern Arizonans and Americans all across our country are hurting, and our economy has been seriously harmed. The Senate is working on a bipartisan solution to reopen the government and to avoid putting America into default. I am very hopeful that we can find a reasonable and responsible plan and immediately bring it to the House floor for a vote.

Mr. Speaker, we must end this blame game. We must put the American people first. Let us come together and act responsibly now. Let this government shutdown end, and let us ensure that we pay our bills now. It is important, and the American people are calling on us to act, to act now.

#### END GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, Republicans have again recklessly threatened America's future by allowing the Nation, already in a Republican shutdown, to default on its debt unless the Congress votes to stop ObamaCare. The government has been shut down for 2 weeks, and the United States will default on its debt in 2 days. All respected economists say a default means devastating and definitely unnecessary damage to our economy and to the global marketplace. Yet Republicans radically and irresponsibly push us toward the precipice of default. Their disconnect from financial reality is certainly breathtaking. Their actions are reckless, radical, and irresponsible.

Mr. Speaker, there is power in numbers. If reasonable Republicans would stand up to their radical right wing, we could end this shutdown and avoid a default today.

#### A LETTER FROM A CONSTITUENT

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, a recent letter I received:

I am writing this letter in regards to the new "affordable" healthcare. My husband and I are small business owners with two other employees. We purchase our insurance as individual insurance, and we received a letter this past week that our rates are changing. We currently have a \$5,000 deductible with a monthly premium of \$415, and on the new plan, if we stay with the current company, it is going to be \$4,000 with a monthly premium of \$1,093.78. I have tried to access the [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov) Web site, and have been able to register an account but have not been able to get any type of pricing. I have contacted both of my Illinois Senators and my House Representative and have been told that they are not in favor of a government shutdown, but I am here to say if a shutdown is what it takes to get people to listen, then shut down. The reason I am contacting you is because my Congressmen are not willing to stand up to the President, and I just want to say good job for standing your ground.