

for children and seniors who want to have a meal.

With that, Mr. Speaker, in closing, I honor the 241 who died by saying I ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform, to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform. And Dear God, I ask You to continue to bless America.

LET'S WORK TOGETHER

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I don't think it is news to my friends on the Republican side of the aisle that you don't win every battle around here. The place is tough, and occasionally you get knocked down. The measure of a man or woman in Congress, or anyplace for that matter, is what do you after.

We all witnessed a political showdown over the past several weeks, and now it is time to put it behind us. I challenge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to step up and show the country what you are made of, and let us actually legislate on behalf of the American people.

I have heard a lot of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle say things like, We don't trust that President; we can't work with this President.

So, Mr. Speaker, does this apply to everything?

Will there be no legislation until there is a different President in 2017?

Well, that doesn't sound very realistic.

On my side of the aisle, they are already saying, oh, those Republicans, they are hard-liners; they will not compromise on anything. And when someone does reach across the aisle to say, hey, let's work on an issue together, what do we get?

Hey, why are you helping them?

I have heard it. When I stood with DAVID VALADAO in California, or PAUL RYAN in Chicago to say immigration reform is an objective we can reach in a bipartisan manner, I heard from the Democrats: stop working with them, we're trying to defeat them. We want to take the House back.

Look, I get it. There are millions of dollars to be raised by partisan bickering. Your side raised a ton of money off the past battle, and my side has too.

The fact is that if two of us get into a shouting match, it is news; and if it gets bad, it will be shown on every channel. But if two of us reach an agreement on something, it's not news.

You know, bipartisanship is something that is much lauded here, but it is infrequently applauded and rarely rewarded.

But here is the thing. The only way we actually get anything done is to put aside the shouting matches and work together. I want immigration reform to pass; and even though I think almost every single Democrat agrees with me,

it is still not enough because there are only 201 of us.

We don't run the Rules Committee or set the agenda. The Republicans are the majority in the House, so I know I have to work with the other side.

On your side, you say you don't like what the Senate passed. Let's not just respond with nothing. Let's craft a House response and put our own proposal on the table.

Those on the other side of the aisle say they don't trust the President and can't work with him. Well, okay. Fine. Then work with your colleagues on this side of the aisle.

You know, there are 435 of us. We need 218 votes to pass a bill, and the President doesn't get a vote.

The truth is that even during the shutdown, many on your side of the aisle have been drafting proposals that many of us on this side of the aisle are willing to work with you on. The question is whether the work on a bipartisan basis will be allowed to flourish.

I want to spend the rest of this Congress working with whoever wants to join, in either party, to get immigration reform done.

Your side needs a little time to recover from the last fight? I get that. But with 1,100 deportations every day, we can't wait forever. The kids who are losing their moms are not going to wait for you or for me. The husbands and the fathers who die in the desert because their wives and kids live here don't have any more time to give.

But you probably ask, LUIS, after the battle over health care and budget, how can two parties ever work together?

But, you know, that is exactly what I thought in 1996: How can we work together?

I was here 17 years ago. In 1996, it was Speaker Gingrich who shut down the government. But after that, let's remember what happened. We passed a series of major bipartisan bills on difficult policy issues.

Welfare reform was crafted, in part, by a very conservative House, and signed by a very liberal President Clinton. He had vetoed the bill twice before but, after the shutdown, reached an agreement with the Republican majority.

The Kennedy-Kassenbaum bill was historic, bipartisan legislation on health care, and we passed it after the shutdown. We can do the same if politicians in both parties are committed to accomplishments over campaign talking points. We can pass immigration reform this year.

We all know that immigration reform is immensely popular with voters in both parties who want a political solution to fixing our broken immigration system. Diverse constituencies back immigration reform, like labor unions and business owners and evangelical leaders and Catholic bishops and leaders across the political spectrum.

Don't think of it as working with President Obama if it makes it easier

for you. Think of it as doing your job. Think of it as working on behalf of the American people, not for an Obama solution, not for a Tea Party solution, but for an American solution.

POLITICAL DOUBLE STANDARD AT WORK

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

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, if you missed this past Sunday morning TV talking heads shows, you missed the political double standard at work. Time and again, the hosts of the aforesaid programs referred to the recent "Republican government shutdown."

Wait a minute. Republican government shutdown?

There were two advocacy groups to this affair: one, President Obama and the Democratic administration and, two, the Republicans.

So it appears to me, Mr. Speaker, that a more accurate description would be the Republicans, President Obama and the Democrat administration and the government shutdown.

The Republicans, in spite of the President's adamant refusal to negotiate, requested a 1-year delay for the controversial health care proposal. The President rejected that proposal but, considering the reviews surrounding his health care proposal, which are, at best, dismal, it was an offer the President should have embraced.

All of us, in and out of the political arena, should dismiss the application of the double standard that oftentimes is used in this town, and we should encourage objectivity to prevail over subjectivity; and, in so doing, our country will become the beneficiary of good government, of fair government. Good government finally will be promoted in the end, and we will all benefit therefrom.

THE NATIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today the House begins consideration of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act, which includes in the title the word "reform" but would represent a huge step backwards.

This legislation would have significant impact on the way the Army Corps of Engineers conducts projects that are critical to the Nation's environmental and economic health. I have long worked to help the Corps be a better partner which, in times past, has proved troublesome.

It was my pleasure to work with the head of the Corps previously, General Robert Flowers, and his staff to change the way the Corps does business. Otherwise, we can waste a lot of money and

inflict unnecessary environmental damage.

One of the ways the Corps meets its environmental responsibilities is by compliance with the National and Environmental Policy Act, NEPA, signed into law on New Year's Day in 1970 by President Richard Nixon.

Earlier this year, Glen Bowman, an official with the Georgia Department of Transportation, shared with Georgia legislators President Nixon's observation that clean air, clean water, open space should be the birthright of every American. Through our years of past carelessness, we have incurred a debt to nature that is now being called.

Mr. Bowman told the legislators that 43 years later the price tag is even higher, some problems remain, and daunting challenges loom, but that NEPA's impact is unquestionable. It remains the Nation's guiding environmental star.

He observes that environmental needs and protecting the environment are not mutually exclusive, and it is important to work together to achieve those objectives.

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Sadly, for me, the most critical element in a bill that I would like to support is the damage to the NEPA process. Placing an artificial time limit of 150 days, restricting the internal activities of the agencies, giving them limited time to move the process along, interfering with the chain of command, cutting out the public from the process, and forcing a shorter time for litigation is unnecessary. It is ill-advised, and it is not going to solve the problem. Project delays are not a result of the NEPA process. There are billions of dollars of projects that are already approved and ready to go—\$60 billion by some estimates. The problem is that Congress has not adequately funded the Corps.

I will be offering an amendment with the gentleman from Oregon, Congressman DEFazio, that simply suspends this ill-advised amendment to NEPA, seriously compromising it and the public process, until the project backlog disappears in order to move forward with the already approved projects. Ironically, this bill would add to the backlog while it truncates the NEPA process.

NEPA protects community values. It can often result in alternatives that are even less costly as well as less damaging to the environment. Before we rush to implement ill-advised changes under the guise of reform, let's get rid of the backlog of already approved projects first and be able to work through the consequences.

Forcing more projects that will be ill-considered will make them less worthy of funding. For agencies that are chronically underfunded and are facing further budget cuts, imposing artificial time limits on an already overwhelming backlog is not a prescription for more development projects being

completed and better performance. It is a prescription for sloppy work, ill-advised approvals, and more litigation when we should be concentrating on getting the job done. It will make it harder to serve the public and get the financial support to build vital projects.

I urge my colleagues to support the DeFazio-Blumenauer amendment to reduce the backlog of projects ready to go before complicating and weakening environmental protections and the public's right to participate.

I now would like to enter into the RECORD the comments of Mr. Glenn Bowman from the Georgia Department of Transportation.

NEPA IS THE GUIDE STAR

(By Glenn Bowman)

Shortly after signing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) into law on New Year's Day in 1970, President Richard Nixon discussed it in his State of the Union Address:

"The great question . . . is shall we make peace with nature and begin to make reparations for the damage we have done to our air, our land and our water? . . . Clean air, clean water, open spaces—these should once again be the birthright of every American. . . . The price tag is high. Through our years of past carelessness, we have incurred a debt to nature. Now that debt is being called."

Now, 43 years later, that price tag is even higher. Some old problems remain, and daunting new challenges loom. Still, NEPA's impact is unquestionable; it remains the nation's environmental guide star.

At Georgia's Department of Transportation—the entity responsible for more earth work in this state than any other—NEPA has a huge impact on planning, designing and building transportation infrastructure. Virtually everything we do begins with "complying with the NEPA process."

We must:

Protect water quality, air quality, endangered plant and animal species and their habitats, migratory birds, wetlands, streams, rivers, harbors, flood plains, farmlands and the soil itself;

Preserve historic and culturally significant buildings and places;

Save archaeologically significant resources;

Guard against noise pollution;

Make certain native peoples and the disadvantaged are treated equitably;

Mitigate for unavoidable impacts, and always engage the public in our decision-making process.

This requires a considerable investment in time, staff and money. Making a project NEPA-compliant sometimes requires re-routing; re-locating cemeteries and historic structures; and archaeological "digs" to recover important artifacts. We create or improve wetlands and streams to mitigate for like areas that need to be altered. We work with affected residents to help offset impacts to their neighborhoods and lives.

Recently, the need to study areas of North Georgia for the presence of the endangered Indiana and gray bats has garnered attention. Such examination simply is part of a process we are required by law to undertake for numerous plant and animal species, be they cuddly or creepy.

With as many as 700 projects ongoing at any time, not everyone is always going to be satisfied. But our foremost mission is to help make those 700 projects realities; keep motorists safe and moving, and grow that network as Georgia grows.

Meeting our transportation needs and protecting our environment are not mutually exclusive objectives; doing both does not have to be a contentious, adversarial struggle. Working together—internally, with partner agencies, businesses, local governments and citizens—we can repay our debt to nature, have a world-class transportation system, and preserve the beauty and many wonders of Georgia for generations to come.

AMERICA'S OUT-OF-CONTROL SPENDING

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

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, in just a few short months, we will again find ourselves debating how to not shut down the Federal Government. Our Nation's fiscal woes are not temporary. In fact, they have plagued us for many years, and we have got to stop trying to solve these problems with temporary solutions.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, we are now \$17 trillion in debt, and our government continues to spend and spend and spend. Last Thursday, our Nation's debt jumped \$328 billion in just 1 day. This surpassed the previous high set 2 years ago by over \$100 billion. It is time Congress breaks this pattern. We do not want to be a Nation drowning in debt but, rather, one of economic leadership throughout the world, pro-growth policies.

Mr. Speaker, we simply cannot borrow 40 cents of every dollar we spend. It is simply not the way to run a government, a business, or a family budget. Yet the Federal Government continues to borrow without addressing what got us here in the first place, which is out-of-control spending.

Mr. Speaker, the deal agreed to last week didn't do a single thing to cut spending or tackle the real drivers of our debt; and if we do not change this, we will never get ourselves out of the fiscal rut but, instead, find ourselves repeating history over and over and over again, governing and spending by continuing resolutions. Rather than passing temporary spending bills and short-term extensions to the debt ceiling, we should be working to pass all 12 appropriation bills and a real budget. This doesn't need to be a deal at the eleventh hour. If we go through a regular budgetary process, we will most certainly find areas to eliminate wasteful spending, shore up entitlement spending, and achieve comprehensive tax reform.

Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government is already spending too much, and ObamaCare will only make things worse. It is estimated that ObamaCare will increase taxes over \$1 trillion and add \$6 trillion to the deficit. Putting aside the countless policy issues associated with ObamaCare, the law, from a purely numerical economic standpoint, is a prime example of out-of-control spending. Overall, ObamaCare is expected to increase health care spending