

can also abuse that awesome power. And it seems like the bigger the banks are the more they abuse that power. Let me relate a vivid example:

It was over 5 years ago that America was hit with the great Wall Street-induced recession. Five years later, those banks are still paying our people—their customers—almost nothing if customers have deposits or certificates of deposit with those institutions. That is harming seniors across this country. That is harming people who are trying to make a go of it. It is harming investors. Meanwhile, banks continue to post huge profits, especially the very biggest ones that are market controllers—for example, JPMorgan Chase, just in the last year, took \$21 billion in profit; Wells Fargo, \$19 billion; Goldman Sachs, \$7.5 billion in profits; Citigroup, \$7.5 billion; Bank of America, \$4 billion—while Americans continue to struggle to make ends meet and recuperate from that Great Recession.

Now, it has been reported this week that JPMorgan Chase will agree to a \$13 billion settlement of the civil suit filed by the United States Department of Justice and the Federal Housing Finance Agency in order to resolve several investigations into their fraudulent mortgage securities business. One question I have with that \$13 billion: Are they actually going to pay it, or is JPMorgan Chase going to use it as a deduction on their taxes as a business expense or some other tax dodge that their accountants and lawyers figure out?

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From September 7, 2005, through September 19, 2007, JPMorgan and its affiliates knowingly misrepresented the value and quality of their mortgage bonds that it sold to the Federal Housing Finance Agency. The result of their actions are reverberating still throughout our economy, as foreclosure rates in places like Ohio continue to go up. They are still above the national average. In August, foreclosure starts in Ohio were up 44 percent from the previous month, for a total that month of 9,542 foreclosure filings. Tens of thousands of people are being affected from coast to coast.

Minority neighborhoods were especially harmed by the financial crisis. A report by the Urban Institute estimates the loss of home equity in African American households as a result of the foreclosure crisis is at \$194 billion. All the wealth that was accumulated since World War II vaporized. They were hit very hard.

Hispanic communities lost \$177 billion in home equity during the same time period. Awesome.

Although a settlement has been reached in this particular case, this should not be the end of the investigation into Wall Street banks because JPMorgan and their brethren have proven to be repeat offenders. Criminal charges should be pursued, not just civil.

This settlement is just one of many recent penalties that JP has had to pay. In June 2011, JPMorgan had to pay \$153 million in penalties to the Securities and Exchange Commission for misleading investors about a collateralized debt obligation. In August 2012, the bank had to pay \$1.2 billion for what it had done to conspire with VISA and MasterCard to set the price of credit card and debit interchange fees.

In July of this year, JPMorgan had to pay \$410 million in penalties and repayments to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for revealing that the bank had been manipulating the California and Midwest electricity markets from September 2010 to November 2012. JPMorgan Chase had to pay a \$100 million fine for reckless conduct and market manipulation in connection with its 2012 London Whale trading scandal.

The question I have: Can they deduct any of these penalties from the taxes they pay, or are they really paying back in full those penalties to the government of the United States free and clear to pay back the American people for their criminal behavior?

In the past 3 years, JPMorgan has posted year-after-year record profits, driven by their stock prices. Last year, the firm made \$21.3 billion. Therefore, with this recent settlement, it would be about only half of their most recent profits. For a frame of reference, there are only seven Dow Jones Industrial Average companies that made more than \$13 billion profits last year.

We can say to ourselves, Would these fines, if they were really paid, do any harm to JPMorgan? Think about this. They have \$87 billion in reserves and their total assets are valued, by their own accounts, at over \$2.25 trillion. That is a “wow,” by any account.

The result of all of this misbehavior is many Americans have lost all of their accumulated equity.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to restore prudent banking. I ask my colleagues to sign on to H.R. 129, the Return To Prudent Banking Act of 2013. Let's restore the Glass-Steagall Act and the value of our money.

BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, for months, President Obama promised he would initiate long-overdue negotiations on issues from health care to tax and regulatory reform, all factors holding back economic growth. But he linked this pledge to Congress reopening the government and raising the debt limit.

His promise to address the critical drivers of our economy is why last week I voted to end the budget impasse and tentatively agree to cooperate with the President. With the government reopened, it is time for those

promises that he made to be upheld and for negotiations to begin.

Our economy is still way too weak. Let's look at the facts:

Ninety-seven percent of all the jobs created in America this past year have been part time;

Millions of our workers are seeing their hours cut;

Participation in the workforce is at an all-time low the last 35 years, with 90 million adults sitting on the sidelines.

Our neighbors and our friends are struggling and are uncomfortable about their future. Our latest college graduates can't find jobs, and millions more of our country's youth have quit searching for employment. It is time to reduce the uncertainty and help these families.

The House has already passed dozens of bills to help grow the economy, including tax reform, limiting excessive regulations, debt reduction, and yes, reforming ObamaCare.

The President has repeatedly said he is willing to negotiate on all of these economic issues. As recently as October 3, he stated:

I'm happy to negotiate with you on anything. I don't think any one party has a monopoly on wisdom.

Then, on October 8, the President said:

Serious negotiations could proceed around every item in the budget.

He then went on to say that negotiation would not be limited just to the budget. He said:

I will sit down and work with anyone of any party, not only to talk about the budget . . . about ways to improve the health care system . . . and about ways that we can shrink our long-term deficits.

Congress has now upheld its end of the bargain. The American people can now judge whether the President will uphold his.

In the next 90 days, let's demonstrate that Congress can indeed work in a bipartisan fashion and tackle our most serious problems now: a weak economy, a growing national debt, and a health care law that isn't ready for implementation.

It is important to note that the House took steps necessary to initiate negotiation. Therefore, in fairness, the President and the Senate need to come to the table. History will record whether the President fulfills his repeated pledges and addresses these barriers to America's economic exceptionalism.

Last week, many of us in the Chamber extended a hand of bipartisan cooperation to the President. But as President Reagan once said:

Trust, but verify.

WATER RESOURCES REFORM AND DEVELOPMENT ACT

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

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about an important provision that I worked hard on with a bipartisan group of Illinois Senators and

House Members to have included in the new Water Resources Reform and Development Act. This bill, also known as WRRDA, is a vital piece of legislation that Congress will consider later today.

Our provision would help improve the Nation's water infrastructure, including the aging locks and dams along the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers, through public-private partnerships that would expedite projects and save taxpayers money. It comes from a House and Senate, Democrat and Republican bill called the Water Infrastructure Now Public Private-Partnership Act.

I was proud to introduce this bill earlier this year with Senators Durbin and Kirk and Representative RODNEY DAVIS, all proudly of Illinois. Our provision would help clear a \$60 billion backlog in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects that will take decades to complete without outside investment. It does this by creating a pilot program to explore agreements between the Army Corps of Engineers and private entities as alternatives to traditional financing, planning, design, and construction models.

The Mississippi and Illinois Rivers are absolutely critical to the economic well-being of my region in Illinois, the entire Midwest, and the United States and the world. These locks and dams were built during the administration of Franklin Roosevelt and are now close to 80 years old. This is why action must be taken to expand and modernize the locks and dams that help transport our goods and products worldwide.

By encouraging public-private partnerships, our bipartisan effort will help make the movement of the high-quality goods of our region, whether they be from any of the numerous farmers and manufacturers that call Illinois home, more swift, efficient, and safe.

To put this in perspective, the Mississippi River is the world's largest navigable inland waterway. Just on the Mississippi River alone, 60 percent—well over half—of the Nation's agricultural goods are transported. It is absolutely critical to American commerce and the smooth movement of goods that this is made as efficient as possible.

Our bill fits perfectly into that equation, and it is good for the taxpayer, the farmer, and industry. I am very proud of that.

In addition to our efforts to improve our Nation's locks and dams, the Water Resources Reform and Development Act also contains many provisions that will boost local economies across our country. The WRRDA bill will lead to upgraded water transportation systems and offer vulnerable communities better protection against flooding, which is very important to the region that I represent. It will promote America's competitiveness, prosperity, and economic growth for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I came to Congress to work with those I don't always agree with and who don't always agree with me, but as a way to find commonsense,

reasonable solutions to create jobs and lay the foundation for a stronger middle class.

I was proud that the WRRDA bill passed out of the House Transportation Committee on a bipartisan, unanimous basis. I give a great deal of credit to Transportation Committee Chairman BILL SHUSTER, Ranking Member NICK RAHALL, Subcommittee Chairman BOB GIBBS, Subcommittee Ranking Member TIM BISHOP, and all of my colleagues on the committee for their hard work over the last year. It is truly an example of congressional Republicans and Democrats working together, and I hope it is something that we will see a lot more of.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this important job-creating bill when it comes to the floor later today.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: THE BATTLE RESUMES IN 2014

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

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, Benjamin Franklin once advised:

When you run in debt, you give to another power over your liberty.

Washington is in an epic political battle that controls America's destiny for decades to come. The fight is between those who are financially responsible and have the understanding and backbone needed to prevent an American bankruptcy, and those who do not.

Last week, mainstream news media pundits declared a great win for Democrats and President Obama when the Federal Government reopened and the debt ceiling was raised. To the contrary, and for reasons I will explain, last week was a major loss for the American people.

America's economy suffers from a \$17 trillion debt—the worse in history—and 5 years of deficits averaging more than a trillion dollars per year. Again, the worst in history.

During the past 5 years, the Federal Government borrowed 30 percent of its spending. How many families and businesses can avoid bankruptcy if, year after year, 30 percent of their spending is borrowed money? Not many, and not for long. Yet that is exactly what our country, America, is doing.

Economic principles don't care if you are a family, a business, or a country. If you borrow more money than you can pay back, you go bankrupt.

Mr. Speaker, America has been warned.

President Obama's Comptroller General Dodaro warns America's finances are on an "unsustainable path." Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen warns that our greatest national security threat is not Iran, al Qaeda, China, or Russia; it is our debt burden that undermines our ability to pay for America's national defense and thus risks our national security.

Detroit and Stockton bankruptcies mean retirees may lose their pensions. Greece, another debtor nation, has a 27 percent unemployment rate—worse than any year in America's Great Depression.

There are good and bad ways to fund the Federal Government and raise the debt ceiling. Last week, Washington chose the worst way by not fixing the underlying problems: deficits and debt. Instead, Washington again kicked the can down the road, forcing America to revisit government funding issues in January and the debt ceiling issues in February, with one major difference: America will be financially weaker and less able to face the problem because we will be burdened by another half-trillion dollars in debt.

Mr. Speaker, another half-trillion dollars in debt. I wonder why you didn't hear that from the media pundits.

What did America get for another half-trillion dollars in debt? Not one penny in spending cuts, not a single economic policy that creates jobs and grows our economy, and nothing that fixes our deficit and debt problem.

□ 1045

What Washington did last week is akin to a sick patient going to the emergency room and getting pain-killing drugs that help the patient feel good, yet do nothing to cure the disease that ultimately kills the patient. In the real world, that is medical malpractice. Similarly, Washington's refusal last week to cure our deficit and debt disease was governing malpractice.

Mr. Speaker, America enjoys prosperity today because past generations sacrificed to make us who we are. We have the same obligation to our descendants.

President George Washington once advised Congress:

No pecuniary consideration is more urgent than the regular redemption and discharge of the public debt. On none can delay be more injurious.

George Washington gave prudent advice in 1793. It is prudent advice now. Washington must cut out-of-control spending and balance the budget before America's debt burden spirals out of control and is so great that we cannot recover. Failure risks a bankruptcy that will destroy the America it took our ancestors generations—centuries—to build.

Mr. Speaker, the fight for America resumes in January on properly funding the government and in February on properly raising the debt ceiling. Ours is a fight America must win. Congress and the White House must rise to the challenge and be financially responsible when funding the government and raising the debt ceiling. America's future as a great Nation and a world power depends on it.