

our philosophy of military compensation, benefits, and the size of the force to come to grips with the cost of an all-volunteer Army.

Of course, at a minimum, we should also dramatically reduce and shift resources away from the vast nuclear weapons stockpile and the three redundant delivery systems which we haven't used in 68 years and probably never will. We have 10 times more nuclear firepower than we need for deterrence. It is past time to scale down that archaic symbol of the Cold War and save hundreds of billions of dollars at no risk to American security.

It is time for Congress and the administration to work meaningfully for agriculture reform to give more support for America's farmers and ranchers at a fraction of the cost. We should reform the outrageous, inefficient, and unproductive crop insurance program. We should restore investments in nutrition, conservation, research, and marketing that will make a difference for most farmers and ranchers, improve long-term productivity, and support value-added agriculture. This saves money in the long run and doesn't distort our trade position or make Americans unhealthy.

By all means, we must reform our Tax Code, but reform is not likely to raise anything near what a growing and aging America is going to need.

Yes, close more of the egregious loopholes, but we need another broad-based source of revenue. A carbon tax would fit the bill, help reduce the deficit, and help us protect the planet from increasingly catastrophic weather events and the budget-busting disaster relief that inevitably follows.

We should, for the first time in 20 years, increase the gas tax, as recommended by the Simpson-Bowles report, a user fee that will help enable us to provide more support for transportation, put more people to work rebuilding and renewing America.

We might take a lesson from the history and our failed 14-year effort to prohibit alcohol, where the government spent a fortune in a fruitless effort to enforce prohibition, lost a fortune in revenue, and made a fortune for the Mafia, the underworld cartels of the 1920s, that haunts us to this day.

□ 1210

We ought to treat marijuana like we treat alcohol: the Federal Government regulates and taxes while the States decide what they want to do to legalize for medical or recreational use. Given what's already happened in 23 States and the District of Columbia, let's save money on enforcement, raise revenue from taxation, and invest in drug treatment and efforts to keep drugs out of the hands of children.

Let's take a break from the endless debates that are basically beside the point. Let's commit to doing business differently with health care, the military, enact broad-based taxes to both raise money and fix a broken Tax Code,

stop cheating the majority of farmers and ranchers and the environment.

This is not rocket science. We could start now if people address the big issues in a thoughtful way. Even when some of the measures may be controversial or hard, it's a whole lot better than doing stupid things that alienate everybody.

#### THE PARADOX OF HUNGER AND OBESITY

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, in our efforts to end hunger now, it is important to look at all aspects of hunger. Today, I want to talk about hunger and obesity and to highlight the unfortunate paradox between these two conditions.

How can an obese person also be food insecure? To put it bluntly, how can an overweight person be hungry? The question may be simple, but the answer is not. Unfortunately, this link is all too prevalent among millions of low- and middle-income people.

The simple truth is that hunger exists because people do not have enough money to buy enough healthy food, but obesity is more complex. Just because someone has enough money to buy food doesn't mean they have the resources to buy nutritious food. Ultimately, this is a problem of poverty in America.

The families who struggle with hunger not only struggle to put food on their tables, they struggle to make the food they can afford on a few dollars a day as nutritious as possible. For a variety of reasons, even well-to-do families are finding it more difficult today to prepare nutritious meals. A big part has to do with the amount of widely available, inexpensive, nonnutritious food—high-calorie, high-fat, low-nutrient food—and part of that has to do with the time constraints on families today.

But it is even more difficult for low-income, food-insecure families because they generally don't have access to full-service grocery stores. The local stores they do have access to, for the most part, do not sell fresh produce, and the fresh produce they do sell is expensive. So in order to stretch their food dollar, these families buy high-calorie, low-nutrient food that is more affordable.

Obesity, like hunger, is often a function of poverty, and low-income families are especially vulnerable to obesity because of the additional risk factors associated with poverty. When taken together, these risk factors make it easy to see how obesity and hunger are related.

There are at least four general risk factors for obesity that are associated with poverty:

First, low-income neighborhoods are underserved by full-service supermarkets. In inner cities, food is most

readily available at small neighborhood convenience stores where fresh produce and lower-fat food items are most limited. In rural areas, full-service grocery stores are many miles away. This is commonly referred to as a food desert, something that can exist in both urban and rural areas;

Second, when healthy food is available, it is oftentimes more expensive than less healthy options. Low-income families must stretch their budgets in ways that make it difficult to purchase higher priced, more nutritious food items. This means that these families are forced to buy cheaper, high-calorie, high-fat, high-sodium food that lasts longer just so they can make their food budgets stretch through the month;

Third, there are fewer opportunities for physical activity in neighborhoods and schools. Safe open space can be difficult to find in many of our neighborhoods where lower income families live, sometimes because of lack of parks and other times because of higher crime rates;

Fourth, high levels of stress and limited access to health care can contribute to weight gain. Hunger is truly a health issue, and it is important to note that stress and lack of access to quality health care can trigger physiological responses that contribute to obesity.

Mr. Speaker, I remind people that food is medicine. My grandmother used to say "an apple a day keeps the doctor away." It used to annoy me, but she was right. We missed an opportunity during the Affordable Care Act to address the issues of hunger and nutrition. We must do so now.

Adequate access to good, nutritious foods can help lower the instances of diabetes and heart disease. That will improve the quality of life for people, but it will also save us money from avoidable health care issues. Hunger costs us dearly, and the cost to fix and solve the problem is cheaper than the status quo.

So to all my colleagues who believe that the only problem we face is the budget deficit, I urge you to join us in this effort to end hunger now. It is fiscally the right thing to do, and it is our moral obligation.

Hunger and obesity are two sides of the same coin. Yes, we have excellent antihunger safety net programs like SNAP and the school meal programs that help reduce incidences of hunger in America; yes, the First Lady's Let's Move campaign is working to address obesity in America, primarily among children; but we must do more to address these two issues together. Because of all of these factors, it is clear that we simply cannot address hunger or obesity. We must address both of these issues at the same time if we are going to end hunger now. It is why I believe we need a White House conference on food and nutrition, a Presidential summit that brings all the stakeholders together, a forum where we can develop and agree on one strategy to reduce hunger and obesity together.

In addition, I would plead with my colleagues to not cut our antihunger safety net programs like SNAP and WIC, programs which provide a minimum food benefit. To do so would only worsen the problem of hunger and obesity in America. We must end hunger now, but we cannot do so just by increasing access to high-calorie, low-nutrient food. It is a real challenge, but it's one that we are capable of meeting. We just need to muster the political will to make it happen. End hunger now.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MEADOWS) at 2 p.m.

#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Dear Lord, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

At the beginning of a new workweek, we use this moment to be reminded of Your presence and to tap the resources needed by the Members of this people's House to do their work as well as it can be done.

May they be led by Your Spirit in the decisions they make. May they possess Your power as they steady themselves amid the pressures of persistent problems.

May their faith in You deliver them from tensions that tear the House apart and from worries that might wear them out.

All this day, and through the week, may they do their best to find solutions to pressing issues facing our Nation. Please hasten the day when justice and love shall dwell in the hearts of all peoples and rule the affairs of the nations of Earth.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr.

MULLIN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. MULLIN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

#### PRESIDENT'S SEQUESTER CREATES RISKS

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last Friday, our national security was placed at risk when the President's sequester began implementation. Sadly, this nearly \$600 billion budget cut was the third attack on our Nation's military. In 2010, the Defense Department experienced a \$100 billion budget cut. And again in January 2012, President Obama removed \$487 billion from our military in the annual budget.

Maintaining a strong national defense is a primary function of the Federal Government. Removing these resources so drastically places American families and our allies, such as Israel, at risk of future attacks. In fact, nearly half of all of the reductions in spending are on the defense budget, which is only 18 percent of the entire Federal budget.

As a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I appreciate Chairman BUCK MCKEON's efforts that our national security not be sacrificed to fight our Nation's debt crisis. It is my hope that the President and Senate leadership will work with House Republicans to address our spending problem by reducing wasteful spending and not by holding our national security hostage.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

#### PUT AMERICA FIRST

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

Mr. MULLIN. Mr. Speaker, I come to you today not as a Republican or a Democrat, but an American committed to the United States Constitution. I regularly hear from my constituents who are fed up with the bipartisan fighting. We pledge allegiance to the United States of America, not our political parties. In President George Washington's farewell address, he said:

With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have, in a common cause, fought and triumphed together. The independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils and joint efforts of common dangers, sufferings, and successes.

Washington was right. We are all united by common bonds. Although we

have our differences, we are more alike than we are different.

In his address, Washington was not speaking to one party, but to all people of the young Republic. If we don't start putting this country first and partisanship last, we are going to ruin the country our fathers founded.

It is no secret that we are facing difficult decisions, but I am committed to working with any Member of Congress regardless of party, as long as they're willing to put country first.

#### ENHANCING THE HEALTH OF OUR YOUTH

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

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, a report issued by the Centers for Disease Control on February 13 made headlines with the news that young adults account for 50 percent of all STD infections.

This caught my attention because, as a father with two of my four kids in their late teens, I want them to avoid such risks. I am not alone. A recent national survey revealed that most parents feel the same way, regardless of race or political affiliation. They want their children to have the best chance for optimal health and, so, support risk avoidance education, sometimes called "abstinence education," for their kids.

However, currently there is a troubling 16 to 1 Federal funding disparity between contraception-centered education and risk-avoidance education. That is why I introduced H.R. 718, the Abstinence Education Reallocation Act. The bill brings some parity to programs that give our kids the facts about contraception and avoiding risky behavior.

Mr. Speaker, our teens deserve the best and most accurate information for their optimal health.

#### SEQUESTRATION

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, the President is wrong to suggest taking more money away from the American people would ease the effects of his sequester or correct the debt crisis his policies have exacerbated.

Despite high tax revenue, Washington has been overspending by at least \$1 trillion each year of the Obama Presidency. When families run out of money, they do the smart thing—stop spending so much. Washington has to do the same, but arbitrarily cutting budgets through sequestration isn't the best way.

Twice since last summer, House Republicans passed legislation to achieve the same savings while completely removing the indiscriminate threat of sequestration. Our plans targeted waste and limited government growth. The President threatened to veto our proposals because they didn't include