

the House floor in the reading of our Constitution. We took an oath at that swearing-in ceremony to uphold the Constitution. I carry a copy of our Constitution with me everywhere I go. Any and all we do in this body, and our colleagues in the Senate, should be done to uphold, to protect, and to strengthen this document; and by doing this, we strengthen America. Our Constitution has set America apart from every other country in the world, and I aim to keep it that way.

Mr. MESSER. Thanks again to the gentleman from Florida. I appreciate your comments today. I thank my colleague from Utah and my colleagues from Texas who had the opportunity to speak earlier, and I appreciate your leadership on this important topic.

Obviously, we face many challenges as a Nation. The Second Amendment is one of them, but an important one. Clearly, we all want to prevent horrible tragedies similar to the loss of those young lives in Newtown, Connecticut; but gun bans and many of the other proposals from this President are not the answer.

For example, an internal memo from the Justice Department said that the universal background checks proposed by this President will only be effective if paired with required gun registration—a list of law-abiding citizens who simply exercise their constitutional right to own a firearm. This is a blatant intrusion of privacy, and it cannot be allowed.

We need real solutions that aim to identify, treat or limit access to the evil few who perpetrate these horrible acts. I am unwilling to turn my back on the Constitution and sacrifice the liberty of the people I represent for a false sense of security. We need real solutions; and despite our disagreements, there are opportunities to work together.

As I mentioned earlier, blaming a gun for violence is to blame a pen for a misspelled word. If we can come together and focus on the real causes of this violence, then there are opportunities to work together, and I stand ready to work with every Member of this Chamber, regardless of party, to move this country forward.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

CBC HOUR: THE IMPACT OF SEQUESTRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and my privilege to stand here today as a member of the Congressional Black Caucus to participate one more time as an anchor for the CBC Special Order today on the subject of the impact of sequestration on the American people.

As we know, on Friday, the sequestration took effect, automatic spending cuts of a significant painful amount that will be experienced by the American people all across the land. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, it's something that was avoidable had there been a willingness to try and find common ground.

There are many of us who believe that the most appropriate approach would have been to try and find a balanced resolution involving tax reform and revenue and attempting to identify where reasonable spending adjustments could have been made. But instead of all parties trying to come together to find a balanced resolution to the problem that we find ourselves in, there are some in this Chamber who seem committed to trying to balance the budget on the backs of the most vulnerable in our society, balancing the budget on the backs of children and seniors, pregnant women, Superstorm Sandy victims, public housing residents, or national security.

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I'm just hopeful that as we move forward that we can find the capacity, find the ability, find the courage to come together to seek out common ground so we can resolve this sequestration matter and move forward supporting the economy in the manner that will be the healthiest for the greatest number of Americans possible.

I'm pleased today that we've been joined by several distinguished members of the Congressional Black Caucus, including the chairperson of the CBC, to whom I yield as much time as she may consume, the Honorable MARCIA FUDGE, who has been a tremendous leader on so many issues on behalf of working families and the middle class and seniors all across this country.

Ms. FUDGE. I thank the gentleman for yielding. And I certainly do want to thank Congressman JEFFRIES for once again leading the Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour on another timely and important topic: the impact of sequestration.

Mr. Speaker, here we are. It is March 4, and the Congress and the administration are still mired in political gridlock with no resolution on how to avoid the across-the-board cuts, destructive as they may be, and untargeted sequestration cuts. How irresponsible.

Many communities around the country are still reeling from the worst economic recession since the Great Depression. Let us not forget that the national black unemployment rate re-

mains in double digits at 13.8 percent, far higher than the national rate. Now these communities can only watch as the sequester threatens to roll back the modest gains of the last few years.

The Office of Management and Budget estimates that title I education funds could be eliminated for more than 2,700 schools. This cut alone will have an impact on nearly 1.2 million disadvantaged students. In my home State of Ohio, the public schools are preparing for the loss of \$25.1 million in funding for primary and secondary education. You tell me, Mr. Speaker, what have children done to deserve this impact of sequestration?

The sequester will impact every neighborhood and every household. No matter your race or your age, the sequester will have an impact on your life.

What does the sequester mean for our economy? What does it mean for our neighborhoods? What does it mean for your household? It means cuts to education. The jobs of 10,000 teachers are now at risk. It means cuts to small business. Small business loan guarantees will be reduced by up to \$540 million. It means cuts to food safety. There will be roughly 2,100 fewer food inspectors. It means compromising workplace safety. Workers will be less safe due to about 1,200 less safety inspections. It means cuts to mental health funding. Up to 373,000 mentally ill adults and emotionally disturbed children will go untreated.

The American people expect and deserve more. While Congress debates the policies of deficit reduction, our struggling communities must cope with the consequences of our inaction. While politicians argue over tax cuts, our cities and towns—rural and urban—become less secure. Our children's futures become less secure. Our children are important.

We could talk all night about how and why we got here, but many of you at home, our constituents, only want to know how we're going to end the sequester, escape this fiscal limbo and set our Nation back on the right track.

The path to prosperity is built on compromise. As long as House Republicans insist on the Grover Norquist cut-only approach to budgetary health, Congress will not move forward. Simply put: A cut-only plan will not work. A true path forward will be a compromise built upon raising revenues and targeted cuts.

Just last week, this caucus, the Congressional Black Caucus, delivered a plan to House leadership on how to responsibly replace the sequester. The CBC budget replaces the sequester with commonsense cuts and revenue options that don't make the rich richer and the poor poorer.

Mr. Speaker, this constant cycle of fiscal calamities and cliffs is bad for the Nation. It's bad for our economy, and it is bad for our people. We were sent to Congress to move America forward. Time has run out for games. The

sequester is not a game. It means real cuts that will affect the lives of real people.

Again, I thank the gentleman.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Thank you, Congresswoman FUDGE.

I now yield to the Congresswoman from the Golden State, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE from California.

Ms. LEE of California. Let me thank you for your tremendous leadership and pulling us all together tonight to talk about this impact of sequestration. And I also want to thank our chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, MARCIA FUDGE, for once again sounding the alarm and keeping us on track.

Let me first just start by saying we need to stop the sequestration, and we need to create jobs, lift the economy and reduce poverty.

The sequester will impact my congressional district in my home State of California and every single household in America. It will push 750,000 Americans into the unemployment line and slow our entire economy.

In my home State, for example, it will cut 8,200 children from Head Start and shut the door to college for about 9,600 students. Additionally, 600,000 to 775,000 eligible low-income women and children are going to be denied nutritional assistance because they're going to be cut from the WIC program.

Sequestration will impact everyone, but it will have a particularly harmful effect on communities of color who were hit first and worst by the Great Recession and have yet to significantly feel the effects of the recovery.

Let me just read out 10 reasons which were recently highlighted by the Center for American Progress, and why communities of color and the African American community and Latino community particularly should pay attention to sequestration and the impact it will have in these communities.

First, there are going to be deep cuts to the long-term unemployed and the reduction of benefits will disproportionately affect people of color.

Extended Federal unemployment benefits remain vulnerable under sequestration, and the long-term unemployed—those out of work and searching for a new job for at least 6 months—could lose almost 10 percent, mind you, 10 percent of their weekly jobless benefits if the sequester goes into effect.

Now, 13.8 percent of African Americans and 9.7 percent of Latinos are unemployed. Worse than that, 40 percent of unemployed Asians, 38 percent of African Americans and 28 percent of Latinos have been unemployed for more than 52 weeks.

Secondly, workforce development programs that are vital to communities of color such as YouthBuild and Job Corps face significant cuts. YouthBuild is a program that connects low-income youth to education and training, and it could be cut about 8 percent

Cuts to critical job-creation programs such as Build America Bonds are also on the chopping block. This was created in 2009 and provides incentives for infrastructure investments through the Tax Code.

Fourth, Federal budget cuts under sequestration would quickly mean cuts to Federal, State, and local public sector jobs which disproportionately employ women and African Americans. In 2011, employed African Americans comprised 20 percent of the Federal, State, and local public sector workforce, and women were nearly 50 percent more likely than men to work in the public sector.

Early child care funding could be cut by more than \$900 million, impacting thousands of children of color who benefit from these programs, programs that directly help the most vulnerable families and children such as, as I said earlier, WIC. They're threatened by sequestration.

Federal education funding cuts will disproportionately hurt students of color. If sequester goes into effect in the way it has been designed, nearly \$3 billion would be cut in educational loans, including cuts to financial aid for students and to programs for our most vulnerable youth.

Cuts to medical research put patients at risk. The National Institutes of Health would lose \$1.5 billion in medical research funding, meaning fewer research projects would be aimed at finding treatments and cures for diseases such as HIV/AIDS, cancer, and diabetes, all of which are among the leading cause of death for African Americans.

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Since 2010, funding for housing has been cut by \$2.5 billion, meaning any additional cuts would significantly hurt low-income families and communities. Many housing programs, such as section 8 housing assistance, provide vouchers to low-income families for affordable housing in the private sector.

Finally, as the Nation continues to endure a cold winter, programs such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, which helps bring down the cost of heating for low-income households, are critical.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert for the RECORD an article from today's New York Times, headed: "As Automatic Budget Cuts Go into Effect, Poor May Be Hit Particularly Hard." It explains that sequestration cuts, as they are called, still contain billions of dollars in mandatory budget reductions and programs that help low-income Americans, including ones that give vouchers for housing for the poor and the disabled and another that provides fortified baby formula to the children of poor women.

So I think we need to really listen to the Congressional Black Caucus and understand what this means in terms of vulnerable, marginal communities—communities of color and individuals

who were hardest hit by the recession and who have yet to feel any of the economic recovery that has taken place and who are going to now have another hit in terms of the safety net and the quality of life. They don't deserve this. We need to get back to the drawing board and do what is right and what is fair.

[From the New York Times, Mar. 3, 2013]

AS AUTOMATIC BUDGET CUTS GO INTO EFFECT, POOR MAY BE HIT PARTICULARLY HARD

(By Annie Lowrey)

WASHINGTON.—The \$85 billion in automatic cuts working their way through the federal budget spare many programs that aid the poorest and most vulnerable Americans, including the Children's Health Insurance Program and food stamps.

But the sequestration cuts, as they are called, still contain billions of dollars in mandatory budget reductions in programs that help low-income Americans, including one that gives vouchers for housing to the poor and disabled and another that provides fortified baby formula to the children of poor women.

Republican and Democratic lawmakers largely resigned themselves to allowing sequestration—a policy meant to force them to the negotiating table, not to actually reduce the deficit—to take wider effect after it started on Friday. That leaves agencies just seven months to carry out their cuts before the fiscal year ends on Sept. 30. In many cases, they will eventually have to deny aid to eligible needy families.

Unless a deal is reached to change the course of the cuts, housing programs would be hit particularly hard, with about 125,000 individuals and families put at risk of becoming homeless, the Department of Housing and Urban Development estimated. An additional 100,000 formerly homeless people might be removed from emergency shelters or other housing arrangements because of the cuts, the agency said.

Local administrators are trying to decide how to put the mandatory 5.1 percent budget cuts into effect by the end of September. Adrienne Todman, the executive director of the District of Columbia Housing Authority, said that no person in her program currently using a housing voucher or living in a public facility would be affected or put out on the street.

But to absorb the cuts, Ms. Todman plans to defer maintenance and leave staff vacancies open. She may also not be able to fill open public housing units as tenants vacate them. And she may stop rolling over housing vouchers to families on the waiting list. Eventually, she said, she may have to furlough employees.

"It's a shame. It's more than a shame, it's despicable," Ms. Todman said, noting that her agency already lacked enough capacity to meet the district's needs. "These are real families that we have deemed eligible and are waiting to receive their voucher from us."

In Washington and across the country, families and individuals generally need to have very low incomes to be eligible for federal assistance. Public housing residents in Washington have an average annual income of just \$12,911. More than 40 percent are either children or the elderly, and more than a quarter live with a disability. In the voucher program, the annual income is even lower, just over \$10,000 a year, and similarly large proportions of residents are elderly, disabled or young.

"These people are very, very, very poor," said Sheila Crowley, the president of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, speaking of recipients of federal housing support

across the country. "They don't have resources to fall back on."

In some places, officials have already started carrying out cuts. For instance, King County in Washington State, which includes Seattle, stopped issuing new housing vouchers on Friday.

"Sequestration will result in some 600 fewer families in our local communities receiving crucial rental assistance over the next year," Stephen Norman, the executive director of the county housing authority, said in a statement. "Because rents are so high, many of these families may, quite literally, find themselves out on the street."

Members of Congress have indicated that they might give agencies more discretion in fulfilling the cuts, to help blunt their impact. But policy experts said that in the case of many low-income programs, budget cuts would necessarily mean fewer people get help.

"There's no loose change in the cushions," Ms. Crowley said. "Anything you take out of HUD is going to reduce services and cut programs. There's just no fat there. There hasn't been for a long time."

Other programs that assist low-income families face similarly significant cuts, including one that delivers hot meals to the elderly and another that helps pregnant women. Policy experts are particularly concerned about cuts to the supplemental nutrition program for women, infants and children known as WIC, which provides food and baby formula for at-risk families.

It is considered one of the most effective social programs in government, reducing anemia and increasing birth weights. But up to 775,000 low-income women and their children might lose access to or be denied that aid because of the mandatory cuts, according to calculations by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a nonprofit research group.

The start of sequestration, a policy never meant to take effect, has left both sides seeking cover, with many Democrats dramatizing the impact of the cuts and many Republicans playing them down.

Some Republicans, in fact, have said that whatever the effect, the cuts are a necessary part of reversing the trend of the government spending more and taking on more debt.

"President Obama proclaimed that the sequester's 'brutal' and 'severe' cuts will 'eviscerate' America's domestic spending," Senator Rand Paul, Republican of Kentucky, wrote in a recent article published by Investors.com. "But 'eviscerate' is not the adjective I would use; in fact, I believe the sequester is a pittance."

The \$85 billion in cuts is just a small part of the \$3.6 trillion annual budget, but policy experts say that even those cuts that are being applied to programs that do not specifically focus on low-income people and communities will disproportionately affect them.

Other cuts might not hit low-income Americans specifically, but their impact could affect vulnerable families disproportionately. Those include cuts to programs that aid children with special needs; job-training programs that help unemployed people find a new career; foreclosure prevention services; and programs that help 150,000 veterans every year make the transition into the nonmilitary work force.

They also include a reduction in jobless benefits for the long-term unemployed. Those out of work for more than six months could see their checks shrink by as much as 11 percent.

The Budget Control Act, a 2011 law that created the automatic cuts, exempted "mandatory" spending programs that aid low-income Americans, like Medicaid, which re-

ceive automatic federal financing. But it did not exempt "discretionary" programs, whose financing Congress determines in its annual appropriations process.

[Feb. 22, 2013]

TOP 10 REASONS WHY PEOPLE OF COLOR SHOULD CARE ABOUT SEQUESTRATION

(By Sophia Kerby)

Thanks to congressional Republicans putting the economy in jeopardy during the debt ceiling debacle in the summer of 2011 and again in 2012, a package of automatic across-the-board spending cuts known as sequestration is set to go into effect on March 1, 2013. Senate Democrats have proposed a balanced approach to resolve this crisis, urging congressional Republicans to avoid the damaging sequester cuts by accepting a package of more tax revenue coupled with targeted spending cuts. But once again Republicans are threatening the economy by risking massive and harmful spending cuts that will hurt the middle class, damage the economy, kill hundreds of thousands of jobs, and harm the most economically vulnerable among us.

Sequestration will impact all Americans but will have a particularly harmful effect on communities of color, who were hit first and worst by the Great Recession and have yet to significantly feel the effects of the recovery. Our nation's demographics are changing, and communities of color are the fastest-growing group of Americans. It is important that we invest now in these communities, as we prepare for our nation's economic future and upcoming workforce needs.

Our driving focus should be on averting crises that slow our economy and instead, promoting policies that help all Americans.

Below are the top 10 reasons why communities of color should pay attention to sequestration and the impact it will have in these communities:

1. Deep cuts to long-term unemployment benefits will disproportionately affect people of color. Extended federal unemployment benefits remain vulnerable under sequestration, and the long-term unemployed—those out of work and searching for a new job for at least six months—could lose almost 10 percent of their weekly jobless benefits if the sequester cuts go into effect next week. These cuts will have a greater impact on people of color, as 9.7 percent of Latinos and a staggering 13.8 percent of blacks are unemployed, compared to only 7 percent of whites. What's more, in 2011, 40 percent of unemployed Asians, 38 percent of unemployed blacks, and 28 percent of unemployed Latinos were unemployed for more than 52 weeks.

2. Workforce development programs that are vital to communities of color such as YouthBuild and Job Corps face significant cuts. YouthBuild, a program connecting low-income youth to education and training, could be cut by about 8 percent under sequestration. Coupled with previous federal appropriation cuts in fiscal year 2011 by 37 percent, the program could see about one-third of its federal funding cut between fiscal year 2010 and fiscal year 2013. In 2010, 54 percent of YouthBuild participants were African American and 20 percent were Latino. Job Corps, an education and training program geared toward young adults, faces about \$83 million in cuts in FY 2013 under sequestration. In 2011, 72 percent of Job Corps participants were people of color.

3. Cuts to critical job-creating programs such as the Build America Bonds program are also on the chopping block. Build America Bonds, which were created in the 2009 stimulus bill, provides incentives for infrastructure investments through the tax code.

Since its inception, the program has helped states and cities fund thousands of job-creating infrastructure projects at lower costs than traditional tax-exempt municipal bonds. Build America Bonds could see budget cuts of up to 7.6 percent, however, if sequestration goes through. Build America Bonds benefit all Americans, as more than \$106 billion of Build America Bonds have been issued by state and local governments in 49 states and the District of Columbia since the program started. Infrastructure investments stimulate employment in sectors that employ disproportionately high rates of workers of color, such as construction and public transit.

4. Federal budget cuts under sequestration would quickly mean cuts to federal, state, and local public-sector jobs, which disproportionately employ women and African Americans. In 2011 employed African Americans comprised 20 percent of the federal, state, and local public-sector workforce, and women were nearly 50 percent more likely than men to work in the public sector. According to the Congressional Budget Office, scheduled cuts in federal spending were the primary driving force behind slow economic growth projected for this year, meaning thousands of lost jobs and cuts to federal contractors.

5. Early child care funding could be cut by more than \$900 million, impacting the thousands of children of color who benefit from these programs. Such cuts will mean 70,000 children will be kicked out of Head Start, a federal program that promotes the school readiness of children from low-income families from birth through age 5. Sixty percent of program participants are children of color.

6. Programs that directly help the most vulnerable families and children—such as the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, or WIC—are threatened by sequestration. WIC serves as a supplemental food and nutrition program for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women and for children under age 5. The program could be cut by \$543 million—a devastating loss to the more than 450,000 people of color who benefit from its services.

7. Federal education funding cuts will disproportionately hurt students of color. If the sequester goes into effect, nearly \$3 billion would be cut in education alone, including cuts to financial aid for college students and to programs for our most vulnerable youth—English language learners and those attending high-poverty, struggling schools—impacting 9.3 million students. Such cuts will affect key programs that receive federally funded grants such as Education for Homeless Children and Youth and federal work study. The lack of access to financial aid for people of color will further exacerbate the student debt rates in these communities. In the 2007–08 academic year, 81 percent of African Americans and 67 percent of Latinos with a bachelor's degree graduated with student debt, compared to 64 percent of their white peers. Cutting access to these vital financial aid programs will curtail the higher education aspirations of tens of thousands of students of color.

8. Cuts to critical medical research put patients at risk. The National Institutes of Health would lose \$1.5 billion in medical research funding, meaning fewer research projects would be aimed at finding treatments and cures for diseases such as cancer and diabetes—both of which are among the leading causes of death for African Americans.

9. Since 2010 funding for housing has been cut by \$2.5 billion, meaning any additional cuts would significantly hurt low-income families and communities. Many housing

programs such as Section 8 Housing Assistance provide vouchers to low-income families for affordable housing in the private market. In 2011 Section 8 aided more than 2 million low-income families across the country. Data from 2008 indicate that 44 percent and 23 percent of public housing recipients are African American and Latino, respectively.

10. As the nation continues to endure a cold winter, programs such as the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, or LIHEAP, which helps bring down the cost of heating for low-income households, are crucial. The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, which helped about 23 million low-income people pay their winter heat bills, is in jeopardy of being cut in FY 2013. Low-income communities, which tend to disproportionately comprise of people of color, depend on such programs to make ends meet during these tough economic times.

In order to avoid significant damage to the U.S. economy—and particularly to communities of color across the country—congressional Republicans should agree to a balanced package to replace the sequester and its damaging cuts.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Thank you, Congresswoman LEE.

The economic recovery, as you pointed out, is still in an extremely fragile state. Many of those most vulnerable Americans who were adversely impacted by the recession still have not been made whole in any way, shape, or form. Sequestration is an \$85 billion shock to the system. It may begin as a slow burn, but it is going to sear over time. It is going to hurt our most vulnerable Americans, as has been detailed in congressional district after congressional district across this country.

It is irresponsible for us to even have allowed it to get to this point, which is why we are advocating for everyone to come to the table to find common ground. This is a democracy, not a dictatorship. Because we are in a divided government, it is unreasonable to simply say “no revenues.” So as a result of this hardened position, we find ourselves in the midst of this sequestration.

We’ve been joined by the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey, my good friend, Congressman Donald Payne, to whom I yield the floor.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friends and colleagues—Congressman HORSFORD from Nevada and Congressman JEFFRIES from New York, across the water from me—for once again anchoring this Special Order for the CBC on the impact of sequestration.

I came to Washington to work—to serve the hardworking families and individuals in my district who have been disproportionately impacted by this economy. I came to Washington to spur growth and development for the sake of this country’s economic future. Unfortunately, my colleagues on the other side oppose any effort that would support this mission. Sadly, the only growth and development that the Republican leadership has spurred has been the development of lies and the growth of fear among the American people.

We now face the drastic cuts of sequestration because the Republican leadership in Congress refuses to adopt a balanced approach to our Nation’s deficit and debt. Instead, they push drastic measures that would only further depress this economy. The fact is that it is impossible to reduce Federal debts without a healthy economy, and a healthy economy will not develop as a result of sporadic cuts but, rather, as a result of increased revenue, in part by an increased volume of working people who earn income and pay taxes. This is common sense; yet the sequester and everything the Republican leadership has proposed undermines the current and future workforce, and it disproportionately harms low-income families and individuals.

At a time of great need for a skilled workforce, the sequester would cut workforce development programs and assistance for college students. As it was stated, YouthBuild and Job Corps are key workforce development programs that provide pathways to employment for low-income youth. These programs already experienced a 37 percent cut in fiscal year 2011, but they will face additional cuts under sequestration. TRIO programs are key Federal supports for first-generation college students to prepare them to attend and complete college. These programs serve nearly 800,000 students, and they will face cuts of almost \$43 million under sequestration.

In New Jersey, my home State, around 1,480 fewer low-income students will receive financial aid for college, and nearly 650 fewer students will receive work-study jobs. Approximately 15,000 students will be impacted by the cuts in education, and around 1,300 children will be removed from Head Start. Nationally, approximately 9 million students will be impacted due to cuts in education, and nearly 70,000 children will be removed from the Head Start program.

Further, under sequestration, the security of children and their families will also be impacted. Research shows that the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children—WIC—improves birth outcomes, reduces child anemia and improves the participants’ nutrition and health. It is widely regarded as one of the most effective social programs; yet under sequestration this program will be forced to cut an estimated 600,000 to 775,000 women and children. This is devastating.

These cuts are unnecessary and counterproductive. Democrats have offered commonsense solutions time and time again to our deficit issue, including the latest alternative to sequestration—H.R. 699. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership prefers manufacturing problems and not offering real solutions. The Republican leadership claims that their actions are in the name of our Nation’s future and austerity for our children; but our Nation’s deficit peaked at \$1.4 trillion in

2009, which was prior to their efforts to cut, and it has been falling ever since.

Our economy, though sluggish, is experiencing record growth. Now is not the time for arbitrary cuts. Now is the time to end the shameful attack on the middle class and the hardworking Americans. Pass a balanced approach. We are waiting for leadership in this area.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey for pointing several things out, but particularly for making it clear that we have already made significant progress under this administration, in partnership with this side of the aisle, as we have attempted to move forward over the last several years as it relates to deficit reduction. I believe that we’ve cut approximately \$2.5 trillion—done—as it relates to deficit reduction. While certainly we’re open to trying to figure out how to move forward in the best possible way as it relates to the economy, an \$85 billion shock to the system over the next several months and approximately \$1 trillion over the next 10 years is harmful as it relates to the ability to move the economy forward.

We are thankful that we have been joined by the distinguished gentlelady from the Virgin Islands, Congresswoman DONNA CHRISTENSEN.

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Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. I thank you for yielding, and I thank you for hosting this Special Order and for coming to the floor on many evenings to speak to the American people and make sure that they understand what is at stake here.

I am somewhat ashamed to come back to work this week because the sequester wasn’t avoided, and the failure of Congress to work together and take action has put so many important programs that our fellow Americans rely on, so many jobs, and the early recovery from the recent recession at risk.

Our Democratic leaders said before the President’s Day recess and again at the end of last week that we should not go home without fixing the sequester; and yet the Republican leadership, which sets the schedule, did not enable us to stay here and work together to prevent the cuts that everyone knows will hurt our country.

So under the Republican leadership—or lack of it—the Federal budget, which affects government workers, contracts, and programs in every department, will have an across-the-board ax taken to them. I think that we are smart enough that if the will was there, we would come together and reason to a far better approach than this blunt instrument that’s now being applied.

It makes one wonder: what are our priorities? If we look at where the cuts will hurt the most, it does not tell a proud story—education and job training, Head Start, special education, health and programs like WIC that support the health of mothers and babies,

mental health and substance abuse programs when we have seen so vividly and painful how much these programs are needed, health care, law enforcement and homeland security, defense, housing, jobs and the economy, which is now struggling to recover.

And as often happens, people of color are disproportionately impacted. African Americans are more likely to work in the public sector where the jobs are going to be cut. We already have the highest unemployment and will be severely hurt by the reduction in unemployment benefits. The YouthBuild and Job Corps programs that were spoken about earlier, over 70 percent of the young people in those programs are African American and Latino, and those programs will be cut.

The TRIO programs, which have already been cut, caused the Virgin Islands' only Upward Bound program to be lost. They need to be more fully funded; but they, too, will suffer. And many low-income students will not have the benefit of their support to enter and complete college.

I want to focus on how it will affect my district, the U.S. Virgin Islands. We stand to lose \$13 million in Federal funding. The territories already do not participate in all of the Federal programs that the States do, and many programs are capped regardless of need or what would have been the eligibility in the States.

Already, over the past 2 years, the Virgin Islands Government has had to cut salaries 8 percent and laid off about 500 government workers. The abrupt closing of the HOVENSA oil refinery has cost 200 direct jobs and many more indirect ones. So that \$13 million does not tell the full impact, nor does it include the impact of possible layoffs, furloughs, or other reductions of the close to 800 Federal employees in the territory.

If we just look at WIC, Meals on Wheels, special ed, Head Start and HIV/AIDS, which serve almost 10 percent of our population of 106,405, a cut of any size will have a major impact on some of the most vulnerable in any society.

Unemployment is over 17 percent in St. Croix, the island on which I live and where the HOVENSA refinery was operating. The cuts in unemployment benefits will definitely be felt. All of these cuts hurt individuals and families, but like everywhere else, they have ripple effects across the entire community.

The American people expect better from us. They expect us to lead and to govern, to be responsive to their needs and to help the less fortunate. This 113th Congress thus far has not lived up to their expectations. The Congressional Black Caucus, as it always is, is prepared and poised to lead. We will soon be releasing our budget, which raises revenues, makes strategic investments that strengthen our country, and still would reduce the deficit over the next 10 years, more than any other budget that we've seen proposed,

so we know it can be done. And we also know that the cuts the sequester would impose will cost this country more in the long run.

So where is the gain? We have been advised time and time again that the cuts in the sequester are the worst thing that we can do at this time; and although no one wants to talk about it, what we really need is another stimulus.

Last week the Fed Chairman, Ben Bernanke, strongly advised:

Congress and the administration should consider replacing the sharp, front-loaded spending cuts required by the sequestration with policies that reduce the Federal deficit more gradually in the near term and more substantially in the longer run.

That's what all reputable economists have been saying. We need to call off the sequestration before irrevocable harm is done and replace it with a sensible approach that recognizes and counts the savings that we have already put in place, that does not stifle the growth that we need and still reduces the deficit in the long run.

The American people are tired of the gridlock up here. They want us to work together. They also, in their vote in November, said very clearly that they support the President's approach and agenda. As the African Kikuyu proverb says: When the elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers.

My constituents are hurting, as I know all of yours are. The sequester only adds more pain and suffering and does nothing to reduce spending, because more spending will have to be done to clean up the mess the sequester will leave later on. Let's call it off and let's pass a responsible and fair budget for the rest of the year.

It's time for the Republican leadership to work with our President, the President of the United States, Barack Obama. Together, we can do better for our country and for those who send us here to represent them. We must do better.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Congresswoman CHRISTENSEN, thank you very much.

I think it's important to emphasize a point that you just made as it relates to what we should be doing to jumpstart the economy. We should be investing in the American economy, attempting to grow it so we can create prosperity for the greatest number of people possible, not using sequestration, which is a blunt instrument, to beat the economy and give it a pounding when it is already in an extremely fragile state.

We know that objective economists have said that sequestration will have an impact of 750,000 lost jobs. We can't afford that at this moment. We urge our colleagues to come back to the negotiating table.

I'm pleased that we've been joined by the distinguished gentleman from Illinois, Congressman DANNY DAVIS.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for his leadership in hosting

this event. It is so good to see young and talented individuals come to the Congress, building upon the experiences that they've had in their city, State, and local governments, and it's a pleasure to be here.

You know, I've been told that you can measure the humaneness of a society by how well it treats its old, how well it treats its young, and how well it treats those who have difficulty caring for themselves. I was just thinking that should the sequestration deal hold through the end of the fiscal year, between 600,000 and 750,000 low-income women, infants, and children will be turned away.

This would be not only unfortunate, but it would be a tremendous change in what precedence has been because traditionally, dating back to 1997, both parties have made it a point of trying to make sure that this population group did in fact have an opportunity to participate in the Women, Infants, and Children program and that low-income pregnant women, infants, and children, the most vulnerable members of our society, would be able to have the basic necessities of life.

And it was amazing to me this weekend, as I watched a little bit of television on Sunday morning, on the traditional Sunday talk shows, and how different Representatives were characterizing this action as: not as bad as some people thought it was going to be; it's not going to affect as many people as it seems; our country has not fallen into Lake Michigan.

Well, I can tell you, if you are a young, pregnant mother with no money, no place to go, and you rely upon the Women, Infants, and Children program to try to make sure that you produce a healthy baby who just comes into the world with a chance to make it and who, without these services, may come into life already disadvantaged, already behind.

□ 2000

And so I don't know how we can actually do this with a good conscience. But, also, I can't imagine what it is that we're thinking. How do you cut, cut jobs and opportunities for people to work and expect to raise a recessed economy?

I've always been led to believe that you've got to have the exchange of goods and services. You've got to keep money flowing in an economy, in a society, to move it beyond the bottom up towards the top.

And so, in the recessed state that we're in, we need to be producing jobs, creating work opportunity, not furloughing, laying people off, having them wonder what they're going to be able to do. I think it's the wrong approach. I think it's not a good way to manage our resources, and I think it's not a good message that we're sending to the American people.

So, sir, I want to thank you, again, for the opportunity to participate with you and other members of the Congressional Black Caucus as we raise awareness that, with this sequestration deal,

our country is headed in the wrong direction.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Thank you, Congressman DAVIS, for your leadership and for your eloquence in laying out, in a very clear, concise, and articulate fashion, the problems with sequestration that we are forced now to confront here in America as a result of the irresponsibility of some in this Chamber.

I'm pleased that we've been joined by my distinguished co-anchor, the gentleman from Nevada, the Silver State, STEVEN HORSFORD. I now yield to Representative HORSFORD.

Mr. HORSFORD. Thank you, Madam Speaker. To my good friend and colleague, Representative JEFFRIES, thank you for co-anchoring this special hour, and to all of my colleagues who joined us tonight to discuss the impact of the sequester.

You know, far too often, talk of the so-called sequester ignores the very real people who feel the pain of unfair cuts. Our job, as Representatives, is to be the voice of our constituents. Well, tonight, I hope that we can have a frank discussion about what these cuts really mean to all of our communities.

My colleagues talked about the 750,000 to 1 million job losses that could result as a result of the sequester. Any day, Congress can pass a reasonable, balanced deficit reduction solution to avert these devastating, across-the-board cuts. That's what the American people are asking for, in fact.

According to a USA Today/Pew Research poll, three out of four Americans surveyed said that Congress should focus on a balanced approach to the deficit, with a combination of spending cuts, strategic spending cuts, and additional revenue.

Now, I know here in Washington, sometimes the focus is more on scoring political points, or seeing who can win the blame game. Well, Madam Speaker, the American people are watching, and they are fed up with the broken ways of Washington. They came out and they voted in November, and they sent a very clear message to all of us here in Congress that it is time for us to work together to put partisanship aside and to put our Nation first.

So, if all parties would come to the table, like we are supposed to, we can minimize the impact of the sequester on working families like mine in Congressional District Four. If we do our jobs, like the American people are rightfully demanding, we can reduce our debt in a responsible way and get our economy moving again.

So I call on my colleagues on the other side of the aisle: Come to the table, help find a solution, and let's fix some of these deep cuts that were never supposed to happen. I wasn't part of the Congress that enacted the sequester. I know my colleague, Mr. JEFFRIES, was not either, but we are here now, and we want to do our jobs on behalf of the constituents who sent us here.

This is victory for no one and a horrible loss for the American people.

Now, if we let the sequester continue, our economic recovery will be thrown in reverse.

A study by George Mason University projects a loss of 2.14 million American jobs if we fail to act. Half of those jobs will come from small businesses, businesses that are the engines of our economy. Perhaps most unfair, as part of the sequester, our schools and our students will be hurt.

Now, a couple of weeks ago, I voted, along with many of my colleagues, to not adjourn this body, to stay here throughout the so-called District Work Week to work with my colleagues across the aisle to try to come up with a balanced solution to avoid these devastating cuts. But the leadership, the Republican leadership, decided to adjourn.

And so, instead of spending time with our families, we went out and met with our constituents to listen to them about what these cuts mean in their everyday lives. So let me talk to you about what this means in my home State of Nevada.

Nearly 300 Nevada children will lose Head Start and early Head Start services. These are programs that provide critical early education programs. At a time when we talk about wanting to close the academic achievement gap and allowing every child to start school ready to learn on day one, these impacts would deny services to 300 Nevada children. In fact, I already have 400 children who are on the waiting list for one of my Head Start providers, and families can't even get in to be served.

Primary and secondary education in Nevada would be cut by \$9 million, putting around 120 teacher and teacher aide jobs at risk. Funding for title I schools would be slashed.

One particular elementary school that I visited, Matt Kelly Elementary School, over 50 percent of their allocation from the school district is title I funding. How is that school supposed to maintain the services that they're providing to these young and deserving children?

Services like nutrition programs, full-day kindergarten, a parent center so that we can actually have parental involvement in our schools, that is what is under attack with these mindless, across-the-board cuts.

About 14,000 fewer students would be served, and approximately 10 fewer schools in my district would even receive funding under title I.

Disadvantaged and vulnerable children could lose access to child care, which is also essential for working parents. When we talk about helping people get back to work, one of the biggest impediments for many families is having access to child care.

Schools and families in my district need these programs to provide hungry students the meals that they need to focus in class, to fund math and reading intervention programs, and to keep their teachers employed.

We can reduce unnecessary spending, Madam Speaker, but these are the

wrong places to cut, and everyone knows it on both sides of the aisle, in both Chambers of this Congress.

□ 2010

Now, some of these cuts won't heal. And as Mrs. Marian Wright Edelman of the Children's Defense Fund has aptly noted, we better be careful what we cut because some cuts don't heal. We don't get a second chance at Head Start. We don't get a second chance once our kids have moved on to the next grade, with or without the schools that they need. We don't get a second chance at the whole formative experience of education that so heavily influences the paths of our lives.

Opportunities are just that. They're there for a moment, and they disappear if you don't act. There is no reset button for your education. Once our children are in those classrooms, we set them on a track for success or failure. We tip the scales for or against them in the moment that they walk through the front doors of the schoolhouse.

We ask our students to study hard, meet deadlines and do their homework. That's their end of the bargain. We, as parents, are asked to be involved, to foster our children's growth and to pay attention to their needs. As Members of Congress, our end of the bargain is to make sure that our children's schools are well-funded institutions of learning.

Well, if anyone is grading Congress right now, we're not doing our job, Madam Speaker. We even gave ourselves a 2-month extension, but we missed our deadline and let cuts go into effect that Members from both parties have described as dumb, avoidable, and painful. Congress didn't make the grade.

When it comes to fixing the deficit, you have to be careful what you cut. As I said, according to the Children's Defense Fund, eliminating early education investments now would increase a child's chances of going to prison later by up to 39 percent. Paying for that prison will cost nearly three times more a year than it would have cost to provide them with a quality early learning experience.

Simply put, our kids are being shortchanged by adults here in Washington. This is an adult problem, and it's time for adults to be adults and to come into this body and work together and solve this for our children and their future.

Let's make the right choice—adequately fund our schools and look out for our children.

I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Thank you, Congressman HORSFORD.

I think what is important, as it relates to the moment we find ourselves in right now in America, is that there are some who make the argument that the reason why the sequestration cuts perhaps were acceptable is because we've got to do something to deal with our out-of-control spending problem—I believe that's the phraseology that is

often used—that we have here in America. And certainly when you think about the debt number that we have, \$16 trillion, it strikes you as an extremely troubling situation.

And then of course we've had debates back and forth as it relates to the debt ceiling and suggestions from some in this Chamber that the President's effort to raise the debt ceiling is evidence of his willingness to be irresponsible as it relates to the economy.

What's interesting, of course, is that the debt ceiling is not a forward-looking vehicle that's designed to give the administration the ability to spend more. The debt ceiling is a backward-looking vehicle designed to give President Obama at this moment the ability to pay for bills that this Congress has already incurred.

And so when we talk about the notion that there is a spending problem in America, let's be accurate with what really is at issue. And the reality is that many of the bills that we've already incurred, that Americans are forced to pay for and borrow in order to meet our obligations, these were debts incurred by the prior administration.

In fact, this chart illustrates the dynamic that we find ourselves in as it relates to where we really are in America and how we got here. Under the prior administration of George W. Bush, we had two significant tax cuts that were not paid for in 2001 and 2003 that disproportionately benefited the wealthy and the well off. We had an unjustified war in Iraq that cost Americans in lives and in treasure and that contributed significantly to the deficit and our need to raise and borrow additional debt.

And then, of course, we had the collapse of the economy. It cost America, by some estimates, \$22 trillion in lost wealth, homeownership, and economic productivity. And as a result of the collapse of the economy, which took place under the prior administration—many argue they were sleeping at the switch and allowed some in Wall Street to engage in reckless behavior—we were forced to bail out some of the largest financial institutions in this country, which added to our financial burden here in America. And then when the administration came in, inherited a train wreck, in order to stimulate the economy we incurred some additional financial responsibility.

And so when you look at this chart, you can see what the projected debt is as a result of things that occurred in the prior administration as a proportion of GDP. This is a dangerously high number. But we are at this point where the debt has increased relative to our GDP because of things that happened in the prior administration. And, in fact, if you look at the bottom of the chart, you see what the debt would be, much lower, as a proportion of GDP, had those things not occurred.

So when you talk about the need to get spending under control, let's be intellectually honest. Because when

we're not, you lay out a scenario: Well, it's because of Social Security that we're in this situation. That's not the case. Well, it's because of Medicare and entitlements that we're in this situation. That's not the case. Well, it's because of Medicaid, and we have all of these takers—so-called takers—in our economy. That's not the case.

Two wars, one of which was completely unjustified, the other of which it's not clear whether it was prosecuted in the manner it could have been because we were distracted in Iraq; two enormous tax cuts that benefited the wealthy and the well off disproportionately; the collapse of the economy; a subsequent Wall Street bailout; and then the need for an economic stimulus package explains why we are where we are right now.

And so the sequestration is an irrational, irresponsible, illegitimate reaction to the reason why we are in this place. And that's why, Congressman HORSFORD, we are arguing for a balanced approach to our economic reality, the one that we confront right now.

I yield to the gentleman from Nevada.

Mr. HORSFORD. Thank you to my friend and my colleague from New York. And as you aptly noted, the history of how we got to this point needs to not be lost in this debate. And I know there are some who also want to now talk about the cuts that were made in agreement with the administration last year, along with those additional revenues which were approved in January, as somehow the answer for why there needs to be no additional revenue.

□ 2020

That doesn't take into account the \$85 billion of cuts that are now upon us under this sequester.

I'd like to just hit on three additional points, if I could. One is the unemployment impact.

We're focused on growing the economy, putting people back to work. In my home State of Nevada, we still have an unemployment rate above the national average. While our numbers are coming down, we don't need to add anyone to the unemployment lines. Under the sequester, some 750,000 to 1 million Americans will end up losing their jobs unless this Congress comes together and finds a solution—a balanced approach, as you indicate.

In Nevada, that's 10,000 lost jobs. And of those jobs, the main areas that will be affected are the civilian positions at our Air Force bases—Nellis Air Force Base, Creech Air Force Base, and the Hawthorn Army Depot. It's estimated that some 1,400 furloughs will occur to civilian jobs, amounting to \$11 million in lost wages. These aren't just lost wages to these individuals and their families; it's \$11 million less of economic recovery that we so desperately need.

Then when you talk about our tourism and the impact to travel, the FAA

will be required to cut its operational activities by nearly \$483 million. As a consequence, all FAA employees could be furloughed for 11 days, meaning as much as 10 percent of the FAA's workforce of 40,000 would be on furlough on any given day. So for those of us who travel, States like ours, yours in New York that rely on tourism to fuel our economies, that is going to affect our ability to recover.

On top of that, Nevada will lose funds for job search assistance to help those who are currently looking for work. Nevada could lose upwards of \$300,000 in funding for job search assistance, referral and placement, meaning that 10,000 fewer people will get the help that they need for the skills to help them find another job.

So these are the dire impacts that we see, talking to our constituents. These are the real impacts that we believe need to be addressed by this Congress in a balanced approach.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank you for highlighting some of the impacts that are going to take place in your district in Nevada.

If I might ask, Madam Speaker, how much time do we have remaining on our Special Order?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. WAGNER). The gentleman has 4 minutes remaining.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Madam Speaker, I represent the Eighth Congressional District in New York. It was one of the districts that was hardest hit by Superstorm Sandy that struck on October 29.

The people of the Eighth Congressional District—neighborhoods like Canarsie and Coney Island, Sea Gate, Brighton Beach, Manhattan Beach, Mill Basin, folks who are in coastal communities along the Atlantic Ocean or who live near the Jamaica Bay—lost their homes, experienced significant damage, were displaced, lost property that can never be recovered.

They were victimized on October 29, and then this Congress attempted to come together to provide swift and immediate relief—as is our responsibility to do when Americans have been hit with disaster. A \$60 billion aid package was passed in the Senate. Although there was a promise for a vote in 2012, it didn't happen. At the 11th hour, it was yanked because there were some who were arguing—again, in the name of alleged fiscal responsibility—that we should be considering offsets. Americans in need, desperate, but we should be considering offsets, unprecedented in the history of America's response to a tragedy.

Then, thankfully, in January, we came together. Common sense prevailed and we were able to pass that robust \$60 billion package. But now we've victimized those who were impacted by Superstorm Sandy in a district that I represent—and others in New York and New Jersey and Connecticut—for a third time because in this sequestration, \$2.5 billion in superstorm aid relief has been cut.

That's just one of the examples of how sequestration will impact folks in my congressional district and all across the country, which is why we've been arguing for a balanced response.

The other thing that I'd note: I was in Brooklyn a few days ago and had a meeting with public housing leaders. The New York City Public Housing Authority, which presides over public housing units in New York City—the largest such public authority related to public housing in the country—will experience a \$190 million cut as a result of sequestration. There are already residents of public housing in my district and all across the city of New York dealing with inhumane conditions right now—mold infestation, broken elevators, rat infestation, the inability to get repairs done on a timely basis, violence at levels that should not be tolerated. And instead of cutting almost \$200 million from the Public Housing Authority in New York, we should be investing more.

Madam Speaker, we're hopeful that we can arrive at a place where common sense will prevail and we can move forward to keep America moving forward in a reasonable way.

I yield to my colleague from Nevada to close.

Mr. HORSFORD. I just want to add that this debate begins and ends with the American people. We want to hear and listen to their views. We want you to know that you can go to # Be Careful What You Cut and tell us the impacts that you are seeing with this sequester and how it is affecting you. That way we can share those opinions and views with our colleagues to hopefully convince them that a balanced approach, working across party lines, both Chambers, the Senate and the House, coming together for the good of the American people is what we desperately need at this time.

Madam Speaker, thank you for allowing us to speak this evening and for the American people allowing us to be their voice in this representative government.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, when the Congress adjourned last week, it did so without addressing the drastic spending cuts known as sequester. Now the March 1st deadline has passed, still with no action. Without the attention of Congress, these cuts will wreak havoc on our fragile economy and jeopardize the safety and security of families in this country. House and Senate Democrats have both offered reasonable, balanced plans to avert these damaging cuts, but the GOP has refused to work towards a bipartisan plan to reduce the deficit. We have had more than a year to reach a bipartisan agreement, and without an agreement these cuts will be balanced on the backs on our most vulnerable citizens.

I am specifically concerned about the effects of sequestration on the 30th District, and the state of Texas as a whole. Texas will lose approximately \$67.8 million for primary and secondary education, putting educators at risk

and compromising our children's education. In Texas alone, approximately 52,000 civilian Department of Defense employees would be furloughed, reducing gross pay by around \$274.8 million in total. These are not just numbers. Madam Speaker. These are mothers and fathers trying to provide for their families.

Under sequestration, 9,730 fewer children in Texas will receive vaccines, and our state will lose approximately \$3,557,000 to help provide meals for seniors. Texas will also lose approximately \$2,402,000 to help respond to public health threats including infectious diseases and natural disasters.

Madam Speaker, we must confront our federal debt and deficit, but we must do so in a balanced approach that does not further harm our weakened economy. Deficit reduction must be comprised by both decreased spending and enhanced revenue measures. I implore the House leadership and the Republican Members of Congress to come back to the table and get back to work.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. HONDA (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of a death in the family.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for February 25 through March 7 on account of medical reasons.

Mr. CULBERSON (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of illness.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 47. An act to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. JEFFRIES. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 28 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, March 5, 2013, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

566. A letter from the Program Manager, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's "Major" final rule — Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; Standards Related to Essential Health Benefits, Actuarial Value, and Accreditation [CMS-9980-F] (RIN: 0938-AR03) received February 25, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

567. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's "Major" final rule — Seismic Evaluation Guidance: Screening, Prioritization and Implementation Details (SPID) for the Resolu-

tion of Fukushima Near-Term Task Force Recommendation 2.1: Seismic received February 26, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

568. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 13-020, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

569. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 13-010, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

570. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 13-001, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

571. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 13-021, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

572. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting the Engineering Documentation Report for the Flood Damage Reduction Project for the Roseau River; (H. Doc. No. 113—13); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and ordered to be printed.

573. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Changes in accounting periods and methods of accounting (Rev. Proc. 2013-20) received February 20, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

574. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Applicable Federal Rates — March 2013 (Rev. Rul. 2013-7) received February 20, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

575. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Update of List of Plants, Grown in Commercial Quantities in the United States, Having a Preproductive Period in Excess of Two Years Based on the Nationwide Weighted Average Preproductive Period for Such Plant [Notice 2013-8] received February 20, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky:

H.R. 933. A bill making appropriations for the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and other departments and agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2013, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.