

of the situation in Iran. I cannot tell you what the information is here or anywhere else because it is appropriately classified, but based on the classified briefings I have received on the situation in Iran and the Joint Plan of Action, I am very reluctant to support any additional sanctions at this time.

Mr. Speaker, given the importance of this issue to all Members and the stakes involved in preventing a nuclear-armed Iran, I think many of my colleagues would be in a much better position to evaluate the options before us if they also had access to the very classified briefing from which I regularly benefit. That is why I wrote a letter to the Speaker of the House, JOHN BOEHNER, and Democratic Leader NANCY PELOSI last week asking them to convene a classified briefing for Members of the House of Representatives.

All of us could have had access to classified materials or request a briefing if we wanted one on a case-by-case basis, but the point is that we are facing a crossroads as a nation, and we are facing a crossroads as a Congress, and I want us to be as informed as possible.

I understand the mistrust between the United States and Iran, and the desire of some in this body to seek additional sanctions, even as we are implementing the terms of the 6-month agreement.

□ 1015

We need clear-eyed, apolitical, informed decisionmaking so we can make the best possible choices on behalf of our constituents and the Nation.

I believe my colleagues would find great value in the classified briefing and come away with greater confidence in the work of the administration and our international partners.

I have been convinced that now is not the time to consider additional sanctions, but I want my colleagues to make up their own minds and to do so with as much information as possible, so I renew my request for classified briefings as soon as they can be arranged.

I have every confidence that if talks falter or we have evidence that Iran is not abiding by the terms of the Joint Plan of Action, the Congress will not hesitate to take appropriate actions, including imposing new sanctions on Iran. But with Iran at the negotiating table, taking steps to halt enrichment and submit to enhanced inspections and monitoring, it is worth giving diplomacy the chance to succeed.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT WILL SLOW ECONOMIC GROWTH

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office,

CBO, issued a report stating the Affordable Care Act, otherwise known as ObamaCare, will slow economic growth over the next decade substantially more than previously predicted. According to yesterday's report, the Affordable Care Act could lead to 2 million fewer workers in the workforce between now and 2017, which is nearly three times as high as CBO's earlier predictions. What is even worse, this number is supposed to rise in later years to the equivalent of 2.5 million jobs by 2024.

According to The Hill newspaper:

The agency, CBO, also said employer penalties in the law would decrease wages, and part-year workers would be slower to return to the workforce because they would seek to retain ObamaCare insurance subsidies.

We cannot afford more blows to jobs. We cannot afford more blows to the American workforce. We cannot afford more blows to our economy. We as policymakers should be focused on breaking down barriers to employment in order to increase wages.

Mr. Speaker, the administration better get better at explaining this law to the American people or start working with this body to repeal and fix it. The American people deserve better. The American people deserve jobs.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAM SCANDAL

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, before turning to the subject at hand, I really hope that people look at the CBO report that was referenced by my good friend from Pennsylvania, and you will find that the 2 million people who would no longer be working, are not going to increase unemployment. The unemployment rate will be lower. There are people who are trapped in the workforce now because they can't afford health care. The Affordable Care Act will actually enable some people to retire who want to retire or stop working a second job. Read the report and find out that this is actually a very positive signal.

But, Mr. Speaker, I am here today to reference something else that was in the newspapers. The papers are filled with scandal about the nuclear weapons program. The real scandal is not the cheating or drug use by people with their finger on the nuclear button. The scandal is that these people are there on the job at all, with these nuclear weapons; jobs and nuclear weapons that should no longer exist.

Don't get me wrong. The alleged drug use by the people who stand watch daily with a finger on the nuclear trigger, or that were cheating on their proficiency exams, is outrageous, but it is scandalous that we are frozen in time linked to a nuclear Cold War past and committed to wildly wasteful spending.

These are weapons that have never been used in 69 years, that did not

deter the 9/11 attackers, and cannot help us in our major strategic challenges today. They have never been used in battle since World War II, but they have almost been used by miscalculation and mistake.

In Eric Schlosser's recent book called "Command and Control," there are terrifying examples of what were termed "broken arrows," nuclear mishaps.

A nuclear bomb was accidentally released over South Carolina, landing in Walter Greg's backyard, leaving a 75-foot wide, 30-foot crater, leveling his home. Luckily, it failed to trigger the nuclear explosion.

In North Carolina, a B-52 fell into a tailspin carrying two hydrogen bombs, each 250 times more powerful than Hiroshima.

There were numerous instances when our bomber fleet, which used to be on the runway idling, on alert 24/7, was prone to catching on fire while packed with nuclear bombs.

A few years ago, there was a B-52 which flew across the country unknowingly carrying six nuclear-armed air-launched missiles.

By no stretch of the imagination, do we need these 450 intercontinental ballistic missiles on alert, plus nuclear armed bombers, all on top of our nuclear submarine-based missiles? We don't need a fraction of this weaponry. At most, we need perhaps one scaled-down system. There is nobody left to deter. We are competing in Russia in the Winter Olympics right now.

A small portion of one of these delivery systems is all the nuclear deterrence we could ever possibly need. The larger and more complex the infrastructure is not just more expensive, but more prone to mistake.

We are talking about upwards of \$700 billion over the next 10 years in operations, modernization, new systems, new nuclear submarines. It is outrageous. It is dangerous. Let me put that in context. \$750 billion is more than the Federal Government will spend on education in its entirety in the next 5 years.

It is time for Congress and the American people to put an end to this.

STOP OUTSOURCING AMERICAN JOBS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the further outsourcing of American jobs through more unfair trade agreements. The Obama administration is currently working on the next executive branch job-killing so-called "free trade" agreement. They are calling it the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP.

The contents of this agreement have been kept secret from the American people and Members of Congress and, as well, the general public wherever they might live. The administration is using the same old failed trade model

called “fast track” to negotiate this, which means whatever they negotiate, we don’t get to see, and then they bring it up here under a fast track procedure. That process ties our hands. They bring it up in one lump-sum vote, with no amendments allowed. And they usually do it in a lame-duck session of Congress after election and just try to ram it through, usually very late in the evening, often in the early morning hours.

Since fast track was first used, the United States has accumulated red ink—trade deficits, more imports coming in here than exports going out—for nearly three decades. We have accumulated over \$9 trillion in trade deficits. If you want to know why we have a budget deficit, it is because we have a trade deficit. We have outsourced too many jobs to low-wage havens. Go out and try to buy anything made in America; right? The American people know this inherently. More than 7 million good-paying American manufacturing jobs have been lost since fast track was first passed.

Every poll of U.S. opinion tells this Congress: What do the American people care about? Jobs and the economy. Jobs and the economy. They care about economic recovery. So why is this administration using the same old model that goes back to 1975? Now they are looking at the Pacific, the Pacific region, as if we haven’t had relations with some of those countries before. But every other agreement has resulted in red ink. The American people want job creation, not job outsourcing.

Actually, if this President were to refurbish this failed trade model and really fix it, it would be the first time in modern history that our trade policy would yield job creation in this country, net job creation in this country and real income growth for the American people.

Now, let’s look at a couple dimensions of this.

The trade deficit in 2012, the last year for which we have confirmed numbers, was half a trillion dollars, \$534 billion. That alone resulted in over 2 million lost jobs in this country. That number has just been getting worse with each passing decade, more and more jobs lost.

Let’s look at some of the countries. Let’s take China. The trade deficit in 2000 with China was about \$83 billion. It has increased four fold. It has quadrupled. In 2012, for which we have confirmed numbers, we had over \$315 billion in trade deficit with China. Every billion equals 4,000 lost jobs in this country. So we are net negative with China—a job loss of over 1,200,000 more U.S. jobs.

With Japan, we have been solidly negative for decades. In 2012, our trade deficit with Japan was \$76 billion.

With Mexico, they said after NAFTA, oh, it is going to be great for America; there are going to be millions of jobs in the United States. Wrong. Our jobs were outsourced. In fact, in the year

2000, we had a \$24 billion deficit with Mexico. By 2012, that had gone up three times more to \$61 billion in the red—in the red—our jobs going there, their exports coming here, not the reverse. That’s 244,000 more lost jobs. The numbers don’t lie.

In Korea, we had a discussion with some of the President’s advisers. They said, well, you know, that was supposed to be the new trade model, the Korean trade deal that this President proposed was going to change everything. Well, guess what? We are in the red with Korea, too. In 2000, we already had a \$12 billion trade deficit. Yes, more red ink. After the new Korean free trade deal, in 2012, it has nearly doubled. It is \$16.6 billion. And in 2013, just through November, it is nearly \$20 billion. That is a doubling of the trade deficit with Korea and 80,000 more lost U.S. jobs.

So if this fast track free trade is such a great trade model, how is it working for the American people? It isn’t. None of these trade deals are working. It might be working for certain transnational corporations who can pay their investors more because of the profits they are making off of cheap labor in low wage haven and the lack of environmental regulations in these other countries, but it is not working for the benefit of the American economy, the American people. It is time to change the trade model.

Let me just put two other numbers on the record here. We have over 1.5 million Americans over 45 years of age who still are unemployed. These are people who have worked their whole lives. We can’t even get them unemployment benefits and their jobs have been shipped out someplace else.

Mr. Speaker, later in the week I will talk about the cost of environment degradation in this country because of imports that are not properly regulated by the Department of Agriculture coming over our border and doing harm from coast to coast. It’s long, long overdue for a new trade model that benefits our nation and creates jobs here at home.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o’clock and 27 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Dr. Andrew Chaney, First and Calvary Presbyterian Church, Springfield, Missouri, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, You equipped the Founders with great resilience as they sought Your wisdom in establishing our Nation. With that same power that inspired our patriots, bless these Members of Congress today. Lift them up, O God.

When they feel discouraged, when negative thoughts seem to dominate, when the winds are against them, strengthen their minds and spirits with an inner faith that only You can provide.

As we are now united in prayer, unite their efforts. Help them leave bitterness by the wayside. May their decisions consider the hopeful faces of parents, children, elderly, soldiers, veterans; that each person in every district will be blessed by the strong leadership of this Congress.

As many voices compete for their attention, create a sanctuary for them to pause, reflect, and hear Your voice. Equip them with a courage that constantly reminds them that “with God, all things are possible.”

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker’s approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker’s approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN 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.

WELCOMING REVEREND DR. ANDREW CHANEY

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LONG) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.
Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, today I have the honor of introducing my friend, Reverend Dr. Andrew Chaney.