

S. 1086. An act to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

S. 2137. An act to ensure that holders of flood insurance policies under the National Flood Insurance Program do not receive premium refunds for coverage of second homes.

PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS

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

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be here on behalf of the Progressive Caucus today for the Progressive Caucus Special Order hour. We want to talk about the need to extend unemployment benefits in this country.

Since the end of December, millions of Americans have lost their extended unemployment benefits and are struggling just to get by in this economy.

We have had two really positive developments this week. One, the House Democrats have an initiative, led by Representative BRAD SCHNEIDER of Illinois, to do a discharge petition, which is a procedural motion to force the leadership of this body to let us vote on extending unemployment benefits, which it refuses to do.

We have to get 218 signatures—a majority of the House—to sign the discharge petition. If that happens, we can force a vote and make sure that people who have lost their benefits since the end of December get their benefits.

That is the first important thing that has happened.

The second important thing is, today, just this afternoon, it was announced there is a bipartisan agreement in the Senate by several senators to make sure that we can extend benefits through the month of May of this year.

We need to do everything possible not only to make sure that the Senate passes that, but to make sure that this House takes up that action. Because if we don't, millions of people—and many more every single week—will not get access to unemployment benefits.

So the Progressive Caucus is here today to highlight this issue and to raise awareness and explain why it is so important that we pass these benefits—and we pass them now—on behalf of the millions of people in this country that need those.

I am joined by several of my colleagues here today. I would like to make sure that they have a chance to talk about the unique situations in their area and why this is so important.

I would first like to yield to my colleague from the great State of Oregon, Representative SUZANNE BONAMICI.

Ms. BONAMICI. Thank you very much, Congressman POCAN. Thank you for leading this discussion. The discussion about extending the emergency unemployment compensation program is such an important topic.

Last week, the country marked a troubling milestone. The number of Americans who lost their emergency unemployment insurance hit 2 million. Thousands more will lose this lifeline every week if we do not extend this critical benefit.

The impact of losing unemployment benefits is immediate and devastating to our constituents. I recently spoke to a constituent in Oregon who was laid off from a large employer in my district. His unemployment benefits ended early this year when the program was cut off. Since then, unfortunately, things have gone from bad to worse. He has been in his home for about 10 years, and now he is in default because he cannot pay his mortgage.

I want to thank our colleague, Congressman MATT CARTWRIGHT, for leading the effort to provide my constituents and yours the opportunity to get a bit of relief. He is sponsoring the Stop Foreclosures Due to Congressional Dysfunction Act. That would put a 6-month moratorium on foreclosures of Federally-backed mortgages for individuals who have exhausted their unemployment benefits.

I have to say this is the least that we can do for our constituents who are still suffering because this House refuses to allow an "up-or-down" vote on extending unemployment compensation.

My constituent is actively looking for work. He continues to look for work. But he keeps getting passed over for jobs. They are being filled by employers who seem to be looking for younger, maybe less expensive workers.

He is one of many constituents across the country. What he and other constituents like him tell me is that it is particularly difficult for the more mature job seekers to find work, even though they have decades of productive experience.

His efforts to find work haven't stopped. And I have to emphasize this: the unemployment benefits that he was getting weren't making him lazy. They were allowing him to survive. But instead of giving him the resources he needs to help lift him up and out of this situation, we are abandoning him and constituents across the country when they really need that lifeline.

We need to extend this lifeline while we are tackling the problems of long-term unemployment in this country. The long-term unemployed need better access to job training; workforce development programs; resources; programs to engage employers and help connect the long-term unemployed, particularly older workers, with suitable employment.

All Americans must realize that being among the long-term unemployed does not diminish one's abilities, value, or potential contribution to the workforce and the economy. I want to emphasize that point, because when I had a roundtable discussion in my district, there were several constitu-

ents there who were unemployed. They get down and concerned that they aren't worthy. We wanted to emphasize to them, You are worthy. Keep looking. You can find work.

We should be extending this lifeline.

My home State of Oregon has been a bright spot in the midst of the recovery. In January, Oregon recorded its lowest unemployment rate since 2008. There is a recent report that shows that Oregon added more than 43,000 jobs last year—that is great news—adding to the unemployment base by 2.6 percent.

Unfortunately, the economic improvement provides little relief for the still about 30,000 long-term unemployed Oregonians who have lost these benefits over the last 2 months and are still struggling to reenter the workforce.

They need these resources to have a car to get to job interviews, to have a cell phone.

As the economy continues to recover, we must stimulate it, not stifle it. The Emergency Unemployment Compensation program doesn't just help the millions of Americans who are struggling to get by every day, it provides an economic boost.

When people get these benefits, they aren't saving this money. They put the benefits right back into the economy. While they look for work they use the unemployment benefits to pay their mortgages, to buy groceries, to keep the lights on.

We shouldn't be arguing over extending this lifeline to millions of hard-working Americans. I was glad to hear the news that the Senate has a bipartisan proposal. I hope they pass that and get it over to us right away.

Yesterday, I joined many other of our colleagues in signing the discharge petition calling for a vote to extend emergency unemployment. There is no better cause than helping the hard-working members of our country who desperately want to go back to work.

Thank you again, Representative POCAN, for organizing this hour. I hope that we can draw the attention of the Nation, but especially of our colleagues, about the effects of ending the benefit.

I urge our colleagues on the other side of the aisle and in leadership to reconsider this and put it up for a vote so we can help our constituents who are looking for work, trying to get back to work, and need that lifeline.

Thank you again, Representative POCAN, for leading this important discussion.

Mr. POCAN. Thank you, Representative BONAMICI. I am sorry to hear about your constituent losing housing.

For the State of the Union in this very Chamber, I brought a constituent of mine who had lost their benefits. Rather than be foreclosed on, they put their home up for sale. They are still looking for work.

It is a situation happening all too often. There is an article in today's Huffington Post talking about the

number of people who are being evicted because they can no longer pay their rent or mortgage simply because of the loss of benefits.

Thank you for sharing that story, and thank you for your work on behalf of Oregon.

I would also like to yield to my colleague from California, Representative JARED HUFFMAN, who would like to talk a little bit about the problem of extending unemployment benefits.

Representative HUFFMAN.

Mr. HUFFMAN. I want to thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for your leadership in organizing this hour of debate on such an important subject. I certainly want to lend my voice to the voices of my colleagues on this important matter.

What we are asking for is very simple. We simply want an immediate “up-or-down” vote on whether to extend these Federal long-term unemployment insurance benefits. We are asking that because I think in all of our districts we see that too many of our constituents are unnecessarily suffering from Congress’ failure to act. We owe it to our neighbors and their families—people who lost their jobs through no fault of their own, people who want to work, who continually are searching for work—we owe it to them to provide the support they need to get back on their feet.

In my own home State of California, we have got over 339,000 Californians who have lost unemployment benefits. The number continues to grow the longer Congress waits, the longer we fail to act.

California’s currently got an unemployment rate of about 8.3 percent, but in many parts of my district—I include some rural areas—that rate is much higher. In fact, in Trinity County we have an unemployment rate that is over 11 percent.

It is very important to remember that this is not an abstract issue. This is an immediate and deeply personal issue about real people and real struggles. Since the Federal benefits expired in December of last year, I have received thousands of emails and phone calls from my constituents asking for Congress to wake up and take action.

One of them very recently is a great example. It is from Lisa in Eureka. She wrote to me:

I have been on unemployment for just over 6 months now and I am not able to make my mortgage payment. I am a worker, not a lazy bum. I want to work, and I am still looking and hopeful. But in the meantime, I can’t live without a little help from unemployment.

That is very typical of the kind of feedback and pleas that I am hearing and that I know you, Mr. POCAN, and many of us are hearing from hard-working folks in our district every single day.

So, again, I think it is important to emphasize this is not a handout. This is about offering a hand up to real people during a difficult time. Without the

extension of this crucial lifeline, 181,000 children in California—let’s remember the impact on families and children—will be hurt.

No one should be forced to make the unbearable choice between paying their rent and feeding their family simply because they lost their job due to no fault of their own. Extending these benefits should not remain a casualty to congressional gridlock.

Just today, we got some great news. I think we are all encouraged that Democrats and Republicans in the Senate are working together on a tentative agreement to extend unemployment insurance benefits for 5 months—an agreement that, as I understand it, would provide retroactive payments to people like Lisa in my district.

So, Mr. Speaker, let’s help the economy. Let’s help our constituents who are looking for work. This House should follow the Senate’s lead and work together to find a solution.

Again, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin.

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Mr. POCAN. Thank you, Representative HUFFMAN, for all the work on behalf of your constituents in northern California. I appreciate your words and sharing the story of your constituent.

Again, 72,000 people every single week will lose benefits until this Congress acts, real people in California, Oregon, and real people in the State of Illinois.

Next it is my privilege to yield time to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHNEIDER), the person who led the initiative on behalf of the House Democrats, led the initiative to discharge the bill so that we could force a vote in this House to ensure that everyone across the country and in the State of Illinois can get the benefits they need so they can continue to get by to find work.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you again, Congressman POCAN, not just for your friendship, but tonight for organizing and bringing us here to have this conversation.

For us in Illinois and Wisconsin, throughout the country it has been a harsh winter. Everyone has talked about the weather and the snow and the storms, but for some it has been a harsher winter than for others.

In January, I hosted a roundtable on unemployment, long-term unemployment. At that roundtable I met a young mother, 29 years old, with two young children, and she told me how, at the end of the day, she comes home, she makes dinner for her kids, and they crawl into bed under the covers to eat dinner and watch TV because she had to make the choice between paying her rent and paying her heat.

I met another woman who has been looking for work now for over a year. Her story was a little different. She was in an industry, travel agency, that is shrinking. She has two kids, high school age, who are looking forward to

going to college, and she is now in the position of having to deplete the kids’ college accounts so that they can simply make ends meet as she looks for work.

This is the reality for 2 million people around the country, and the numbers, as you have pointed out, grow by 72,000 people every single week. In Illinois alone, there are more than 116,000 people who have lost their unemployment insurance and are struggling just to survive.

Yet, in this Chamber, in this House of Representatives, we have not had a single vote to extend or address the unemployment insurance challenge. Partisan gridlock, partisanship and gridlock have already cost millions their emergency unemployment insurance, and the next year it is estimated that it will cost the U.S. economy 240,000 jobs.

Failing to extend unemployment insurance is hurting families, it is hurting businesses, it is hurting our communities, and it is hurting our national economy. That is why yesterday I filed this discharge petition to end the gridlock and to bring to the floor a vote on extending unemployment insurance.

Now, look, I understand some of my colleagues may disagree, and I respect their perspective and I respect their right to vote “no,” but not allowing a vote on the floor, not allowing us to voice our vote in this House of Representatives on unemployment insurance is simply unacceptable.

I believe extending unemployment insurance is not just smart policy, it is the right thing to do. That is why I celebrate the passage, or the agreement in the Senate, bipartisan agreement, to extend unemployment insurance by 5 months. I look forward for that to come into this House, and I hope we will have a chance to vote to it.

I know the path ahead is not going to be easy, but our constituents deserve better than partisan gridlock.

Thank you for sharing your time, and thank you for organizing this evening. Thank you so much.

Mr. POCAN. Thank you, Representative SCHNEIDER. Your efforts for this body, leading the House Democrats on that discharge position—we didn’t know today the Senate was going to come up with something that may pass and may be able to get through this House. But your leadership made sure that those over 110,000 people in Illinois, and each and every week more people adding to that, can get those benefits.

So thank you for your efforts. We hope that we can force this House to have us vote to extend unemployment benefits.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I hope it happens soon. Thank you.

Mr. POCAN. I would now like to yield to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. CLARK), one of the newest Members of the House.

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Thank you, Mr. POCAN, for your leadership on

this critical issue. I also want to thank the gentleman from Illinois for all he has done to try and bring this vote to the floor.

A majority of Americans support renewing unemployment insurance, but the majority here in the House continue to show that they are out of step with American families by refusing to extend unemployment insurance for the 2 million Americans who need it, and the families of my home district in Massachusetts are left to suffer because of it.

This out-of-touch majority has invested billions of dollars in tax breaks for the ultra-rich and for wealthy corporations that have often shipped our jobs overseas. Yet, they are refusing to help those who are looking for work, our job-seekers who are struggling to care for their families and put food on the table.

I cringe when I hear some of the Members of the majority blame poverty on the poor, and then vote to give tax breaks for the wealthy. It is the same majority that looks to slash the budget and put that burden on the backs of our children and seniors.

Some have said that Democrats want to give children a full stomach and an empty soul, but I would say, people who would deny a hungry child lunch, they are the ones who need to worry about the condition of their soul.

In Massachusetts, more than \$100 million has been taken out of our economy as Congress has failed to act on this issue. I signed the discharge petition to force a vote on unemployment insurance on behalf of the nearly 80,000 workers in Massachusetts who have lost their unemployment benefits. They cannot afford to wait for the majority to catch up with the rest of the country, who know this is the right thing to do.

Again, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for this opportunity, and I thank you for your work.

Mr. POCAN. Thank you so much. You deserve a lot of credit for hitting the ground running in Congress. Thank you so much for representing the people of Massachusetts so very ably and defending the unemployment benefits that we need to extend.

This is something that—the Progressive Caucus, earlier this week, released our budget, and our budget is the Better Off Budget, to make sure that people are better off, their families, they have access to opportunity for their families.

That budget offered extending the benefits to the full 99 weeks. So the Progressive Caucus was there from the very beginning to make sure that we can get these benefits extended for every single American, the 2 million Americans, including 40,000 people in the State of Wisconsin, that they can get these benefits.

We are very proud that the Progressive Caucus looked at this as a priority, and that is why so many Members tonight were here to discuss it.

It is interesting, I am going to read a couple of quotes from people that you wouldn't expect to hear coming out of the Progressive Caucus.

One is a quote from someone back in 1983, someone that often gets quoted in this Chamber, but usually by people on the other side of the aisle, former President Ronald Reagan. His quote was: "Unemployment insurance is a lifeline that extends to millions of Americans." A lifeline. That is Ronald Reagan saying that unemployment insurance is a lifeline to the Americans who need it. He got it, in 1983.

Now, let me read another quote. In the year 2002, another person that people on this side of the aisle don't quote too often, former President George W. Bush, this is what he said: "These Americans rely on their unemployment benefits. They need our assistance in these difficult times, and we cannot let them down."

We cannot let them down. That is from President George W. Bush. These are two Republican leaders who understood that unemployment compensation is not a political toy.

It is not something about brinksmanship. It is the demand that we need to make sure that people who pay into the system, who have worked hard and played by the rules all their lives, have that lifeline when they need it because they have put in their dues. They have worked hard, and now, through no fault of their own, they are out of work and looking for work. We should be able to extend those benefits. So that is exactly what we are here to talk about tonight.

Forty thousand people in my home State of Wisconsin, and more every week, are losing their benefits because this Congress has refused to act up to now.

Now, they still can either act through the discharge petition the Democrats have put forth, they can sign the discharge petition to make sure we can get a vote in this body, or we can hope that the Senate does pass this bipartisan deal just from this afternoon, come to this House, and see that we do the right thing here and extend the benefits so that 72,000 people each and every week don't continue to lose their benefits.

This costs the economy. It was mentioned earlier, but it has been estimated, just in January and February alone, we have cost the economy \$3 billion by not extending these benefits, and that is more than \$51 million in my home State of Wisconsin, just during the months of January and February.

Folks, we need to make sure these benefits are passed, not just for the families struggling, but for our economy that is also struggling. We are coming back, but we can't keep putting roadblocks in front of our economy, things like this, that stop unemployment benefits for all too many Americans.

Now, it also is estimated that this will cost the economy 240,000 jobs this

year alone by not extending the benefits, 240,000 jobs.

So here we are trying to bring the economy back, and by not doing the right thing, by not extending the unemployment benefits, we are going to cost 240,000 jobs in this country, on top of the people now who don't have benefits.

Now, you heard some stories tonight from people who talked about constituents, telling their very real stories about what this means to them.

Well, let me tell you about a constituent I had who came in this very body, and I quickly referenced it before: Brian Krueger of Mount Horeb, a hardworking person, a steamfitter.

As we know, the construction industry, when the economy gets a cold, the construction industry gets pneumonia. That is just the way it happens. It dries up even more. So people aren't back to work yet in this industry.

This is a hardworking person who was working as a steamfitter, trying to find work. His benefits were cut off at the end of December, and he is struggling to get by, looking for work each and every single day.

He even put his home up for sale so that it wouldn't be foreclosed on, just as he is trying get by, someone who has played by the rules and worked hard each and every single day.

Today there is an article in the Huffington Post, Mr. Speaker, and I am going to read a little bit from that. The headline was: "Some Jobless Facing Eviction After Loss of Benefits."

These are the very real stories that you were just hearing a little bit earlier tonight. Let me tell some more of these stories, and I am going to read directly from The Huffington Post article:

Craig Bruce, 45, told The Huffington Post that he and his wife were evicted Tuesday from their apartment in California. He said they're fighting the eviction in court, but they spent Tuesday night in a motel room and bunked with family Wednesday.

"I can't get a job. Either I'm over-qualified or somebody else is closer and they don't have to pay them any moving fees to take the job," he told the Huffington Post.

Bruce, a gulf war veteran, lost his quality assurance analyst job at an engineering company in the fall of 2012. He said his unemployment's been hard on him and his wife, who is still looking for work in quality assurance.

"There's been a lot of depression on my end," he said. "She's scared. She's terrified right now."

That is a real story of a real person who has worked hard and had a job for many years who, because of the economy, is out of work and can't get the benefits. And the result of this body not acting, the result has been he has been evicted from his home as of Tuesday.

That is wrong. That is not America. That is not the way we should be acting.

Now, I want to yield some time to the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES), another colleague of mine, someone who has been a fighter for

working families throughout New York and across the country.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank my good friend, the distinguished gentleman from the Badger State, for yielding some time, as well as for the leadership that you have continued to provide, week after week, in the context of this Congressional Progressive Caucus Special Order, and on behalf of the people that you represent, and indeed, people all across America, in bringing issues to the forefront that we, in this House of Representatives, should be dealing with in order to improve the quality of life of everyone who we represent.

Now, unfortunately, I stand today on the House floor again, finding myself in a situation where the only obstacle to progress is the House GOP majority. Once again, we are placed in a situation where the American people could stand to benefit from congressional action, but, because of obstinacy and obstruction on the other side, you have got close to 2 million long-term unemployed Americans who find themselves in a distressed financial situation.

Now, earlier today we were informed that a bipartisan agreement was reached in the Senate and, hopefully, that means we will see progress in that Chamber at some point this month, which means that we have a real opportunity here in the House of Representatives to act in a manner that would benefit long-term unemployed Americans.

Why should we do that?

Well, because there are many individuals all across this country, in the district that I represent in Brooklyn and in Queens, but all across America, who find themselves unemployed, not because of their lack of interest, not because of lack of effort, not because of an unwillingness to work, but because of structural changes that have occurred in our economy, particularly in the aftermath of the Great Recession of 2008.

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We know that when the economy collapsed in 2008, that didn't have anything to do with folks on Main Street America. That didn't have anything to do with folks in urban America, in the district that I represent. That didn't have anything to do with folks in rural America who are struggling.

It was because of the behavior of some reckless institutions on Wall Street and connected to the financial services industry whose actions collapsed the world's economy, and Americans have suffered as a result, so those consequences are still being felt.

We are no longer technically in a recession. This is one of the arguments that our good friends on the other side of the aisle point out. So what is the emergency? The emergency is you still have an unacceptably high unemployment rate, and a disproportionately high number of those individuals happen to be long-term unemployed.

Now, the argument that is often advanced by our good friends on the other

side of the aisle, as they attempt to justify the obstruction that has taken place in blocking unemployment insurance from being extended, is that we are enabling these individuals—enabling these individuals. What kind of myth is that? There is no evidence to support that argument.

First of all, it is important to note that, in order to qualify for unemployment insurance, as the distinguished gentleman from Wisconsin knows, you have to demonstrate conclusively that you are actively engaged in an employment search. Otherwise, you are ineligible.

There is this caricature that has been created, as if these are these individuals who are sitting at home like couch potatoes, channel surfing, whose only exercise is when they run outside of the house in order to pick up the unemployment insurance check from the mailbox, and then run back in and continue to channel surf.

Can't we have an evidence-based discussion, Mr. Speaker, as opposed to fictional caricatures created to justify your harshness and refusal to move forward and provide assistance to these unemployed Americans? We know it is a fictional caricature that you have created to justify your indifference because the facts suggest otherwise.

We know that, for every 258 Americans who are searching for employment, only 100 jobs exist. I am no mathematician, but it suggests to me that, given the nature of the economy, it is impossible for every one of those individuals who would otherwise be eligible for unemployment insurance to secure employment because of structural realities in the economy.

That doesn't even account for the fact that, often, there will be a skills mismatch as our economy continues to change, a shift away from manufacturing jobs and a shift into technology and innovation. That is a good thing, but there is a skills mismatch that has to be dealt with.

So the choice that we have been given is to deem these individuals and brand them as lazy Americans when the facts are to the contrary? Why? Why would we leave these unemployed Americans on the recessionary battlefield?

We know that there has been a very schizophrenic recovery. Corporate profits are way up. Unemployment is still up, but the stock market is up, and CEO compensation is up; yet middle class families and those who aspire to be part of the middle class are increasingly struggling in America.

Whenever I am back home in Brooklyn, I am often approached by individuals who are in fear that they could lose their home, given the reality that they have been harshly and callously cut off by the obstruction of the House GOP majority.

I am just hopeful that for the good of America—because there are unemployed in blue States, and there are unemployed in red States; there are un-

employed individuals in urban America, in suburban America, in rural America, all across this great country. Can't we find the compassion and the will to address this issue?

As I prepare to take my seat and yield back to the distinguished gentleman, I would also point out that what has occurred here is another example of us here in this Congress doing things affirmatively to prevent jobs from being created.

We allowed sequestration to take effect on April 1 of last year, notwithstanding the fact that independent economists suggested that we would lose 750,000 jobs in America if we allowed it to occur; yet the majority steadfastly stood behind sequestration. Then in October of 2013, we had a reckless, unreasonable, unnecessary government shutdown.

It cost the economy \$24 billion, according to Standard and Poor's, in lost economic productivity. Well, you complain that Americans are supposedly sitting at home channel surfing, staying on the couch, not looking for work while you affirmatively damage the economy.

Now, as a result of your failure to deal with the unemployment insurance issue, if this were to continue throughout this year, you will cost us another 200,000 jobs.

I will just say that for a wide variety of reasons—because it is in the best interests of the American economy, the best interests of the people that we represent, and that it represents the best values of America—that we allow a vote to take place on the floor of the House of Representatives because I am confident, Mr. Speaker, that if you do, the votes exist to pass this into law, and we can put this sad chapter in the 113th Congress behind us.

I thank the distinguished gentleman again for his continued leadership.

Mr. POCAN. Thank you so much, Representative JEFFRIES, for your always eloquent fight on behalf of the working people across the State of New York and the need for the benefits.

I am glad you debunked some of the myths that are out there because I remember, during the debate we had on food stamps, there was discussion of a surfer dude from California who talked about gaming the system.

We were basically cutting \$39 billion from food stamps because there was a surfer who abused the system from the State of California. Rather than governing by analysis, they govern by anecdote, and it is something that we need to get done and this body needs to get done.

Let me just share one final story, if I can, of someone from the State of California, again, from The Huffington Post article. This is Ricki Ward of Rancho Cucamonga, California, and I will read from the article.

Ward, who told The Huff Post Tuesday that she expects to be evicted next month, said she has worked all her life from paycheck to paycheck and raised two kids as a single

mother. For the past 5 years, Ward worked in offices, retail stores, and fast food before being laid off from a customer service job for a cable provider in March 2013.

Ward said she suspects she is having difficulty finding work because of her age.

"I took the year that I graduated from high school off of my resume, and I started getting calls," Ward said. "Yet once they saw me, I wasn't what they wanted for their front counter. I'm 59 years old, but I'm a very young 59 years old. I keep myself in good shape. I'm nowhere near ready to stop working."

She said her landlord has been fair with her and that she has received some help from family and friends, but she keeps falling further behind.

"It's so humiliating to have to have everybody else try to take care of you," Ward said. "It's just not what I'm used to. I've worked all my life."

These are the stories that we have talked about during this past hour from people across the country who, again, have played by the rules, worked hard and, because of a turn in the economy a few years ago, have lost work.

The commitment that we have to those people is that if they are working hard. We need to do everything we can to make sure that they have the help that they have paid into: unemployment benefits. We need to, in a time like this, pass those emergency benefits.

I would like to yield my final time to a Representative from Ohio who has done an absolutely amazing job for a number of years representing her constituents and is a great University of Wisconsin alumni.

I have to say that, being from Wisconsin, but she is a great colleague, Representative MARCY KAPTUR from the great State of Ohio.

Ms. KAPTUR. I want to thank Congressman POCAN for just a phenomenal presentation this evening and for lifting up those across our country who worked hard for a living and have fallen on hard times.

Trying to hold their families together, they go try to get a job, and 1,000 people show up for one job. What are they supposed to do? They have lost footing. They haven't been able to make their mortgage payments. They can't send their kids to college. Many of them get sick. They lose their health benefits. It is not so easy getting a job in today's America.

You have been such a leader not just on unemployment benefit extensions, but also on job creation. Since we are commemorating the second anniversary of the passage of the U.S.-Korean so-called "free-trade agreement," I thought I would bring a startling chart to the floor to show why we have unemployment in this country.

One of the aspects of the U.S.-Korean so-called "free-trade agreement," passed 2 years ago without my support, was that we were supposed to increase exports and decrease imports.

It was supposed to actually be good for America. We were supposed to create more jobs here at home when, in fact, we have actually lost 40,000 jobs

when they told us we were going to gain 70,000 jobs as a result of that agreement. Those people who were supposed to have those jobs fell on unemployment benefits, large numbers of them.

Here is a chart that shows what has happened. This gives you a sense of how big the difference is.

All right. The idea is we are supposed to export cars from here to Korea. Well, guess what, folks? This is how much we export; and this is how much they export to us, so we have fallen so deeply in the red.

What happens is, with every \$1 billion of trade deficit, you get another 4,000 people out of work. Factories shut down. Suppliers shut down. The math is very simple. You just need to understand it.

Now, you know, if you look at the individuals who stand in those unemployment lines, they were told that we were supposed to sell thousands and thousands of vehicles to Korea.

Well, I will tell you what: we have sold 3,400 more vehicles in that country—3,400.

Guess how much—since the trade agreement was signed with Korea, how many more they have sold to us. 125,000. 125,000.

Now, according to my math, they have sold to us 121,600 more cars than we have sold them. That means unemployment in Wisconsin. It means unemployment in Ohio. It means unemployment across this country. It means unemployment in the steel industry, unemployment in the machine tool industry. You can tick it off.

Now, they tell us agriculture was supposed to save us. Right? We have positive trade accounts in agriculture, and we are supposed to increase our exports to Korea. Guess what has happened. They are off by 41 percent—not just 4 percent, but 41 percent.

Our exports of poultry have fallen since this agreement was signed by 39 percent. Pork exports are down 34 percent. Beef exports are down to Korea 6 percent. U.S. meat producers have lost a combined total of \$442 million in poultry, beef, and pork exports to Korea in the first 22 months of the agreement. That means more than \$20 million lost every month.

So, Congressman POCAN, I am sure you have seen the impacts of this in Wisconsin. We have certainly seen it in Ohio, and we see these big trainloads coming through on rail of all these cars that they bring in here from the west coast that come from points over the Pacific or the Atlantic coming in to our country.

If you go to those countries and you look around on the streets, they not only don't buy U.S. cars; they don't buy cars from anyplace else but themselves.

□ 1900

So part of what we are doing with unemployment benefits is we are trying to make up for failures in our trade

policy that have turned people away, away from the world of work and trying to struggle to make ends meet.

I will insert into the RECORD tonight a special report done by Public Citizen regarding the impacts of the U.S.-Korean so-called free trade agreement, and if this is the same template that the administration intends to use for bringing trade promotion authority in the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement up here, don't even start. Don't even start, because we have to reduce this and increase this, and until an agreement does that, we are not going to create more jobs in this country.

I will show you something. This is the big hole we are digging out of. We hear a lot about the budget deficit. Well, why do we have a budget deficit? We have a budget deficit because we have a trade deficit. We have had it now for one-quarter century, and every time we get into another one of those trade deals that are lopsided, what happens? We go deeper, deeper, and deeper into trade deficit. More and more companies close down; more and more people lose their work; and then we have to subsidize the differential between imports and exports through unemployment benefits.

We are trying to keep the hold, but we are not addressing this problem. This is after China PNTR. They told us: Oh, that will be so great; we are going to sell all this stuff to China. We fell deeper into deficit.

CAFTA—then they told us: Oh, Latin America, that will make it better. This is after Korea. It went down again.

What are we doing to America? We are ceding away our sovereignty in industry after industry. They have always said that electronics are going to save us. Those big, bad auto States? We are going to do better. Well, guess what? We have now fallen into deficit in advanced electronics. We are not even succeeding in exporting those. The people of this country have to pay attention because the heart and soul is being chipped away piece by piece. Try to find something made in this country—coats? shoes? cars? Some.

What we have is state economies like China competing against merchant economies like our own. And the auto industry got in such shape that it took the Government of the United States to prop it up and save it. We were faced with: Will the United States have an automobile industry or not? That is going to happen in other sectors. That is going to happen in steel, and that is going to happen in shoes. They didn't even fight. But if you look at every sector, unemployment, unemployment, unemployment—appliances, unemployment.

You can see it by census statistics. No matter what community you go to, we have had these lost jobs; and you look over 10 years, 2000 to 2010, poverty quadruples. Don't tell me those people don't want to work. They had jobs. The jobs disappeared.

You can go to these sweatshop countries and you can go find the production. Guess what? You can find TRICO now in Mexico. They used to make windshield wipers in Buffalo, New York. It was a major employer. The man who founded the company had a decent soul. He had a huge foundation that helped that community. It still does to this day. But all those jobs have moved down south of the border. No decent wage, no benefits, nothing. No corporate conscience at all.

That is happening from one end of this country to the other. America has a rude awakening ahead of her. It goes through Democratic and Republican administrations, and the American people know it. They know that it doesn't change here. Unemployment benefits are the least we can do for the American people—the people who went to work, they believed in making a good product, and now they have fallen onto hard times. Don't tell me it is all their fault.

I have done job fairs in my district. Thousands of people show up. There aren't enough jobs for everyone that wants to work. I would invite any President, any former President.

I would like to invite George Bush II to travel with me, because he came to my district. I would like to take him and show him where in Mexico these jobs have gone. Come with me to Guangdong province in China. I will show you where our jobs have gone. I will take you to Honduras. Then, do you know what? I am going to make everybody who comes with me work like those women work, and then you tell me why we face an unemployment benefit crisis in this country and what kind of a society we have here.

Those are earned benefits. Those belong to the people who have devoted their lives to going to work, earning a living, and trying to get ahead in an honorable way and in an honest way, and they deserve them.

So I want to thank you, Congressman POCAN, for giving me time this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I place this article from Public Citizen in the RECORD that summarizes everything that has gone haywire with the U.S.-Korean so-called free trade agreement.

ON SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF U.S.-KOREA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT, U.S. EXPORTS DOWN 11 PERCENT, IMPORTS FROM KOREA UP AND DEFICIT WITH KOREA BALLOONS 47 PERCENT—FUELING CONGRESSIONAL SKEPTICISM ABOUT OBAMA TPP EXPORT PROMISES

EXPORT DECLINE HITS U.S. FARMERS AND AUTO WORKERS PARTICULARLY HARD, DISMAL OUTCOMES OF PACT-USED AS TPP TEMPLATE WILL BOLSTER OPPOSITION TO OBAMA BID FOR FAST TRACK AUTHORITY

WASHINGTON, DC.—Two years after the implementation of the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA), government data reveal that the Obama administration's promises that the pact would expand U.S. exports and create U.S. jobs are exactly opposite of the actual outcomes: a downfall in U.S. exports to Korea, rising imports and a surge in the U.S. trade deficit with Korea. Using the administration's export-to-job ratio, the estimated drop in net U.S. exports to Korea in

the FTA's first two years represents the loss of more than 46,600 U.S. jobs.

The damaging Korea FTA record, detailed in a new Public Citizen report, undermines the administration's attempt to use the same failed export growth promises to sell an already skeptical Congress on Fast Track authority for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a sweeping deal for which the Korea FTA was the template.

Contrary to the administration's promise that the Korea FTA would mean "more exports, more jobs":

U.S. goods exports to Korea have fallen below the pre-FTA average monthly level for 21 out of 22 months since the deal took effect.

The United States has lost an average of \$385 million each month in exports to Korea, given an 11 percent decline in the average monthly export level in comparison to the year before the deal.

The United States lost an estimated, cumulative \$9.2 billion in exports to Korea under the FTA's first two years, compared with the exports that would have been achieved at the pre-FTA level.

Average monthly exports of U.S. agricultural products to Korea have fallen 41 percent.

The average monthly U.S. automotive trade deficit with Korea has grown 19 percent.

The U.S. exports downfall is particularly concerning given that Korea's overall imports from all countries increased by 2 percent over the past two years (from 2011 to 2013).

The average monthly trade deficit with Korea has ballooned 47 percent in comparison to the year before the deal. As U.S. exports to Korea have declined under the FTA, average monthly imports from Korea have risen four percent. The total U.S. trade deficit with Korea under the FTA's just-completed second year is projected to be \$8.6 billion higher than in the year before the deal, assuming that trends during the FTA's first 22 months continue for the remaining two months for which data is not yet available.

Meanwhile, U.S. services exports to Korea have slowed under the FTA. While U.S. services exports to Korea increased at an average quarterly rate of 3.0 percent in the year before the FTA took effect, the average quarterly growth rate has fallen to 2.3 percent since the deal's enactment—a 24 percent drop.

"Most Americans won't be surprised that another NAFTA-style deal is causing damage, but it's stunning that the administration thinks the public and Congress won't notice if it recycles the promises used to sell the Korea pact—now proven empty—to push a Trans-Pacific deal that is literally based on the Korea FTA text," said Lori Wallach, director of Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch. "The new evidence of the Korea FTA's damaging record is certain to make it even more difficult for the Obama administration to get Congress to delegate its constitutional trade authority via Fast Track for the TPP."

The decline in U.S. exports under the Korea FTA contributed to an overall zero percent growth in U.S. exports in 2013, rendering virtually impossible Obama's stated goal to double exports by the end of 2014. At the export growth rate seen over the past two years, the export-doubling goal would not be reached until 2054. While the Korea pact is the only U.S. FTA that has led to an actual decline in U.S. exports, the overall growth of U.S. exports to nations that are not FTA partners has exceeded combined U.S. export growth to U.S. FTA partners by 30 percent over the past decade.

"The data simply do not support the Obama administration's tired pitch that

more FTAs will bring more exports," said Wallach. "Faced with falling exports and rising, job-displacing deficits under existing FTAs, the administration needs to find a new model, not to repackage an old one that patently failed."

The Korea FTA has produced very few winners; since the FTA took effect, U.S. average monthly exports to Korea have fallen in 11 of the 15 sectors that export the most to Korea, relative to the year before the FTA. And while losing sectors have faced relatively steep export declines (e.g. a 12 percent drop in computer and electronics exports, a 30 percent drop in mineral and ore exports), none of the winning sectors has experienced an average monthly export increase of greater than two percent. Ironically, many sectors that the administration promised would be the biggest beneficiaries of the Korea FTA have been some of the deal's largest losers.

AGRICULTURE: While the administration argued for passage of the FTA in 2011 by claiming, "The U.S.-Korea trade agreement creates new opportunities for U.S. farmers, ranchers and food processors seeking to export to Korea's 49 million consumers," average monthly exports of U.S. agricultural products to Korea have fallen 41 percent under the FTA.

U.S. average monthly poultry exports to Korea have fallen 39 percent.

U.S. average monthly pork exports to Korea have fallen 34 percent.

U.S. average monthly beef exports to Korea have fallen 6 percent.

Compared with the exports that would have been achieved at the pre-FTA average monthly level, U.S. meat producers have lost a combined \$442 million in poultry, pork and beef exports to Korea in the first 22 months of the Korea deal—a loss of more than \$20 million in meat exports every month.

AUTOS AND AUTO PARTS: The administration also promised the Korea FTA would bring "more job-creating export opportunities in a more open and fair Korean market for America's auto companies and auto workers," while a special safeguard would "ensure . . . that the American industry does not suffer from harmful surges in Korean auto imports due to this agreement." The U.S. average monthly automotive exports to Korea under the FTA have been \$12 million higher than the pre-FTA monthly average, but the average monthly automotive imports from Korea have soared by \$263 million under the deal—a 19 percent increase. So while U.S. auto exports have risen very modestly under the FTA, those tiny gains have been swamped by a surge in auto imports from Korea that the administration promised would not occur under the FTA.

In January 2014, monthly auto imports from Korea topped \$2 billion for the first time on record.

About 125,000 more Korean-produced Hyundais and Kias were imported and sold in the United States in 2013 (after the FTA) than in 2011 (before the FTA).

Sales of U.S.-produced Fords, Chryslers and Cadillacs in Korea increased by just 3,400 vehicles.

The post-FTA flood of automotive imports has provoked a 19 percent increase in the average monthly U.S. auto trade deficit with Korea. The Obama administration has sought to distract from this dismal result by touting the percentage increase in U.S. auto sales to Korea. This allows the sale of a small number of cars beyond the small pre-FTA base of sales to appear to be a significant gain when in fact it is not.

Mr. POCAN. Thank you so much, Representative KAPTUR, again for your history of support not only for working families across Ohio. I know we are

going to talk more about trade in this body. Thank you for sharing that information.

With that, I am going to close the Special Order hour for the Progressive Caucus. It is imperative that this body pass the extension of the emergency unemployment benefits. The House Democrats have filed a discharge petition. We will do everything we can to force a vote off that; but we are hoping that the Senate, now that they have a bipartisan agreement, can get that passed as well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time on behalf of the Progressive Caucus.

KEYSTONE PIPELINE AND ENERGY SECURITY

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

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, we have just gone through an hour of talking about uninsured, and I want to talk an hour about creating jobs and that it is time to build the Keystone pipeline.

The Keystone pipeline has just reached its 2,001st day of the birth of its permit, 2,001 days that this country has waited for our President to sign the permit allowing the construction of the Keystone pipeline.

Why is the Keystone pipeline important to us? First of all, the Keystone pipeline brings oil from Canada into the United States to six of our refineries. This provides us a level of energy security that is absolutely necessary in today's world. In fact, when I talk about today's world, let's talk about current events for just 1 second here.

This is a newspaper article that was just released a few hours ago:

Retired General James Jones told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Thursday that approving the pipeline would send a message to Russian President Vladimir Putin and other "international bullies" that they cannot use energy security as a weapon.

Jones said rejection of the Canada-to-Texas pipeline would "make Mr. Putin's day and strengthen his hand."

The Senate panel was holding its first hearing on the pipeline 5 years after it was proposed as Democrats wrestle with its impact on the outcome of next fall's election.

The reality is, in a geopolitical sense, Russia is using energy as a new economic weapon to control the countries that it once dominated as the Soviet Union. We have a new energy—well, it is a renaissance. Because of new technologies and new abilities, we are finding oil and natural gas within our own borders; but if we can team up with Canada's oil in a North American oil pact, the reality is we will no longer be relying on Venezuela. In fact, the amount that comes through the pipeline, the proposed Keystone pipeline, would completely offset Venezuelan oil. It doesn't matter what your party registration is; I think all of us would

agree that if we didn't have to rely on Venezuelan oil, that makes us a more secure country.

Now, I want to talk about some of the other advantages besides just geopolitical. The first is 42,000 jobs. Now, I know a lot of the opponents to this pipeline say that it is a myth that it creates 42,000 jobs, but the reality is that when you add the direct jobs—for example, the hundreds if not 1,000 people from Nebraska that would go to work on the pipeline as it comes through Montana, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas—but what it also employs are all that we would call downstream, the downstream that would work on the refineries to upgrade them to be able to handle the additional oil and the oil that would come to them, and those refineries are in Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Kansas.

But then we can look about, okay, what are all the other indirect jobs? For example, Mr. GRIFFIN is going to talk about and mention a company in his district in Arkansas that actually fabricates, takes the steel that is hopefully made in America and fabricates it into the pipeline. So there are thousands of indirect jobs that rely on the construction.

Now, when I am out and about, I hear all these myths that have been perpetuated on the Keystone pipeline, and I just want to bat a few of them down tonight.

First of all, some of the environmental extremists that are opposing the Keystone pipeline tell people that it will increase CO₂, or carbon, in our air. The reality is the environmental studies and the final study concluded that not only does it not increase carbon, but because it will transfer transportation of the oil from train and trucks to a zero-emission pipeline, it will actually reduce carbon output; because the reality is the carbon output to extract the oil from the oil sands is diminishing, and the reality is that oil, as it is pumped out or created there, will be used. So if you stop the Keystone pipeline, the reality is there will be more carbon emitted.

In a recent meeting with the Canadian officials, they stressed to me that they are going ahead with their pipelines reversing the flow so that they can pump oil from the oil sands to the east coast of Canada and then will export it. Then they also have already accumulated all of the right-of-way necessary for a pipeline to the west and will build a second one to the west.

What that means is that, okay, they used the pipeline, but now it goes on a ship and is sent to China, so we lose the opportunities except for what can be brought by train and truck into the United States and makes us less secure.

Now, those are environmental studies that have done this. This is science. This is from reputable engineering firms in one of our national laboratories.

One of the other myths is that this pipeline won't be safe, that there have been leaks in the first Keystone pipeline that is already carrying some of the oil over. The reality is there were leaks in the first Keystone pipeline. They were defective seals that have been replaced, and the leaks have stopped.

Now, this pipeline has been studied safetywise more than any others. The liquid pipeline industry's safety performance initiative reflects these conclusions: first of all, that pipeline safety statistics deliver 99.999 percent of crude oil and petroleum products each year safely; 14 billion barrels of crude oil and petroleum products delivered in the pipeline in 2012; 62 percent decline in the number of pipeline releases since 2001; and 47 percent decline in the number of barrels released since 2001.

□ 1915

The reality is not only are pipelines becoming safer, but the pipeline, this Keystone pipeline has 59 special conditions placed upon it above all other pipelines. Most of these are to mitigate any risk of spilling or of a leak. If there is a leak, one of the other conditions is that they have to have people within a 2-hour drive to be able to stop that leak, thereby minimizing that leak.

Now, there is another myth about it hurting the Ogallala aquifer. They said that hasn't been studied, but the reality is that 22,000 pages of environmental studies that have been submitted to the State Department and made final clearly state that it has a minimal impact on the Ogallala aquifer. And when you read into the facts of the Ogallala—I learned something, growing up in Nebraska. We assumed that it was a big underground lake. What it is, it is a series of rock formations that capture water. So when you have a heavy crude, if it would leak, it is easier to pick up than a lighter crude or a gas. And because it is a rocky formation, it would trap it and not allow it to leak where they could get down there to where the leak was and be able to pump it out without further injuring the Ogallala aquifer. So the fact that it can pollute this huge underground lake that doesn't really exist all of the way down to Kansas is a myth, if you talk to the real geologists and the environmental folks, experts, in this area.

Now, does the Keystone pipeline have an economic impact? Yes. It will have \$2 billion worth of earnings throughout the U.S., property tax revenue, through the property taxes paid along the pipeline to the communities that will help schools and counties with their budgets.

Now, one other thing that I hear once in a while is that Canadian oil sands are more dangerous or dirtier than other oils. The fact is that the U.S. currently imports 1.4 million barrels of this crude daily. Nearly all of it is transported by already existing pipelines or trucks or trains, and there has