

doing about our Nation's debt? What are you doing about this out-of-control budget?

From time to time, at our committee, we would hold hearings on an inspector general report and actually look at some waste. This started our office thinking and some of us on the Budget Committee thinking about: How do you begin to quantify that and hold these agencies accountable?

As one of my constituents said: You know, it seems that they are always after one of us, a small-business owner, but they never go ask a Federal bureaucrat or a Federal agency to pony up or to pay back money or to be held accountable.

In our office, our interns this summer have worked with us on a project to actually begin to quantify this waste and to look at these inspector general reports.

Mr. Speaker, this is what we found. Just taking the reports from the 70 agencies that have inspector generals and looking at a 4-year period of time, from 2011 to 2014, what we found is this: we could put our finger on \$105.7 billion of waste, and that is \$105.7 billion of waste, of taxpayer money that is being wasted. It has been identified by the inspector general's office. That works out to about \$1.5 billion for each of these 70 agencies.

Now, what was of concern to us was the fact that many of these agencies are doing nothing about it; and we found that, when you look at the reports that have been issued, which total 81 different reports, the reports for which a management decision was made during the reporting period was only 30 of those reports.

Mr. Speaker, 30 times, management said that they are going to go in and they are going to take an action in response to the recommendations that the inspector general has found.

Now, one of the things that we looked at was where these wasteful occurrences continue to happen and who are the repeat offenders when you look at these IG reports.

Let me give you some examples, Mr. Speaker. Department of Defense, \$38.2 billion that has been identified—this is one of the reasons that Republicans are pushing to audit the DOD and hold people accountable for the wasteful spending.

Health and Human Services, \$10.3 billion—we found that \$2 billion went toward the ObamaCare Web site, which still is barely working.

Department of Agriculture, \$9.2 billion; Social Security Administration, \$9.1 billion; Department of Energy, \$7.7 billion—and by the way, Solyndra, a green energy firm, filed for bankruptcy in September 2011, after they got 536 million taxpayer dollars. The list goes on and on.

What we are going to do—and I commend Chairman PRICE for pushing forward to hold some hearings with these inspector generals, with these departments, to drill down on the total num-

ber of reports and to hold them accountable for not taking an action and looking for ways that we, as Members of Congress, can charge back these agencies for the continued misuse—not occasional misuse, not one time misuse, but continued misuse of taxpayer dollars.

When you look at the list of these agencies and what they have done, year after year, there are some of these agencies that end up in the top 10 offenders every year—2014, Department of Defense, HUD, Health and Human Services, Department of Energy, Social Security, Department of Agriculture, VA, Homeland Security, Department of Education, Department of State, and the Agency for International Development.

You can look at 2013, continuing down the list, the top 10 again, Defense, HUD, Energy, Health and Human Services, Railroad Retirement Board, Homeland Security, Agriculture, Social Security Administration, Department of Education, and Department of State—repeated waste, fraud, and abuse of the taxpayer money.

When I came to Congress in January 2003, our freshman class decided our project was going to be rooting out wasteful Washington spending. We continue to be committed to that, and I submit our findings to the body for their review and understanding.

INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORTS—WASTE, FRAUD, AND ABUSE

2011–2014

Total waste (70 agencies) = \$105.7 billion
Average waste of the 70 agencies = \$1.5 billion

Waste by year:

Our findings
2011 = \$20.1 billion
2012 = \$19.5 billion
2013 = \$40.9 billion
2014 = \$25.2 billion

Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity & Efficiency
2011 = \$17.2 billion
2012 = \$12.8 billion
2013 = \$35.1 billion
2014 = n/a

11 agencies accumulated over \$1 billion in waste over the 4 years:

1. Dept. of Defense—\$38.2 billion
2. Dept. of Health & Human Services—\$10.3 billion
3. Dept. of Agriculture—\$9.2 billion
4. Social Security Administration—\$9.1 billion
5. HUD—\$ 7.7 billion
6. Dept. of Energy—\$7.7 billion
7. Dept. of Homeland Security—\$5.9 billion
8. VA—\$3.9 billion
9. Dept. of Education—\$3.2 billion
10. Railroad Retirement Board—\$2.5 billion
11. Dept. of State—\$1.1 billion
Top 10 in 2014 Total Waste
1. Dept. of Defense—\$10.4 billion
2. HUD—\$2.9 billion
3. Dept. Health & Human Services—\$2.7 billion
4. Dept. of Energy—\$2.6 billion
5. Social Security Administration—\$2.5 billion
6. Dept. of Agriculture—\$992.7 million
7. VA—\$957.1 million
8. Dept. of Homeland Security—\$345.5 million
9. Dept. of Education—\$273.4 million

10. Dept. of State—\$264.8 million
11. Agency for International Development—\$202.9 million
Top 10 in 2013 Total Waste
1. Dept. of Defense—\$23.9 billion
2. HUD—\$2.9 billion
3. Dept. of Energy—\$2.6 billion
4. Dept. of Health and Human Services—\$2.5 billion
5. Railroad Retirement Board—\$2.2 billion
6. Dept. of Homeland Security—\$1.6 billion
7. Dept. of Agriculture—\$1.5 billion
8. Social Security Administration—\$1.4 billion
9. Dept. of Education—\$606.6 million
10. Dept. of State—\$266.1 million
Top 10 in 2012 Total Waste
1. Social Security Administration—\$3.4 billion
2. Dept. of Defense—\$3.0 billion
3. Dept. of Homeland Security—\$2.3 billion
4. Dept. of Health & Human Services—\$2.3 billion
5. Dept. of Agriculture—\$2.0 billion
6. HUD—\$1.4 billion
7. Dept. of Energy—\$1.2 billion
8. Dept. of Education—\$999.4 million
9. Securities and Exchange Commission—\$557.1 million
10. Treasury Inspector General on Tax Administration—\$404.2 million
Top 10 in 2011 Total Waste
1. Dept. of Agriculture—\$4.7 billion
2. Dept. of Health & Human Services—\$2.9 billion
3. VA—\$2.8 billion
4. Social Security Administration—\$1.8 billion
5. Dept. of Homeland Security—\$1.6 billion
6. Dept. of Education—\$1.3 billion
7. Dept. of Energy—\$1.2 billion
8. Dept. of Defense—\$979 million
9. Securities and Exchange Commission—\$566.9 million
10. HUD—\$395.9 million
Other agencies total waste 2011–2014 (no particular order). . . .
EPA—\$404.7 million
FCC—\$24.4 million
Dept. of Labor—\$147.1 million
Dept. of Treasury—\$38.9 million
Dept. of Commerce—\$467.1 million
Dept. of Transportation—\$478.4 million.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF KEN FARFSING

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

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize Mr. Ken Farfsing, upon his retirement as the city manager of the city of Signal Hill, California, which will be this coming week, on June 30.

I have had the pleasure of working with Ken on local and statewide issues for almost 20 years, while I served on the Long Beach City Council, as a member of the California State Legislature, and now, as a Member of the United States Congress. I consider Ken to be a dear friend.

Ken has served for over 33 years, in community development, redevelopment, economic development, and city management in five southern California communities. He has spent the last 19 years, however, serving the city of Signal Hill, and I am honored to recognize his outstanding career.

Ken began his career with the city of Santa Fe Springs in California in 1981

as an intern. In 1985, he was promoted to community development director. In 1988, he continued his career as the community development director for the city of Downey. He later became Downey's assistant city manager and director of economic development. He served as the city manager in the city of South Pasadena for 4 years before coming to the city of Signal Hill.

Under his guidance, the city of Signal Hill established three commercial centers, the Town Center North, the Town Center West, and the Signal Hill Gateway Center.

He facilitated the relocation of a Mercedes Benz dealership to Signal Hill and the expansion of the Glenn E. Thomas Dodge dealership, growing sales and tax revenues from \$6 million to more than \$12 million. Additionally, he completed the development of six community parks and a new police station.

Ken has been active in regional issues, also, and he has been a leader with expertise on water issues, working with 27 of the area's Gateway Cities Council of Governments on water, storm water, and urban runoff regulations and practices.

He has served as the chair of the city manager's steering committee for the Gateway Cities manager's group, and he was a member of the water quality task force for the League of California Cities.

As you can tell, I respect and admire Ken Farfaring's leadership and service to the community of Signal Hill, and he will be greatly missed. I want to wish him the very best as he retires. His impact on the city of Signal Hill will always be remembered.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in thanking Ken Farfaring for his 19 years of public service within the city of Signal Hill.

□ 1100

POWER OF THE PURSE ACT OF 2015

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

Mr. RIBBLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Power of the Purse Act of 2015. I wrote this bill to restore Congress' ability to set priorities within Federal spending and, quite frankly, to better control it. To do that, my bill simply removes the firewall that exists within sequestration between defense spending and non-discretionary spending. It allows Congress to regain the power of the purse so that we can take discretionary spending and take defense spending, but right now, the firewall requires us to spend equally on both. The Constitution gives the power of the purse clearly to Congress, and, as elected Representatives, we have an obligation to make the hard choices about where your tax dollars are spent.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take you back to 2011. The country was facing its

third year in a row with trillion-dollar deficits. Republicans and Democrats alike here in the House, Republicans and Democrats in the Senate, and the President of the United States signed into law the Budget Control Act, the result of a failure of Congress to come to a better agreement.

The intention of that act was to control spending, to put caps on spending. But to get Democrats to agree to it, we had to say we would only spend 50 percent of discretionary spending on defense spending; yet Republicans, we would only put 50 percent on non-defense spending. So we locked ourselves and tied our hands, but we couldn't actually prioritize.

In 2011, you could make the argument, as some did—I was here at the time, but prior to that, I was not here—when they argued that we should spend more money here in the United States on domestic spending, and they passed an \$800 billion stimulus bill. They had the ability to do that and adjust to the global financial crisis. In 2011, they responded to the terrorist attacks and decided to spend more money on defense.

But today we don't get to respond. We have to say, 50 percent here, 50 percent there, without regard to the circumstances that we face. This makes no sense at all.

Today we are facing a new and an unprecedented number of threats. They are coming at us from all around the world. ISIS poses one of the greatest terrorist threats that we have seen since 9/11, while Iraq, Syria, and Yemen descend further into chaos. Iran remains committed to advancing its nuclear infrastructure while continuing to meddle and support instability in the region. And we have seen an alarming rise in cyber threats from both nonstate and state actors like Russia, Iran, and North Korea. China has started to build islands in the China Sea, raising tensions in Southeast Asia.

By removing the arbitrary firewall that exists under sequestration, budget caps on defense and nondefense discretionary spending, we restore spending control back to the Congress, and we can appropriately respond to these international and global threats and require more focus on defense.

Tomorrow could be just as well something else. It could be infrastructure right here at home or education. This is National Alzheimer's Month. Maybe it would be spending more there to cure that horrible disease. We need to have the ability here to respond to the climate and environment that we face today, not what it was 4 years ago. My bill simply allows us to do that. By taking the taxpayer dollars that are sent by hard-working taxpayers here, it allows this Congress to make the determination on what the priorities ought to be at the time that we face those priorities.

Now, I know Democrats are concerned that we will just blow up and spend more money on defense, and Re-

publicans are concerned that if Democrats control it they would spend more money on discretionary spending. My bill does not remove the caps, but it does make this Congress have to debate with each other and find a conclusion that makes the most sense for the American people, because times have changed right here in the Congress.

Today there are many Republicans who are more libertarian-minded, and they would prefer not to spend money on defense. They would prefer to spend it domestically. Rather than building roads in Afghanistan, they would prefer to build roads here. I have got colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle that feel we need to focus on national defense. They serve on the House Armed Services Committee or the Foreign Affairs Committee and are well aware of the national defense threats that we face. But we can't do anything because we reluctantly hold onto bad policy.

My bill is designed to correct this once and for all. By removing the firewall, we get to have the control of the purse once again that the Constitution has given us.

Benjamin Franklin said that a nation is best off when control of its money is handled by those who are the most "immediate representatives of the people." This Chamber, Mr. Speaker, is called the people's House. Each of us represent well over 700,000 Americans, and our job is to represent them to the best of our ability. We should not and can not continue to tie our hands with some arbitrary decision that was made maybe out of necessity 4 years ago but doesn't recognize the threat today.

I encourage my colleagues to be part of this process and to cosponsor the Power of the Purse Act of 2015.

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 11 o'clock and 4 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

Dr. Chandra Bhanu Satpathy, Shri Sai Cultural & Community Center, Seattle, Washington, offered the following prayer:

O, Lord, by Your will, we are born in different nations, speak different languages, and follow different religions and cultures; yet we are all Your children and ever grateful for Your love and protection.

Evoke in us pious thoughts and feelings to shun all hatred and violence