

an AUMF, would help in the cause of defeating ISIL. Secretary Carter said it would be helpful because we would need to show the troops that Congress supports them.

Two weeks ago, the Obama administration announced that it would be sending an expeditionary force into Iraq and Syria to fight ISIS. In his column last week entitled “Obama’s Quiet Shift in War on ISIS,” syndicated columnist Doyle McManus wrote: “If the first expeditionary forces succeed, as their record suggests they will, they will almost surely be followed by more.” I completely agree with Mr. McManus.

Mr. Speaker, on November 6, my colleague JIM McGOVERN and I, along with 33 of our colleagues, wrote a letter to Speaker RYAN urging him to allow debate on an AUMF on the House floor. We never received a response. Last week, JIM and I wrote Speaker RYAN another letter urging him to allow a debate on the AUMF on the House floor as one of the first actions Congress takes when we come back in January 2016.

Mr. Speaker, President Obama continues to escalate our involvement against ISIS in Iraq and Syria. Our fight with ISIS isn’t going away any time soon, which is why it is high time Congress fulfills its constitutional duty and debates our role in the Middle East. As James Madison said: “The power to declare war, including the power of judging the causes of war, is fully and exclusively vested in the legislature.” The most important vote by a Member of Congress is to commit a young man or woman to fight and die for this country.

Mr. Speaker, I have two letters that I include in the RECORD.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, November 6, 2015.
Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: Among the issues that require urgent attention by the U.S. House of Representatives is the question of the extent of involvement by the U.S. military in the war against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. Given the recent announcement by President Obama of a deepening entanglement in Syria and Iraq, it is critical that the House schedule and debate an Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) as quickly as possible.

Last week, the president announced initiatives that escalate U.S. engagement in combat operations in Syria and Iraq. Specifically, the U.S. will deploy a U.S. Special Operations contingent into northern Syria to be embedded with and to advise opposition militant forces in that region; and U.S. military advisors and special operations forces already in Iraq will be embedded with Kurdish and Iraqi forces on the front lines of combat. Secretary of Defense Carter also stated that U.S. air operations in both Syria and Iraq will increase their bombing campaigns. Taken all together, these represent a significant escalation in U.S. military operations in the region and place U.S. military personnel on the front lines of combat operations.

We do not share the same policy prescriptions for U.S. military engagement in the re-

gion, but we do share the belief that it is past time for the Congress to fulfill its obligations under the Constitution and vote on an AUMF that clearly delineates the authority and limits, if any, on U.S. military engagement in Iraq, Syria and the surrounding region. U.S. bombing campaigns have been going on for more than a year, and U.S. troops on the ground have been increasingly close to or drawn into combat operations, including the recent death in combat of a special operations soldier in Iraq.

Consistent with your pledge to return to regular order, we urge you to direct the committees of jurisdiction to draft and report out an AUMF as soon as possible. We do not believe in the illusion of a consensus authorization, something that only happens rarely. We do believe the Congress can no longer ask our brave service men and women to continue to serve in harm’s way while we fail in carrying out our constitutional responsibility in the area of war and peace.

As long as the House fails to assert its constitutional prerogatives and authority, the Administration may continue to expand the mission and level of engagement of U.S. Armed Forces throughout the region. We strongly urge you, Mr. Speaker, to bring an AUMF to the floor of the House as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

James P. McGovern; Tom Cole; Barbara Lee; Walter B. Jones; Peter Welch; John Lewis; Bill Posey; John Abney Culberson; Ryan K. Zinke; Richard L. Hanna; Thomas Massie; Ted S. Yoho; Ed Whitfield; Dana Rohrabacher; Justin Amash; Mark Sanford; Paul A. Gosar; Mick Mulvaney; John J. Duncan, Jr.; Matt Salmon; Raúl R. Labrador; Janice D. Schakowsky; Peter A. DeFazio; Charles B. Rangel; Louise M. Slaughter; Janice Hahn; Joseph P. Kennedy; Michael C. Burgess; Chellie Pingree; John Garamendi; Joseph Crowley; David N. Cicilline; John Conyers, Jr.; Beto O’Rourke; Daniel T. Kildee.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, December 10, 2015.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: We write to you again to strongly urge you to bring before the U.S. House of Representatives an Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) related to U.S. military involvement in Iraq, Syria and elsewhere against the Islamic State. We ask that you schedule the debate and vote on an AUMF resolution in January when the 114th Congress reconvenes in 2016.

As you are aware, U.S. involvement in Iraq and Syria continues to escalate. In both countries, U.S. special operations forces are engaged in front-line operations. Last month a bipartisan group of 35 Members of the House, representing a broad ideological spectrum, called on you to schedule such a debate as soon as possible. As that letter stated: “We do believe the Congress can no longer ask our brave service men and women to continue to serve in harm’s way while we fail in carrying out our constitutional responsibility in the area of war and peace.” We are attaching a copy of that letter for your convenience and review. In subsequent media reports, we were deeply disappointed to read that you do not believe that the 114th Congress needs to act on a new AUMF to wage war against the Islamic State, but rather that the 14-year-old and 13-year-old AUMFs approved by the 107th Congress under starkly different circumstances provide the president with all the authority he requires.

We firmly believe that among the most important duties of Congress is that of debating and voting on whether to send U.S. armed forces into battle. On this matter, the Constitution is crystal clear: it is the duty of Congress to authorize such engagement. We believe that it violates our oath of office to continue to ignore this urgent and serious matter.

Ten months ago, the president sent a draft AUMF to Congress for consideration and last Sunday he called, once again, on Congress to approve a new AUMF. It is now the role of the Speaker to direct the committee of jurisdiction to approve the Administration’s draft, or to amend it, or to draft a new version of the AUMF and to schedule that resolution for consideration and a vote by the full House as expeditiously as possible.

Once again, we strongly urge you to bring an AUMF before the House in January 2016 so that the House may debate and vote on authorizing U.S. military operations in Iraq, Syria and elsewhere against the Islamic State. We look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,

JAMES P. McGOVERN,
Member of Congress.
WALTER B. JONES,
Member of Congress.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, if we do not meet our responsibility, we will become complicit in the loss of life among our troops. How many young children will have a loved one that doesn’t come home from fighting for this country?

The picture here, Mr. Speaker, is the first one that I brought after we went into an unnecessary war known as Iraq. His daddy, Phillip Jordan, was a gunnery sergeant who was killed in 2003. The little boy’s name is Tyler Jordan. This is actually 12 years ago, and now he is 18 years of age. How many more children will have to go without a father or a mother or a brother or sister who lost their life in war?

We need to meet our constitutional responsibility. It is embarrassing that we in Congress—I don’t even think we have a right to criticize the President, quite frankly. Let’s do our job based on the Constitution. Let’s do our job and debate a new AUMF or a declaration of war. Let’s meet our responsibility for the good of our men and women in uniform and their families.

Mr. Speaker, I ask God to please bless our Nation, bless our men and women in uniform, and, please, God, continue to bless America.

TAX EXTENDERS

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, within the next few days, the House could take up a tax package that extends a number of tax breaks permanently. The cost of such a package runs in the \$600 billion to \$800 billion range—none of which is paid for—ballooning our deficits in a way that reinforces a misguided double standard that investments in the growth of jobs and opportunities must be offset, but tax cuts are always free.

Tax cuts, like everything else, have a cost. If we fail to pay for them, we will

once again increase deficits and debt, which in turn will be used as the catalyst for another round of cuts to the very programs I believe are vital to our economy and to our people. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I will oppose an unpaid-for tax extenders package like this that is proposed, should it come to the floor.

Before going through my concerns about this deal in greater detail, let me say that the package being discussed has a number of tax preferences that I and many others support. These include making permanent expansions of the earned income tax credit, the child tax credit, and the American opportunity tax credit launched under the Recovery Act in 2009. It would also provide incentives to businesses and individual filers for investment, research, charitable contributions, and teaching expenses, among others. Most of us support those efforts.

In many ways, this would be a bill where everyone gets something they want. But, Mr. Speaker, our children and grandchildren will get the bill.

What concerns me most about this deal is that it further entrenches the false notion that offsets only matter when it comes to spending priorities. The direct consequences will be providing Republicans with the ammunition they need to propose even deeper cuts to the very investments that help grow the economy and create jobs both in the short term and in the long term.

Frankly, I am surprised that we haven't heard more of an outcry that the roughly \$800 billion in lost revenue from this package is nearly the same amount as the \$813 billion in discretionary cuts Republicans insisted upon in the sequester. It would appear that we are setting ourselves up for Republicans demanding the next round of severe cuts that harm our economy and our people, both on the nondefense side and on the national security side. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, we must move away from this dangerous pattern.

Republicans have continued to argue that tax cuts pay for themselves by spurring economic growth, a theory that has been proven wrong, and, sadly, as I said, our children will pay the price for the deficits that have resulted. Others will argue that the effect on our deficits and debt of another \$700 billion in unpaid-for tax expenditures over the next 10 years can be ignored because we would extend them every year anyway. While convenient, neither of these is a responsible position for governing.

In a *Wall Street Journal* piece last Monday, Maya MacGuineas, president of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget—the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget—asked: “How do we explain to our children that we borrowed more than \$1 trillion—counting interest—not because it was a national emergency or to make critical investments in the future but because we just don't like paying our bills?”

Our answer has to be not to justify the irresponsible behavior, but to correct it. And this tax extenders package will make that much more difficult. First, this package undermines Congress' ability to invest in creating jobs and opportunities that make the American Dream possible for millions of families.

When we cut taxes without paying for them, there are consequences. Every dollar in lost revenue is a dollar that must be made up somewhere else in the budget. As I said earlier, these unpaid-for tax extenders will set the table for further Republican attempts to slash critical investments in our Nation's future.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, it will hinder our ability to restore fiscal stability by making it less likely that we will be able to protect the future sustainability of entitlement programs like Medicare and Social Security.

In order to appear balanced, recent Republican budgets proposed trillions of dollars in cuts to health programs for seniors and the most vulnerable in our society. Worsening our deficit outlook by passing this bill invites them to continue that tack.

While we face a challenge to our most critical retirement and health programs—a challenge driven by the retirement of the baby boom generation and the looming effect of compound interest on our debt—my Republican friends continue to offer budget proposals that severely cut benefits for seniors and the most vulnerable Americans and they try to justify doing so because our deficits are too high. Their proposal would exacerbate that by about \$1 trillion, as Maya MacGuineas said. Here we are, though, about to consider proposals to raise the deficits even higher.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, this type of unpaid-for, permanent extension will undercut our economic competitiveness by making comprehensive tax reform more difficult to achieve, not easier. We need comprehensive tax reform, and this will make it more difficult. Locking in preferences while lowering the revenue baseline by more than half a trillion dollars will ensure a plunge into further debt.

Mr. Speaker, I continue to believe that the business community would much prefer to see rates go down through comprehensive reform than simply an extension of individual preferences. This bill promises them both—more preferences and lower rates—at the cost of deficits, debt, and diminished investment in our economic competitiveness.

There are certainly components of this tax extenders package that I, as I said before, would like to make permanent. I wish we could make them even better, in fact. For instance, the child tax credit should be structured to keep up with inflation so those working the hardest to get by don't continue to see their resources dwindle year after year.

Again, let me quote Maya MacGuineas when she highlighted this

important point in her op-ed when she said: “Most of the extensions under consideration are sensible enough policy—and their merit is an argument for paying for them.”

I couldn't agree more. This tax extenders package, itself, serves as a powerful argument for Democrats and Republicans to come together to achieve that which we really need: comprehensive tax reform.

So, in closing, Mr. Speaker, while I agree we need short-term certainty for tax filers before the end of the year, I believe the price this package would have us pay is too steep and too irresponsible in the short term and in the longer term. Instead, we could provide that same immediate certainty with a simple 2-year extension. That is what we ought to do.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to think carefully about the long-term impact and consequences of this tax extenders package on the ability to create jobs and opportunities, grow our economy, invest in strengthening our security, reduce our Nation's debt, and balance our budget.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I believe that this Congress and our people expect us to do better. We have a responsibility to our country and to our children to do better. Let's do it.

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ANDERSON TRUCKING: A MINNESOTA SUCCESS STORY

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

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Anderson Trucking Service for their impressive 60 years of business.

The founder of Anderson Trucking, Harold Anderson, grew up in the transportation industry and began hauling granite with his father. In those early years, Harold developed a strong interest in machinery and driving. So it was no surprise when he chose to pursue a career in trucking.

Harold officially started Anderson Trucking Service after he returned home from World War II. The company is now run by Harold's sons, Rollie and Jim, as well as his grandsons, Brent and Scott.

Over the years, Anderson Trucking has grown and prospered, but the Anderson family has never forgotten their roots. The company and the Anderson family represent the best St. Cloud and central Minnesota have to offer. The customer service of Anderson Trucking is only matched by the community service provided by the Andersons and their great employees.

Today Anderson Trucking has thousands of rigs, hundreds of drivers, and has driven millions of miles. The Andersons, however, do not just measure success by the number of miles driven or the number of deliveries made, but also by the high level of the customer service that the company provides.