

DEDICATED WATER INFRASTRUCTURE TRUST FUND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, next week marks an important milestone in the history of North Carolina's Piedmont region—the 250th anniversary of the founding of the town of Salem.

In 1752, Moravian Church leaders purchased a 100,000-acre tract in North Carolina from the British Lord Granville. On February 19, 1766, twelve Moravian brethren from nearby settlements made an 8-mile journey to establish the town of Salem, a new community that would serve as the tract's commercial center.

Moravian Church leaders decided that the new town should have the convenience of running water to the buildings. The town built a waterworks, which was constructed by burying hollowed logs from springs located about a mile away. This addition to Salem's infrastructure attracted the attention of President George Washington, who visited in 1793.

However, Washington was not the first famous visitor to Salem. In 1767, the royal Governor William Tryon heard about the building going on in North Carolina's northwest wilderness. He and his wife made the long journey from New Bern to examine the Moravians' new settlement firsthand.

Along with its advanced plumbing, Salem was also at the forefront of innovative medicine and was home to the first university-educated physician in western North Carolina. In addition, Salem was known across the colonial South as a place of commerce and trade, renowned for its pottery, furniture, silver, and other artistic trades.

In 1913, the town of Salem, with its focus on craftsmanship, sustainability, education, and religion merged with the fast-paced industrial town of Winston, thus becoming Winston-Salem.

Today, Winston-Salem is the fifth largest city in North Carolina. It is home to six colleges and universities, including Salem College, the oldest continuously running women's college in the United States, as well as the prestigious Wake Forest University and Winston-Salem State University.

Reaffirming this time-honored tradition of forging boldly ahead, the city continues to build a diverse business space leading in the areas of nanotechnology research, finance, and manufacturing.

The original settlement is a living history museum that engages visitors in an educational, historical experience about those who lived and worked in the early South.

During the yearlong anniversary celebration, the Moravian Church, Old Salem, the City of Winston-Salem, and Forsyth County will honor important milestones in the town's 250-year history, such as George Washington's two-night visit to Salem in 1739 and the Na-

tion's first public July 4th celebration that took place in 1783. Most importantly, the local community will come together to celebrate and reflect on how Salem's past informs its present and shapes its future.

FORTHCOMING LEGISLATION ON PUERTO RICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, Congress will hold its eighth hearing on Puerto Rico later this month. At the direction of Speaker RYAN, the Natural Resources Committee will then lead an effort to craft legislation for the territory. The record will demonstrate that there is not a single crisis in Puerto Rico, but a series of intertwined crises. It is an economic crisis, a fiscal crisis, a liquidity crisis, a debt crisis, an immigration crisis, and a public administration crisis.

If you visualize Puerto Rico as a tree and each crisis as a withering branch, the root of the tree is Puerto Rico's unequal and undignified political status. While the immediate aim is to mend the branches, ultimately, we will need to attack the problem at its root and that means Puerto Rico must become a State or a sovereign nation.

Last week, Antonio Weiss, a senior Treasury Department official, stated as follows:

There is no question that status is vitally important. Why are we proposing that restructuring authorities and the earned income tax credit and fair Medicaid treatment be provided to Puerto Rico? Well, as a territory, Puerto Rico's status does not afford it adequate tools in those three areas. So we believe that we need to afford the Commonwealth those tools that it needs so it can navigate this crisis. And we agree that over a long period of time, status has contributed to this crisis.

Since the problem in Puerto Rico has multiple dimensions, the legislative solution should as well. First, the bill must empower Puerto Rico to restructure a meaningful portion of its debt. The bill could provide a period in which consensual negotiations between bond insurers and their creditors, mediated by neutral experts, can take place. If those negotiations do not bear fruit, the Puerto Rico Government should be empowered to authorize its instrumentalities to adjust their debts under chapter 9 of the Federal Bankruptcy Code, a right that every State has and that Puerto Rico used to have.

Puerto Rico's congressionally approved constitution provides that bonds issued or guaranteed by the central government receive priority payment. What binds us together as Americans—and Puerto Ricans are proud American citizens—is our commitment to the rule of law.

While I do not believe that Congress should override Puerto Rico's constitution, I do expect all creditor classes, including GO bondholders, to make con-

cessions for the public good that will ultimately benefit all stakeholders. I sense that a bipartisan consensus is finally emerging in support of reasonable debt restructuring authority for Puerto Rico.

Second, the bill should address the outrageous disparities that Puerto Rico faces under key Federal programs, a main driver of our deficits and debt. Consider that historically, Puerto Rico received \$300 billion in annual Medicaid funding, while the similarly sized Oregon receives \$5 billion. I challenge any State to run a decent Medicaid program with that insulting sum without overborrowing in the capital markets. Impossible.

Finally, the Puerto Rico Government has a record of fiscal mismanagement. This is a painful fact, but a fact nonetheless. We must face up to it, resolve to do better, and welcome some temporary assistance. I would support the creation of an independent board to approve Puerto Rico Government's financial plan and annual budgets and to help ensure they are adhered to.

The past is not always a prologue. There is no reason why future Puerto Rico leaders cannot embrace fiscal discipline, as distinct from austerity, and rapidly put the oversight board out of business. And Congress should be careful about casting moral judgment on Puerto Rico since the Federal Government has a \$14 trillion debt that is 75 percent of the GDP. We, in Puerto Rico, are responsible for our actions, but Congress is responsible for its actions and inaction as well.

A balanced board will obtain buy-in from government, business, and labor leaders in Puerto Rico and can serve as a bridge to a brighter future. However, a punitive board that disrespects my constituents and tramples on the principle of states' rights will transform me from an ally to an adversary very quickly.

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DEBT CEILING BILL IS FINANCIALLY IRRESPONSIBLE

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

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, America entrusted Republicans with the House in 2010 and the Senate in 2014.

Democrats lost Congress because their financially irresponsible conduct and trillion-dollar deficits threaten America with a debilitating insolvency and bankruptcy.

House Republicans inherited a \$1.3 trillion deficit in 2011. They cut it to \$1.1 trillion in 2012, cut it to \$680 billion in 2013, cut it to \$485 billion in 2014, and cut it to \$439 billion in 2015.

House Republicans did what the American people elected them to do. In each election thereafter, we were entrusted with 2 more years of a House Republican majority.

Unfortunately, newly released data from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office reveals America's financial condition has taken a sharp turn for the worse.

According to the CBO, the first quarter fiscal year 2016 deficit deteriorated by \$36 billion compared to 2015's first quarter deficit. If extrapolated to a full year, America's FY 2016 deficit would be \$583 billion. That is \$144 billion worse than in fiscal year 2015.

Out-of-control spending was the problem, not taxes. During the first quarter, tax revenues were up 4 percent, but spending was up even more, at 7 percent.

Now, for the first time since I have been in Congress, Republican compromises and surrenders to Obama and Democrats have made America's deficits worse, not better.

This Congress broke open our kids' piggy banks, stole money we cannot pay back, and used it to pay for a trillion-dollar omnibus spending bill that adds tens of billions of dollars to 2016's deficit. I am proud I voted against the financially irresponsible omnibus.

Mr. Speaker, America's Comptroller General and the CBO repeatedly warn that America's financial path is "unsustainable," meaning America faces a debilitating insolvency and bankruptcy unless we get our financial house in order.

Further, the CBO warns that, absent correction, America's debt service costs will increase by \$600 billion per year within a decade, roughly what America spends on national defense, which begs the question: Where will the money come from for an additional annual \$600 billion debt service payment?

America's total debt approached \$14 trillion when I was elected to Congress in 2010. We have blown through the \$19 trillion mark. Now the CBO projects America will blow through the \$29 trillion debt mark in a decade.

For emphasis, Washington is engaged in the worst generational theft in American history. Washington steals from our children and grandchildren with a callous devil-may-care attitude so that we can today live high on the hog, even though it forces our children into hardship and poverty.

Economic principles don't care if you are a family, a business, or a country. If you borrow more money than you can pay back, you go bankrupt. Time is running out. Washington must balance the budget before America's debt burden spirals out of control, before it is too late to prevent the debilitating insolvency and bankruptcy that awaits us.

Mr. Speaker, Americans are rightfully angry at Washington elected officials who care more about special interest campaign contributions than American voters or America's future.

Will the American people channel their anger in the 2016 elections and elect Washington officials who both understand the threat posed by deficits

and debt and have the backbone to fix it? The answer to that question determines whether America continues as a great nation and world power or declines into the dustbin of history.

Mr. Speaker, I can't speak for anyone else, but as for me, Mo Brooks from Alabama's Fifth Congressional District, I fight for financial responsibility and prosperity and against an American bankruptcy and economic depression.

EMERGENCY REQUEST FOR \$1.8 BILLION TO FIGHT ZIKA VIRUS

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

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to strongly urge my colleagues to support the President's emergency request of \$1.8 billion to fight the spread of the Zika virus, a dangerous, mosquito-borne illness that has surfaced in my home State of Hawaii and in at least 12 other States across the country.

The symptoms and effects of the Zika virus, which have prompted an international public health emergency from the World Health Organization, are not dissimilar to another mosquito-borne disease, Dengue fever.

Dengue fever is spread through the very same *Aedes aegypti* mosquito as carries the Zika virus, as well as other mosquito variations. Like the Zika virus, Dengue fever symptoms include fevers, rashes, joint and muscle pains, severe headaches, and other painful symptoms.

The CDC has reported the harmful symptoms and effects of both Zika and Dengue and the ability of both of these diseases to spread very rapidly through mosquitos present in many regions of the United States, including in my home district.

So far, there have been around 50 cases of Zika virus confirmed in the United States. But in the past 16 weeks, there have been 252 known cases of Dengue fever on Hawaii Island alone.

Now, Mayor Billy Kenoi, Hawaii County's mayor, on Monday announced a state of emergency for the county to deploy more resources to battle this Dengue fever outbreak.

I have asked our Governor to declare a state of emergency in response to this outbreak so that the people of Hawaii can receive every resource available to protect themselves, to eradicate this mosquito and its breeding grounds, and stop the spread of Dengue fever, which has quickly become the largest outbreak in the State of Hawaii since the 1940s.

The CDC has activated its emergency operations center to level 1 status. Now, to put this level 1 status in context, the CDC has only raised the emergency operations center to level 1 three times in the past: during the Ebola outbreak in 2014, during the H1N1 pandemic in 2009, and after Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

The President's leadership and emergency request on this urgent issue is warranted and necessary to respond aggressively to the Zika virus early on. He is treating this with the seriousness it deserves, recognizing this global public health threat, the impacts, and long-lasting effects of which still are not fully known.

At the end of last year, Congress came together and passed a bipartisan omnibus spending bill that increased funding for public health preparedness and response by more than \$52 million than the previous fiscal year, but this additional emergency funding request is necessary now in communities like mine on Hawaii Island and in different parts of the country to combat disease-transmitting mosquito viruses like Zika and Dengue fever.

It is imperative that Congress, Federal agencies, local governments, and private sector partners partner together to take action now to deal with the outbreaks we already have and prevent something far worse from occurring.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to push this critical public health funding forward.

PFC JOSEPH P. DWYER VETERANS PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, this week I introduced legislation in the House to expand the PFC Joseph P. Dwyer Veterans Peer Support Program to the national level.

PFC Joseph Dwyer was from Mount Sinai, New York, located in my home district of Suffolk County.

PFC Dwyer served in Iraq and received nationwide recognition for a photograph that went viral, showing him cradling a wounded Iraqi boy while his unit was fighting its way up to the capital city of Baghdad.

Sadly, after returning home and struggling with PTSD, PFC Dwyer died in 2008 and left behind a young widow, Matina, and a 2-year-old daughter, Meagan.

In 2012, while serving in the New York State Senate, I created the Dwyer Program as part of the 2012-2013 State budget. Originally in four counties, including Suffolk, this program has since expanded to over a dozen counties throughout New York.

The Dwyer Program is a peer-to-peer support program for veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury. The program provides a safe, confidential, and educational platform where all veterans are welcome to build vet-to-vet relationships, supporting each other's transition from service to post-service life.

During the first year alone, we were able to conduct 148 group sessions, serving 450 veterans just within Suffolk. Since 2013, the program has