

You win if you bring this debate into every district in America in the 2012 election.

When you go home, people will thank you for being able to focus America's attention on these fiscal issues, but you may be surprised to learn that the American people did not want us to burn down the house in an argument over the height of the ceiling.

DEBT CONTRIBUTION ACT

(Mr. STIVERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STIVERS. It has been said, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a small step."

Today, with a looming national debt of over \$14.2 trillion, we need to take dramatic steps to decrease spending, but we can make a difference by taking small steps as well. Throughout our Nation's economic crisis, I've heard from constituents who have said they want to do more to pay off the national debt.

I voluntarily give back \$700 from every paycheck to help pay down the national debt, and I wanted to make it easier for like-minded citizens to do the same. That's why I've sponsored the Debt Contribution Act, which creates a checkoff box on the tax return for individuals who want to donate money to pay down the national debt. It ensures 100 percent of those proceeds are used to pay down the national debt, and it makes sure that it's still a tax deductible contribution, which it has been since 1964.

So with a national debt of over \$14.2 trillion, we won't be running a surplus anytime soon, but we can allow patriotic Americans who want to volunteer and give money to pay down the national debt to do that, and I hope my colleagues will help me support and pass the Debt Contribution Act.

RECOGNIZING KIDS FIRST, WINNER OF JOHN H. CHAFEE CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP AWARD

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. I rise to recognize Kids First of Pawtucket, Rhode Island, an exemplary community organization for environmental and conservation outreach.

Kids First is the recipient of the John H. Chafee Conservation Leadership Award for its Rhode Island Farm Produce to School Lunch Program, which brings healthy and sustainable nutrition and wellness programs to every school district in Rhode Island. Their strong partnerships with nutritionists, dietitians, chefs, and school administrators have brought important nutrition education programs into schools, and have benefited local produce growers since 1999.

Kids First is a win-win for farmers and students, providing local farmers

with a reliable market and schoolchildren with 200,000 pounds of fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables for healthy meals.

I commend and congratulate Kids First for promoting community sustainability through environmental conservation and for growing Rhode Island's local economy.

OUR NATIONAL DEFENSE IS IN PERIL

(Mr. McKEON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McKEON. As Congress continues to debate proposals to raise the debt limit and rein in Federal spending, I wish to remind my colleagues of the perils of Senator REID's proposal, specifically as it relates to national defense. The Reid plan would cut defense, including funds to maintain the reliability of our nuclear weapons and triad of strategic delivery vehicles that represent our deterrent for both ourselves and our allies.

Because the Obama administration has reduced our strategic forces to the lowest level in decades, the health of our deterrent must be a top national security priority. Prior to the ratification of the New START Treaty, the President committed to fund a host of nuclear modernization efforts that were supported on a bipartisan and bicameral basis. The House also passed language in the fiscal year 2012 Defense authorization bill to ensure the President makes good on these commitments.

We cannot allow a proposal like Senator REID's to jeopardize the reliability and security of our strategic deterrent. We must continue to maintain our investment in our security, stability, and peace.

□ 0910

WAKE UP

(Ms. HANABUSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, we must not forget we're here to represent the people of this great Nation. In a recent poll, 2-1 people said that the reason why we are in this crisis is because of the policies of President Bush. So let's look at those policies because that's the best way to understand why we're in this crisis.

You cannot wage two wars and give tax cuts at the same time. Let's not also forget that President Clinton, by many reports, left a \$5 trillion surplus and President Bush left a \$5 trillion deficit—\$10 trillion.

I ask you, if you believe that these tax cuts are so necessary for the economic growth of this Nation, then what happened for these 10 years? Why aren't we facing a booming economy versus just avoiding another Great Depression?

Mr. Speaker, it seems like you're dreaming while the rest of us are living one of the worst nightmares we can possibly imagine.

Mr. Speaker, wake up. Please, wake up.

PREVENT A DEFAULT

(Mr. POLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, the Speaker of this Chamber has a choice to make with 3½ days remaining until we risk default on our debt. And what does that mean to American families? It means higher interest rates on your variable home mortgage. It means higher interest rates on your credit card debt. For our own Federal Government, as well as local and State governments, it means more of our taxpayer money will have to go to interest to service these existing debts.

At this point, the Speaker of this body has a choice. To be sure, he has a negotiation ahead of him. He has compromise ahead of him. He can choose to negotiate and compromise with only those in his own party further to the right than he is within this very body, or to compromise and come to a deal with those who matter and can actually pass something into law that prevents a default.

Namely, I call upon the Speaker to continue negotiations with the President of the United States and the Senate of the United States to resolve this self-caused crisis within 3½ days and avert a fate that will cost middle class families and taxpayers trillions of dollars.

TIME TO COMPROMISE

(Ms. EDWARDS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, nearly 8 months ago we stood on the floor of this House led by the Republican majority, swore the oath of office to uphold the Constitution of the United States, and even read the Constitution here on the floor of the House.

We read in the 14th amendment, Section 4: "The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned."

We read that, and here we are on the brink of default because the Republican majority has failed to compromise. The Republican majority said we won't do what we've done for every other President, which is give him a clean debt ceiling vote on this floor so that he can pay the debts and obligations of the United States.

So seniors are waiting on Wednesday next week to know whether they're going to get their Social Security benefits. Military servicemembers are

waiting for their checks. Retirees are waiting for their checks. And we stand here on the brink of default.

I would ask the President of the United States to exercise whatever authority is necessary to pay our seniors their Social Security benefits and to meet the obligations of the United States.

It's time for us to do our job. It's time for this majority to compromise. It's time for us to lead.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 15 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. CAPITO) at 2 p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF S. 627, BUDGET CONTROL ACT OF 2011

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112-187) on the resolution (H. Res. 383) providing for further consideration of the bill (S. 627) to establish the Commission on Freedom of Information Act Processing Delays, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 382 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 382

Resolved, That the requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported through the legislative day of August 2, 2011.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), my friend, pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Mem-

bers have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. SESSIONS. House Resolution 382 waives the requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII requiring a two-thirds vote to consider a rule on the same day it is reported by the Rules Committee. This would allow for the same-day consideration of any resolution reported through the legislative day of August 2, 2011. This rule will ensure that Congress has the necessary tools to pass a bill that ensures we cut spending without defaulting on our national debt.

Madam Speaker, today you will hear my friends the Democrats argue about a closed process, but you will not hear them discuss the unprecedented spending spree that my friends the Democrats on the other side of the aisle went through for the last two Congresses. We will discuss how Republicans continue to come up with thoughtful solutions—and I add, balanced, thoughtful solutions—to our Nation's economic troubles, what we think will, and what has up to now, only failed in the Senate. We will talk about the magnitude of this vote and the importance of reaching an agreement before Tuesday. Madam Speaker, it is time to stop pontificating and start acting like Members of Congress. The Nation calls for a solution, and Republicans are the only ones to offer solutions in legislation, in debate on the floor, and with actual votes.

My friends on the other side of the aisle will go on and on today about how Republicans are closing the process and shutting out Members of Congress, when we're really here providing for the flexibility for the Speaker of the House to simply work with the Senate to ensure a solution to the looming debt crisis deadline is met so that we will not default on our obligations. If my Democrat colleagues were serious about finding solutions to this problem, they would vote in favor of this rule today.

The facts of the case are clear: The chairman of the Rules Committee, the gentleman from California, DAVID DREIER, has issued more open rules in the last month than Congress has seen over the last two Congresses—or for a total of 4 years combined. Additionally, in the 111th Congress, under the leadership of NANCY PELOSI and the chairman of the Rules Committee at the time, LOUISE SLAUGHTER, 26 same-day rules were reported out of the Rules Committee. And in the previous Congress, the 110th Congress, under the same leadership, 17 same-day rules were reported out by the Rules Committee. In comparison, the process regarding these rules in this Congress is a far cry from the previous Democrat leadership's unorthodox and unprecedented closed processes.

I rise today in support of this rule. This rule is essential to allow the

House of Representatives the flexibility it needs to ensure the safety and soundness of our country's economic future. Over the past 4 years we've seen record debt and deficits, which have brought us to the crossroad that we face with the looming August 2 deadline for raising the debt ceiling. Americans continue to speak out loudly and clear. And just as they did last November, they are saying it is time to stop the out-of-control spending, wasteful Washington spending, and excessive government. Republicans have cut spending at every opportunity in this Congress, and we are hoping to do that again today.

Discretionary and mandatory spending at Federal levels are on unsustainable paths. In the last 2 years of Democrat control, Congress has approved and the President has signed into law an 84 percent increase in non-defense discretionary spending, and the President's budget proposes to freeze discretionary spending at these inflated levels. America can no longer support or afford this kind of leadership.

The President's proposed FY 2012 budget also doubles, then triples the Federal deficit over the next 10 years. And while increasing taxes on the Nation's job creators by \$1.6 trillion sounds like a good deal to the President, in fact, free enterprise system employers and American workers know otherwise. Additionally, the President's budget makes no substantial effort to address the unsustainable rate of entitlement spending, one of the major aims of the President's own fiscal commission, which he has ignored. Obviously, the President has no intention of cutting spending or reining in Big Government programs. Big Government, more taxes, more regulations are directly in the President's strike zone. And that is the process he intends to challenge Congress to come right along with him on and keep marching toward the cliff.

Madam Speaker, we're at the end of the road. Once again today, Republicans are saying, We are going to have to make tough choices. That's why we came to Congress. And the majority party will continue to do that today. Over the past 7 months, Republican leadership has been steadfast in their support for cutting spending and getting control of our record deficit and debt. The House passed H.R. 1, a continuing resolution that brought back spending levels to 2008 levels, cutting \$100 billion in 1 year. In April, this House passed a budget that would cut \$6.2 trillion in government spending over the next decade compared to the President's budget. Just last week, this body passed Cut, Cap, and Balance, which would limit discretionary spending, cap spending to a lower percentage of GDP, and lead to a Balanced Budget Act, so Congress could no longer write checks that they can't cash without passing the debt on by asking foreign governments and others to make up the difference for us.