

If we just let all the Bush tax cuts expire—all of them—if we went back to the bad old days of the Clinton tax rates that the Republicans claimed would destroy the economy—except actually what happened was, we had 3.8 percent unemployment, and we paid down debt with the Clinton tax rates. But, yes, “the job creators” had to pay a little bit more. Those were really bad times, the Republicans would have us believe. So we don’t want to go back there. We want to stay in the current day.

We have been cutting taxes now for 11 years of Bush tax cuts, 3 years with Obama as a coconspirator on the Bush tax cuts. Where are the jobs? Well, let’s just keep doing it, and maybe it will create jobs.

It’s not going to create jobs. There are no jobs. There are no jobs in this package.

At the least, at the least, they could have extended the Federal Aviation Administration authority. Now, most people think, what does that mean? Well, a week ago last Friday, authority to run the Federal Aviation Administration expired. The air traffic controllers are working under emergency provisions, and they’re being paid out of the trust fund, which is being drawn down. But all of the taxes went away. So we’re walking away from \$200 million a week—that is in taxes that would come from users of the system. Most of the airlines have raised their ticket prices to capture that money.

Four thousand Federal employees have lost their jobs or are laid off, are collecting unemployment. Republicans don’t care about Federal employees; so let’s put that aside.

□ 1010

But 90,000 private sector construction workers and small businesses are also unemployed because we have brought all the safety and security improvements across the entire system to a screeching halt because we are not collecting taxes, which the airlines are now capturing for profits. Could that be in here? That would put 94,000 people back to work. No, that’s not in here. That’s too much to ask.

There isn’t a single job in this package. The biggest problem in America, the greatest deficit we have is in job creation. If we could get back down around 5 percent unemployment, guess what: Those people are working, they are not drawing unemployment benefits, they are not drawing food stamps because they are desperate to put food on the table and the unemployment isn’t enough, and a quarter of the deficit would go away with people working.

How about transportation infrastructure? One hundred and fifty thousand bridges are crumbling, need to be replaced or rehabilitated; a \$70 billion backlog in critical investment in our transit systems across the country, all made in America, manufacturing jobs, engineering jobs. No, can’t do those sorts of things in this bill.

We can’t make investments because the Republicans say everything government does is bad. So we can’t even make investments. We can’t discriminate between wasteful spending, consumptive spending, and investments that will put people back to work, as they claim government can’t put people back to work.

That’s funny. I wonder who built our national highway system. I don’t think it was the private sector. I don’t think it was the financiers on Wall Street. The billionaires and the millionaires are escaping any meaningful taxation at this point, seeing the lowest level of taxation on their incomes since, you know, forever, basically.

We can’t ask them to do anything. We can’t invest, we can’t create jobs, and we are going to cut student financial aid for sure and a few other things.

DEBT CEILING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we will be gathering this morning in a number of conferences and caucuses to assess the work over the weekend that addresses a procedural process that most Americans were never made aware of for the last 100 times since 1917, that we raise the debt ceiling. It is tragic that these two words have become such dastardly words in the American psychic and the American vocabulary, and it has been characterized as reckless spending in Washington more than what it is, which most Americans do at the end of the month, and that is to pay their bills.

I had the privilege of joining in a balanced budget process in the 1990s, and, frankly, it was a joy. It was good to do good things in a bipartisan manner on behalf of the American people.

Out of that process came something called the Children’s Health Insurance Program that helped insure, over these last couple of years, millions and millions of children and, yes, we had a balanced budget. In the course of it, of course, in the rush of doing that budget we skewed the reimbursements for physicians, the doctors that you see in your hamlets and villages and counties and cities and States, the doctors that many of you send to medical school who happen to be your children, the doctors who take an oath to care for the American people.

Yes, we skewed their reimbursement. So, now, every year we have to confront the unfairness of how we reimburse our doctors, the doctors who work in public health institutions, county hospitals, clinics. This is what happens when you rush to do something that should be ordinary.

So today I rise looking towards the meetings that will go on today. In many of them we will huddle together to try and do the right thing. But I asked months ago for us to raise the

debt ceiling, as has been done 17 times for the President of the United States, President Reagan and other Presidents who have asked to have that done, and then begin to look long term. As Mark Zandi has indicated, and a number of economists have said, immediate cuts will be damaging to this economy.

But I rise today to speak of the vulnerable persons who really can’t speak for themselves. Many people think seniors have lobbyists in one of the major, largest, if you will, lobbying group for seniors, and they do a great job.

But I know seniors who really are huddled in small apartments and old, old homes left to them by their deceased spouse, something they paid for but has deteriorated over the years. Because we are not helping seniors with their rehab anymore, and many of them got reverse mortgages that really took them to the cleaners and left them with nonperforming contractors who did a poor job on their homes, these are the seniors who don’t have voices.

Or, maybe, the vulnerable families in Latino and African American communities where the wealth distinction has showed, where our majority Americans, white Americans, have a wealth factor of \$113,000; and, respectively, African Americans have \$5,000; and Hispanics, Latinos at \$6,000. Now that doesn’t cover all. There are people in Appalachia and other places around the Nation where that disparity is very, very strong.

But it does mean that there is a population of vulnerable Americans. And the question is whether or not the approach that we are going to take today in doing something as simple as raising the debt ceiling to allow us to pay our bills has a dastardly part to it that causes the laying off of hundreds of thousands of Americans because there is no job creation.

Because when you cause us to stop spending money to encourage the economy to move such as the 3 million jobs that were created with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, then there is no job creation. Our private sector is not moving as fast as we would like.

We hope this will spur them on, but I have heard that before. I have heard, during the TARP and the bailout of banks, just give us a chance. And you ask any small business around America whether they are able to access capital to build their structure and their business, small businesses that I truly believe are the backbone of America. If we did nothing on this floor but every day do something, give a gift to small businesses and health care, give a gift to them in tax relief, give a gift to them in incentive to grow their business, and you would see Americans being hired.

Small businesses are as small as one individual sitting in front of their computer. That is what we should be doing.

Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned about going forward with a complex approach to the debt ceiling while thousands of Americans are out of jobs, where airlines are taking money they should not take, while the FAA is shut down. We have many other problems to take care of while construction jobs are at a standstill.

What about the vulnerable Americans? That's what my concern will be about as we go through these meetings and approach this floor today.

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 10 o'clock and 18 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: God of the Universe, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We ask Your blessing upon those who have worked so hard these past few days to help bring our Nation to a level of security. Not all are completely satisfied, but help us all to proceed graciously, remaining vigilant for those values held most dear while being just.

In the days that come, help each Member to understand well and interpret positively, as they are able, the positions of those with whom they disagree. Grant to each the wisdom of Solomon, and to us all the faith and confidence to know that no matter how difficult things appear to be, You continue to walk with our Nation, as You have done for over two centuries.

May all that is done today in the people's House be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 4 of House Resolution 375, legislative business is not dispensed with on this day.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

THE WINNERS TODAY ARE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, today the agreement that we will be voting on is another example of the historic pivot here in Washington because never before in history has an increase in our Nation's debt limit been tied to cuts in spending.

No longer will the debate be about how much more is the Federal Government going to spend; the debate now is how much spending is going to be cut.

This legislation will require more than \$2.1 trillion in Federal spending cuts; puts in place firm caps to hold down future spending; both Houses of Congress must have an up-or-down vote on a balanced budget amendment; it does not impose any job-killing tax increases; it avoids a default on Federal obligations that would be disastrous to our economy; and it begins a process to put this Nation on a path to prosperity.

We have so much more that still needs to be done, but this is further progress in turning the Federal Government toward fiscal sanity so we can leave a better America for our children and our grandchildren.

ORDINARY FOLKS EXCLUDED

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

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, it seems whenever important decisions are made by a few people inside a room inside the Beltway, ordinary folks are not only excluded from the room but seem to be excluded from the minds of the people in the room.

I'm talking about ordinary folks working to keep their heads above water; ordinary folks working to keep their mortgage, keep their homes; retirees living on a fixed income; students hoping to have help in going to college; those who are working to improve people's health and our Nation's energy supply—ordinary folks.

What makes anyone think that a supercommittee of 12 people operating in a room inside the Beltway in November is going to do a better job looking after the interests of ordinary folks.

REMEMBERING JUDGE MATTHEW J. PERRY

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this weekend, South Carolina lost one of its greatest leaders, United States District Judge Matthew J. Perry. Judge Perry symbolized courage and leadership and was a towering figure during the civil rights movement of the 1950s through the 1970s.

After having served in the U.S. Army from 1942 to 1945 as a sergeant in the Quartermaster Corps, Judge Perry graduated from South Carolina State with a B.S. in business. He went on to graduate from South Carolina State Law School in 1951. As a young attorney, Judge Perry established his credibility in South Carolina by defending many of the students protesting segregation during sit-ins.

In 1976, he was nominated by Senator Strom Thurmond to the U.S. Military Court of Appeals in Washington. In 1979, he was the first African American to be appointed as a U.S. District Judge for South Carolina. He has been the recipient of the Order of the Palmetto, the highest civilian honor of the State of South Carolina.

Our Nation has truly lost a legend who has made a difference for all of the people of South Carolina.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

DEBT CEILING LEGISLATION

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. This is a little different than the Reid bill we voted on