

a majority that has failed to do the business of the American people, even for something as fundamental as providing for the operations of government.

Mr. Speaker, we Democrats welcome the opportunity to sit down with our Republican colleagues and reach a compromise agreement to meet our responsibilities and address many of the pressing issues I have outlined earlier in this address.

My time is about up. Had we utilized the 90 days that we all voted—we on our side of the aisle, the Democrats voted—with our Republican friends, although 90 Republicans voted “no,” but we all voted “yes” to take 90 days to meet our responsibilities to the American people. It hasn’t been done. We have no confidence that giving 2 more weeks will make it happen.

Let’s get to work right now. Not on the tax bill. That could be passed at some point in time. I am against it. I will vote against it. I hope it fails. It is a bad bill. But let’s address these priorities. That is not what the intent of these 2 weeks are. It is to give 2 weeks so we can pass a bad tax bill that will hurt America, will hurt our children, and will hurt the middle class.

□ 1100

PEOPLE ARE PAYING ATTENTION

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, as I listened to the House Democratic whip lay out the case for the American public, I was struck by how stark the choices are and how much we are looking at failure at home and abroad.

We are watching the reckless action of Trump with his declaration that we are going to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem, further isolating America. We are alone in this instance. People who are in the Arab world, European allies, are deeply concerned that this will have a destabilizing effect.

We are watching the countdown here as we are kind of scrambling to keep government open, when, for heaven’s sake, these have been clear for months. Republicans occupy all the levels of power. Why can’t they simply act to be able to send clear signals so the appropriators can work and government operates.

We have watched the expiration of the Children’s Health Insurance Program, wildly popular with people across the political spectrum to be able to have this significant enhancement of health for children in this country, even more important because of the Republicans’ relentless assault on the Affordable Care Act and destabilizing insurance markets. Yet State after State, including my home State of Oregon, is facing the difficult task of sending out notices to families that they are no longer going to have access to this critical healthcare.

In the backdrop of all of this, we are watching a Republican tax program which would be the largest transfer of wealth in our Nation’s history paid for by mortgaging the future of our children and grandchildren a trillion and a half extra debt. When you put in the fact that we will have to pay interest on that, \$2.3 trillion to be able to give some of the largest corporations and the wealthiest Americans even more tax benefit, and we are neglecting fundamental responsibilities.

\$2.3 trillion tax benefits for some who don’t need it, and we still don’t have an infrastructure plan, which the President promised a trillion dollars of infrastructure spending to rebuild and renew America.

Well, I will tell you, there would be bipartisan support for any reasonable plan going forward. In fact, we have people in the American transportation industry who are saying: Raise our taxes.

The fuel tax has been raised in over half the States, including a number of red Republican States. There is a deal to be had when AAA and the American Trucking Associations say: Let’s provide the leadership, make the investment, put hundreds of thousands of Americans to work in ways that will enhance the environment, improve the economy, and give people a sense of pride that we can actually come together and get something done.

It is waiting there. Yet we are spending \$2.3 trillion to largely benefit the top 1 percent and the largest corporations, and we are ignoring needs like that.

The Treasury, we are told, has been doing studies that will prove that this will just pay for itself, and the Secretary of the Treasury has been asked: Show us the studies. What is the research? Where do you pick this number out of the air that is rejected by virtually every independent economist as well as past experience?

We see nothing.

The tax bill is constantly in flux. That is one of the prices that we pay, because they never followed regular order, they didn’t attempt to work on a bipartisan basis. There were no hearings held on this bill. As a member of the Ways and Means Committee, I was shocked. This bill changed sometimes hour by hour. They still don’t know what they have passed. They are talking about changing corporate tax rates, they are talking about dealing with some of the deductions that have been taken away, like for State and local taxes. It is in a state of flux.

What we do know is what was passed in the House is wildly unpopular. How do you take a tax cut that is unpopular by 75 percent of the population? It is because people are starting to look at it, and the closer they look, the more they are going to find it distasteful.

I am hopeful that we will be able someday to come to our senses, work together on things that will actually make a difference for the American public rather than make things worse.

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 5 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

Reverend Steven E. Boes, Boys Town, Boys Town, Nebraska, offered the following prayer:

Today we remember the lives lost at Pearl Harbor and all the young men and women who serve today.

Lord God, in these troubled times of fires, floods, hurricanes, terror attacks, and mass shootings, help us to rely on Your strength to envision and build a stronger, more secure America.

Give us more visionaries like Father Edward Flanagan, who founded Boys Town on December 12, 100 years ago. Father Flanagan was an Irish immigrant who lived the American Dream and taught us all that even the most troubled child could grow up to be a useful citizen if given half the chance. He saw the best in the kids that others rejected as useless.

Help us, but especially each of our Representatives, to see the best in those who have different political or social views so that we can, together, build an America that enables and calls forth the best in its citizens.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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. The question is on the Speaker’s approval of the Journal.

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. DAVIDSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.