I can't believe that we're doing this right now. We're talking about a national health care program that's going to add additional trillions of dollars. We're talking about bailouts to the financial institutions and to the auto industry. We're talking about a cap-and-trade program that's going to increase the cost of every family in America between $3,000 and $4,000 to turn on their lights or to buy gasoline at a service station or anything else that produces energy. We're adding about $2 trillion a year to this debt, and it's unsustainable. It is going to affect every man, woman, and child who is living in America today, but what it's going to do to future generations is unbelievable.

We can destroy this Republic if we don't get control of spending. This is a political hyperbole. I'm telling you right now that we can destroy this form of government and this civilization we have, just like Rome did, if we don't get control of spending. It is out of control. It is out of control. We're $56 trillion in debt today, and we're adding $2 trillion a year, plus all of these additional programs we're coming up with. In the next 5 years, they say we're going to spend an additional $5 trillion. We don't have it, so we're putting this burden on our kids and on our grandkids.

It's wrong. We have to do something about it. We have to do it now. We have to start getting our spending in order. My Republican and Democrat colleagues understand that. Mr. WOLF is a Republican who sent this out, and Mr. COOPER is a Democrat. They understand it. We all ought to understand it.

ENERGY

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

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Madam Speaker, it is an honor to be here today to talk in this House about energy. This is a moment in time when, I think, most Americans understand this great opportunity we have to really turn things around for our future in this country. It's about three principal elements that aren't just tied to the high cost of gasoline. It's about national security; it's about a better environment; and probably, as one of the most important things for this moment, it's about jobs. It's about a new economy.

We'll just talk about national security. I think all of us understand very clearly, every American, no matter where one is from, the fact that importing oil is the basis for a lot of the dependency that we have. Sixty percent or so of the oil that we take in the United States comes from outside the United States. We depend, unfortunately, on many countries that are, at best, not our friends and that are, at worst, our mortal enemies, who fund terrorism and threats against the United States and against our allies around the world. The sooner that we can take oil out of the centerpiece of our natural resource dependency, the better. That's not to say we don't have oil in the United States and that, yes, we're going to drill more and all that kind of thing. What I'm talking about is the fact that much of our oil comes from places around the world, from the Middle East, from Venezuela and from other places that are not stable places for us to depend on this.

Number 2 is our economy. We know that we have a great opportunity in terms of this next generation of jobs to be created relating to alternative energy and to the various kinds of alternative energies that are out there right now that are being developed by our scientists, by our engineers, and by our businesspeople.

There is one thing that, I think, is just incredible and that I'll just give by way of an example because we know about solar and wind and a lot of other things. I'm from Florida, and I was speaking to one of our utility companies the other day, and they're talking about building the largest solar plant in the world in Florida. Over the years, we've heard, Oh, well, there isn't enough sun or maybe other things. Well, now there is a general recognition that anywhere in the United States there are great opportunities for solar. The technology is moving along, and we need to continue to incent that continued higher level of development of battery storage for solar and things like that.

One of the things he said to me is, in building this plant, they have to import the mirrors—these are the pieces of equipment to hold the solar and to capture the power—from Germany. Hundreds of millions of dollars of this product have to come in from Germany because we don't produce it here in the United States.

Why? Why don't we produce it? Why isn't that a job opportunity that is based right here?

I think that one of the things that's going on right now in the investment recovery act that we've put together and other things that, I think, all of us share, Democrats and Republicans and as Americans, is the idea that, if we're going to talk about energy, we have to incentivize business and industry and the engineers in our universities to develop the science, to develop the entrepreneurship, to give the tax incentives for investment for that type of energy in the United States, and to build the equipment here in the United States.

There is no reason. It costs a lot of money to ship fragile mirrors over from Germany. We can build it here. We can build it better. We can probably export it and can compete with the rest of the world.

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I think that's a pretty exciting opportunity, and there are so many other areas. In my district off the coast of Florida, most of you have heard of the gulf stream. That's that perpetual current, 24/7, 365 days a year, that runs up and down up to north along the east coast. Well, right now, one of our local universities, Florida Atlantic University, is developing technology where they can put turbines in the Atlantic Ocean and capture that energy.

I don't know if this is going to work long-term, but that's the kind of American ingenuity that we're looking for, and we as a government and private sector, our scientists, our entrepreneurs, we need to work together to capture that and build on that.

And of course, there's the environment. We all understand that, and there is something going on in the world on climate. People can have different opinions. I think most scientists agree there's something going on, and whatever we can do in the United States and around the world to provide leadership to reduce the impact of CO_2 and other things, it's good for all of us.

I live in a coastal area, 75 miles on the Atlantic Ocean, some of the most beautiful areas in the world. We obviously are very sensitive to the hurricane activity, to the rise of the Atlantic Ocean, things like that, but I think we all understand there's an environmental issue at the same time.

So what are we doing here in Washington? We're working very collectively, and there are a lot of business and industry actively supporting some of the various ideas that are coming forward to work on this in a very productive way to make sure that the United States is leading the world in these areas of alternative energy.

And we're debating a bill right now and I know our colleagues are asking for comments from back home. We obviously want to do it in a way that allows for appropriate levels of transition for our industries who are dependent on old fuel sources to move to new fuel sources. We need to work together to make sure that the system eases in a way that is economically competitive. That's what we need to do. At the same time, we ought to be encouraging as much as we can getting these products into play.

So I'm very excited about the fact that we can build a new energy future, and I look forward to working with all of our Members to do that.

WE NEED A NATIONAL ENERGY THAT DOESN'T PICK WINNERS AND LOSERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam Speaker, I'm here today to talk about the same issue that my colleague from Florida just talked about, and that's energy. He alluded to the energy bill that's been moving through Congress over the last several months, but he neglected to say that in that bill are some real costs for real people. And I think these are the important issues in front of our Nation today.

Energy, we found when the price of gasoline went up last summer over $4 a gallon, we were pressed, I think appropriately, to try to find an energy future, a plan for our energy future, and we never really answered that question. Well, this morning in Charleston, West Virginia, where I'm from, the price of gasoline went up to $2.75 and has been going up almost daily. So we need a national energy plan that doesn't pick winners and losers, that takes into account real costs for real people.

Right now, the bill that's passed out of the Energy and Commerce Committee is a national energy tax on every single American. We call it cap-and-tax. The supporters call it cap-and-trade. But what it is, in reality, is it has serious problems for States such as mine in West Virginia. Ninety-eight percent of the energy generation in our State is generated through coal. Well, naturally, we're the second largest coal-producing State in this Nation.

We've powered America for generations by giving of our natural resources across this country, and I'm proud to say we have a proud heritage, not only of turning the lights on in America but also of the coal mining jobs and the coal mining communities and families throughout my State.

But this will picks winners and losers because the heartland, of which I consider West Virginia—and we just heard the gentleman from Florida talk a lot about solar—but the heartland, which has had to rely on fossil fuels for energy generation and to keep our manufacturing jobs, we're going to be the losers here. We're going to be the ones who are going to pay the heavy price.

What kind of price are we going to pay? Number one, job loss. It's estimated that in my State alone over 10,000 jobs will be lost in our manufacturing sector because of this bill. And you ask, why is that? Well, because our industrial input will be lower because of the high cost of meeting the demands, because of the lack of a transitional period in this bill. We'll also lose probably many, many, 10s of thousands of jobs in our coal mining industry and associated industries alone.

Also, for the individuals, how is this going to impact the individual who is paying now the $2.75 in West Virginia? In some areas of the country, that probably sounds pretty good, but in ours, it's going up. We've had the luxury of lower energy prices, and we are pleased about that. But it's escaping us, and in this bill, we will no longer have that.

If you look at the West Virginia electricity, prices under this bill will go up over 100. Think about that: 100 percent of your electricity bill, somewhere in the estimate of $2- to $3,000 a year.

And who's the loser there? Small businesses are the loser. They're going to lose jobs because they're going to have the higher cost of turning on their electricity, running their business. And what's that going to result in? Job loss. That's going to result in lack of capital to invest in a small business. And then the higher cost of transportation would also hurt not only individuals but small businesses as well.

But it's also going to hurt those people who can barely afford to keep the lights on as it is, and those are our lower income folks. By the year 2020, it is estimated that with this bill, with this cap-and-tax bill, with this national energy tax, that the lower income folks across this Nation, that 25 percent of their income will go to paying for their energy costs.

Now, let's think about this. We've just gone through a housing crisis, where people are losing their homes and people are having trouble, people are losing jobs. Now, we're going to say to you, a quarter of your income is going to go to one of the basic needs that you have, and that's the basic need for energy.

Another loser are our State budgets. Think what an impact a national energy tax is going to have on every hospital, on every public school, on every university. Think of the cost of running the school buses that we've seen as the rise up in energy costs.

So I don't think that this is the kind of bill that is going to solve the problem. It sets up winners and losers, and it has real costs to real people. It does have in there a great portion of carbon capture and sequestration where we will use coal, and we will use the technology and innovation, but we need to keep moving in this direction so we can be realistic about how we're going to meet our energy needs and how we're going to transition to the next best source.

Green jobs and green future, that's what we all want. I think that it's a laudable goal, and it's one that we will reach, but we've got to do it where we're not picking winners and losers, where we realize that there are real costs to real people.

THE CURRENT ECONOMIC RECESSION

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

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, as a Congressman from Virginia, also a coal-producing State, I wish to rise to address the current economic recession. We need to spur investment and create new jobs, and we need to act now. An essential part of that effort is the American Clean Energy and Security Act.

This legislation, unlike some of the statistics we've been hearing lately, recently approved by the House Energy and Commerce Committee, would reduce greenhouse gas pollution and create lots of clean energy jobs, including in the coal sector, and make polluters pay for the greenhouse gas pollution they're emitting right now.

Last week, the United States Climate Action Partnership, known as USCAP, hosted a congressional briefing to discuss the business reasons for passing legislation to reduce global warming pollution. The USCAP is a coalition of many American businesses who support the legislation, including especially in the energy sector. They include Alcoa, BP, ConocoPhillips, Dow, Duke Energy, DuPont, Exelon, General Electric, General Motors, Johnson & Johnson, NRG Energy, Shell, and Siemens. Environmental groups are also members.

Many of these companies have built billion dollar companies through the extraction, processing, or sale of carbon-intensive fossil fuels. For example, most of BP, Shell and ConocoPhillips' business is in oil exploration and production. Duke Energy produces 75 percent of its electricity from coal. Manufacturers such as GE, Alcoa, and Dow consume a great deal of electricity and would be negatively affected by higher energy prices. They support this bill.

These businesses worked for 2 years with environmentalists and Members of Congress to develop a blueprint for legislative action that laid out a plan to reduce greenhouse gas pollution, create jobs, and spur investment in renewable energy. This blueprint for legislative action formed a foundation for the American Clean Energy and Security Act, passed by the House Energy and Commerce Committee, on a bipartisan vote I might add.

At its briefing, USCAP members emphasized the importance of the American Clean Energy and Security Act in spurring innovation and economic growth. Representatives of Dow, NRG Energy, and Shell said that without passage of this legislation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, there simply will not be sufficient market incentive to invest in carbon capture and storage, something necessary, especially for the coal industry, Madam Speaker.

Carbon capture and storage is a technology that holds tremendous promise; it is essential to more sustainable coal-generated electricity production. The minority party claims that the American Clean Energy and Security Act will hurt coal, as we just heard, but the business community, including companies that rely principally on coal for electrical generation, support this bill.

The minority party claims that the American Clean Energy and Security Act will impair our ability to deploy American energy resources. Yet USCAP members, ConocoPhillips and Shell, for example, noted at the briefing that without this bill, they simply will not be able to develop the next generation of biofuels.

Right now, we get most of our oil from overseas, Madam Speaker, from countries like Saudi Arabia. We must end our dependence on foreign oil. By spurring development of biofuels, the American Clean Energy and Security Act would help reach that objective while creating economic opportunities here at home.

I think the business community said it best. At USCAP's recent briefing, a