NOT VOTING—6

Barrett (SC)	Murtha	Thompson (PA)
Gutierrez	Radanovich	Young (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members have 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1135

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 4061, CYBER-SECURITY ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2009

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Clerk be authorized to make technical corrections in the engrossment of H.R. 4061, including corrections in spelling, punctuation, section and title numbering, cross-referencing, conforming amendments to the table of contents and short titles, and the insertion of appropriate headings.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. BALDWIN). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.J. RES. 45, INCREASING THE STATUTORY LIMIT ON THE PUBLIC DEBT

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1065 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1065

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to take from the Speaker's table the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 45) increasing the statutory limit on the public debt, with the Senate amendment thereto, and to consider in the House, without intervention of any point of order except those arising under clause 10 of rule XXI, a motion offered by the Majority Leader or his designee that the House concur in the Senate amendment. The Senate amendment shall be considered as read. The motion shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the Majority Leader and Minority Leader or their designees. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to its adoption without intervening motion. The question of adoption of the motion shall be divided between concurring in the matter preceding title I of the Senate amendment and concurring in the matter comprising titles I and II of the Senate amendment. The first portion of the divided question shall be considered as adopted. If the second portion of the divided question fails of adoption, then the House shall be considered to have made no disposition of the Senate amendment.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCGOVERN. I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 1065.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, the resolution provides for consideration of the Senate amendment to H.J. Res. 45, the debt limit and statutory PAYGO resolution. The rule makes in order a motion offered by the majority leader or a designee that the House concur in the Senate amendment. The rule waives all points of order against the motion except those arising under clause 10 of House rule XXI and provides 1 hour of debate on the motion. The rule divides the question between concurring in the matter preceding title I of the Senate amendment and concurring in titles I and II of the amendment. The first portion of the question shall be considered as adopted. If the second portion fails, then the House will be considered to have made no disposition of the Senate amendment.

Madam Speaker, this vote is both historic and difficult. It is historic because it is reinstating the pay-as-you-go law, or PAYGO. This is one tool in the effort to reduce the deficit and return fiscal common sense back to our budget. And it is difficult because this resolution includes a $1.9 trillion increase in the debt limit.

Now, let me begin with the debt limit. None of us are eager to increase the debt limit. But we have a responsibility to take action. The Treasury Department has informed Congress that the United States will reach the current statutory limit on the national debt on February 11. That is next Thursday. If the debt limit is not increased before that date, Treasury will not be able to meet the obligations of the U.S. Government.

Simply, Madam Speaker, if we don't act, then we will default. Now, I can't think of a more reckless or irresponsible act. Defaulting is not an option. If the United States defaults, investors will lose confidence that the U.S. will honor its debts in the future. They would likely demand higher interest rates to compensate for the higher risk of purchasing Treasury securities. And this would increase the cost of Federal borrowing, result in even greater budget deficits, and require higher taxes and fewer government services. A greater portion of U.S. wealth would be transferred to overseas creditors, to China, India, and Saudi Arabia. And it is also possible that those creditors would demand that the U.S. borrow in other currencies rather than dollars, putting in peril the very value and stability of the American dollar.

It is clear that the responsible course of action is to raise the debt limit. It is also clear that we are in this position because of the policies that have been implemented over the past decade. Ten years ago, Madam Speaker, we had a budget surplus. Since then, our country was attacked and the worst recession in our lifetimes took a severe economic toll on our Nation's economy. But we also had two wars that were unpaid for, tax cuts, mostly for the wealthy, that were unpaid for, and a prescription drug benefit that was unpaid for. Yes, Republicans and Democrats have had to increase the debt limit because of these policies and events. And unfortunately, we have to do it again today.

Now, I know there will be those who want to use this vote as a way to demagogue this issue. There will be those on my side of the aisle who will detail how the policies of the last 8 years put us in this position, and there will be those who use this debate to claim that the recession is the fault of the Democrats. We can have that debate, and we will have that debate. But at the end of the day, Madam Speaker, it is my hope that nobody in this Chamber would put our Nation at such financial and economic risk simply because of politics.

My friend from Massachusetts and my colleague, Congressman RICHARD NEAL, said it best in the Rules Committee last night: ''If you voted to go to war in Iraq and Afghanistan, if you voted for the tax cuts that went mostly to the wealthiest in this country, or if you voted for the Recovery Act, then you have to vote to raise the debt ceiling.'' Simply put, the American people want us to solve our Nation's problems. And increasing the debt limit is the responsible action. But it doesn't address the underlying problem. And that is the problem of the deficit.

That is where statutory PAYGO comes in. Statutory PAYGO requires all new policies be offset. That means paid for. In plain English, we have to pay for what we buy. While it is not the only step we can take, this is a solid step towards fiscal discipline.

Now, why is PAYGO so important? It is important because our fiscal health and long-term economic prosperity depend upon it. We must find a balance between short-term deficit spending to speed along our economic recovery with longer-term fiscal discipline.

Dick Cheney, Madam Speaker, famously said that deficits don't matter. Well, I believe that they do matter, and I am glad to hear that my Republican friends now agree with Democrats that deficits do matter. I trust that at the end of the day they will vote that way too. But whether you vote for this resolution or not, you must at least admit that President Obama and the Democrats are facing this problem head-on. We are making sure we responsibly

meet our financial obligations. We are instituting PAYGO so that we pay for the programs that we are funding. And we expect President Obama to formalize a debt commission soon to make other recommendations to bring down our debt. These are important steps, and these are real steps.

I urge my colleagues to do the right thing, to vote for this rule and this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1145

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, no surprise, I rise in opposition to this closed rule. The charade of Speaker PELOSI running ''the most open, honest, and ethical Congress'' is once again confirmed today that that's not happening. That is not happening here again on the floor, and it's related to this activity that we went through in the Rules Committee upstairs just yesterday.

At a time of record deficits and record unemployment, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are simply trying to blame Republicans and George Bush rather than looking at their own responsibility of what they have done in the last year that has placed enormous, enormous financial strain on this country. Never once did they talk about that responsibility, that they led this country, saying, We must go and spend this money because it will lend itself to jobs. And we're going to have the stimulus bill. We're going to call it the stimulus bill.

The President went all over the country and Members of Congress went all over the country and sold this. It didn't work it. It didn't work. It didn't work big time. I didn't hear any offer of, Whoops. As Vice President BIDEN said, We guessed and it didn't work.

I think it would have been appropriate this morning for the gentleman from Massachusetts or anybody from the Democratic Party to stand up and say, You know, we did guess. I know those Republicans told us this wouldn't work, but we really guessed and we guessed wrong. The Vice President has the guts to say that. I think this body should say the same thing, rather than trying to blame this on George Bush.

Today, we're here to raise the debt limit an additional $1.9 trillion. Now, the first question is: My gosh, why so much? Because so much burden and debt has been added. The bottom line is we're only here because what our friends Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic Party have done did not work. They took out a monster loan that is not paying off. But today, there is not even a vote. It's required, but not even a vote or a debate on the issue of raising the debt limit. In fact, the majority party has used deceitful procedural games to hide the fact that they are raising the debt limit again, for the sixth time, six times since they took control of the House. Why, you ask? Well, it's to give their members political coverage and a vote on statutory PAYGO again. I guess we're going to keep blaming George Bush, President Bush, for this.

The bottom line is, Madam Speaker, as I speak to each of the Members here on the floor today, this is about raising the statutory debt limit $1.9 trillion. And my colleagues and I are going to spend the time today discussing the current economic climate, the reason why things aren't working. The majority's principles and priorities of spending and taxing and borrowing and the President's fiscal year 2011 budget—$3.6 trillion—that was just released this week tell the reason why.

Madam Speaker, we've told you over and over again, if you take the investor out of the equation, if you tax the American people, if you destroy job creators, if you go at employers and have a battle with them, they will get it. They will quit employing people.

Our President seems to have, every time I watch him, he's always after somebody. He's always got a problem; the bankers, the doctors, insurance. Every time I look up, our great President, Barack Obama, has an ax to grind with somebody, and it's generally employers. And then he wants to turn around and say, How come we don't have any jobs? Oh, we're going to get those. We'll get those. This is America. We can do anything.

But the policies are not creating jobs; they're creating debts. They're creating circumstances where this country has to again today borrow for the debt limit and pass a bill here today that says we're going to raise the debt limit $1.9 trillion so our government doesn't go belly up. Madam Speaker, that is over $46,000 per American family, just what we're doing now. Since September 2007, the year our friends the Democrats took control, over $3.8 billion, on average, has been added to the national debt every single day.

The President's budget borrows too much, taxes too much, and spends too much. But what it does is it kills the goose that lays the golden egg. Then we wonder why we don't have jobs in this country.

The $3.6 trillion budget represents nearly a 30-percent increase in total outlays since 2008. The budget includes more than $2 trillion in job-killing tax hikes, with nearly a 20-percent jump in the first year alone. I get it. I get it as an individual taxpayer, and that's why I virtually sold all my stock. I got out of the stock market because this administration and this Congress want to kill economic growth and opportunity, and I can't take that and everybody else can't take that. And so that's why you're seeing employers and others say, Enough is enough. That's what we're saying here today.

This tax includes taxes on small businesses, investors, and families earning less than $250,000 a year, also. I thought we heard the President say that he was going to give everybody a tax cut. They keep talking about it. Boy, it's a great idea to float. Sure wish you'd deliver on that one. But let's also go to the high side. We need investors to be in the game, Madam Speaker. We need investors, and this bill taxes the stuffings out of them.

Additionally, the President's budget runs up a record budget deficit again. We're going to vote on it again. Democrats, Yea, we support the President. All these great priorities. The national debt is predicted to double once again over 5 years and triple by 2019, and that's a mistake. Interest alone would set the American taxpayer back roughly $6 trillion, just the interest over the next decade.

The American people want Congress, want Washington to rein in borrowing, taxing, and spending. They don't want more of it. They want Congress to stop talking about what they will do about helping jobs and to actually make the environment better. There's still an experiment going on out there, Madam Speaker, and people are not buying it because they are concerned about Washington and what they're going to do next. Taxing, spending, and borrowing is not a way to start this new year.

During last week's State of the Union, President Obama stated, Starting in 2011, we will prepare to freeze government spending for 3 years. Great. Great, Mr. President. That was Thursday night. I went upstairs just yesterday and I offered an amendment in the Rules Committee on H.R. 4061, the Cybersecurity bill, the first bill right out of the bag, and I took the President up on that and said, Hey, I think we ought to have an amendment added to the bill, since the bill doesn't do it, that would have frozen spending just on two programs for 3 years. My amendment would have saved a paltry $47 million. That's all, just $47 million. I know it's not a lot. And you would not have believed the calls at me about how out of line I was and how this was the most important thing in the history of our country.

This body is not prepared to make tough decisions. This body is not prepared even to cut $47 million after we clapped for the President just the other day. This Democrat majority continues to pursue initiatives and policies that will lead to more unemployment and bigger and more deficits. This administration and the Democratic majority promised the American people they would aim for jobs and economic recovery, health care, cleaner energy, better education. That list goes on and on and on. And I will tell you what we've got for it: record deficits, record spending, and record unemployment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, my Republican colleagues are impressive. They're impressive in their ability to cover their

tracks. They make a mess; they cover their tracks. They make a bigger mess; they cover their tracks. They drove this economy into a ditch. They're trying to cover their tracks. Well, that's fine for playing politics on the House floor, but the facts are a stubborn thing. The facts are that $4 trillion of Bush tax cuts were unpaid, $4 trillion: $700 billion for the Bush prescription drug bill, unpaid for; $3.5 trillion in mandatory revenue costs of the Bush economic collapse that we had to endure because of the lousy economy; record job losses in the Bush economy.

Now, the fact of the matter is that we are faced with difficult economic times, and I would like to think that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would at least take some responsibility in helping to fix things. My colleague talks about the Recovery Act as if it meant nothing.

According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, the Recovery Act is already responsible for as many as 2.4 million jobs through the end of 2009. An analysis by the Council of Economic Advisers also found that the Recovery Act is responsible for about 2 million jobs, and that's not counting the jobs that were saved. In my home city of Worcester alone, 500 teachers and support staff would have been laid off without the Recovery Act; 22 cops would have been laid off and 17 firefighters. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle would say, Fire them. Fire the teachers. Fire the cops. Fire the firefighters. That's irresponsible.

So I also point out that former McCain advisor Mark Zandi said that the stimulus was key to the strong fourth quarter growth in the U.S. economy. We just heard the news from the Department of Commerce that the U.S. economy grew at 5.7 percent from October through December, a better than expected gain.

And this is what Mark Zandi, the Republican advisor, said: I think the stimulus was key to the fourth quarter. It was really critical to business fixed investment because there was a tax bonus depreciation in the stimulus that expired in December and juiced up fixed investment. And also, it was very critical to housing and residential investment because of the housing tax credit. And the decline in government spending would have been measurably greater without the money from the stimulus, because the stimulus was very, very important to the fourth quarter. That's a Republican advisor, McCain advisor, Mark Zandi.

Now, I would just say, Madam Speaker, that those of us who voted for the Recovery Act have a responsibility to vote ''yes'' on this rule. But I would also say that those who voted for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, wars that were not paid for, somehow it's okay to ask all of our men and women to sacrifice, but we do nothing. But those wars were not paid for. But if you voted for the Bush tax cuts, the $4 trillion that was unpaid for, at least have the responsibility to come to the floor and do the right thing.

So I would urge my colleagues, Madam Speaker, to vote for this rule and vote for PAYGO. During the Bush years, no one talked about the deficit except to say that it didn't matter. That was Dick Cheney and some of my other colleagues. It does matter. We need to get the deficit under control. We need to help grow this economy. Statutory PAYGO is one way to do it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1200

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, by the way, I like this PAYGO thing that my friends, the Democrats, are pushing. But when it comes down to it, they waive PAYGO on a regular basis.

Madam Speaker, at this time I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Chico, California (Mr. HERGER).

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this rule and to the underlying bill. Excessive debt helped bring about the current economic downturn, and the American people know it. Working families have to make difficult choices every day to balance their budgets, yet Congress still refuses to make the tough choices needed to balance the Federal budget.

The legislation before us authorizes the Federal Government to go $2 trillion deeper in debt. In place of real fiscal discipline, it offers a phony pay-as-you-go rule that is full of loopholes and exceptions and does nothing to tackle our government's long-term structural deficits. The good news is that we can take real action to start cutting the deficit today. At a time when our economy is hurting and Washington continues to pile debt on future generations, it's simple common sense to stand up and say enough is enough.

By defeating the previous question and voting ''no,'' the House will have an opportunity to consider the End TARP Act, legislation I introduced along with Mr. PAULSEN and Mr. TIAHRT that would finally bring TARP to an end and immediately reduce the amount of money the government must borrow. A vote for this rule is a vote in favor of the status quo in Washington. The American people have spoken, and it's time the House acts to reduce unnecessary spending.

Madam Speaker, I urge a ''no'' vote.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, at this time I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS), a member of the Budget Committee.

(Mr. ANDREWS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ANDREWS. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my friend from Massachusetts for yielding.

The constituents that I listen to know that both parties are responsible for borrowing a lot of money. They know that we borrowed a significant amount of money in recent times. They also know that the minority party voted to borrow and increase the national debt by 70 percent during the term of the prior President. They know that this is the worst economic times we've had since the Great Depression. They don't know this by reading the newspaper. They know it by reading the balance in their checking account or reading the foreclosure notice that came in the mail yesterday or reading the want ads because they're looking for a job. They know this.

They know that us saying the Republicans did wrong and the Republicans saying we did wrong isn't going to fix their problems. So what they know is they want to hear us talk about what to do about this burgeoning problem of the national debt. Here is our answer: We first believe that the best way to reduce the debt and reduce the deficit is to get people back to work so that individuals and families are able to pay taxes and so that businesses are able to pay taxes off of their profits.

The best deficit- and debt-reduction program is full employment. We have nothing like full employment, nothing like it at all. We've lost huge numbers of jobs, and our plan to do something about it has been this: First, we believe that we should cut taxes for middle-class families so they have more money to spend. That's what we did last year, and the President proposes to do it again this year. Second, we believe that we should cut taxes for small businesses so they can reinvest in their businesses. That's what we voted for last year. We're prepared to do it again. We believe that we should put people back to work, rebuilding our roads and our bridges, rail systems, clean water systems, clean energy. That's what we voted to do last year.

We are a long way from succeeding in this effort, but here is what has happened: In the last quarter of 2009, nearly 800,000 Americans lost their jobs. Tomorrow we will hear the reports for the month of January. They won't be good. But they will be a lot better than 800,000 people losing their jobs, which is what happened in the last quarter of the year before last year. We've seen growth in the fourth quarter at 5.7 percent. That means nothing to you if you're still looking at the want ads, but it means that there is reason to think that jobs are on the way.

And what have we heard about this? The chief economic adviser to President MCCAIN's Presidential campaign said that the key factor of that growth taking place was the recovery bill that we passed last February. Those are his words, not mine. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, as Mr. MCGOVERN said, estimates that as many as 2.4 million jobs have been created as a result of the recovery bill. We have a long way to go. We have laid out our plan to get there. Frankly, the minority has not laid out a plan, and we look forward to them doing so.

The second thing that you need to do is to restrain and reduce spending. Most people will agree that the number

one spending problem is entitlements, and the number one entitlement problem is health care. There are two ways to reduce health care spending. The first way is to restrain spending right now in existing programs. That's what we did. In November, a bill came to this floor to reform the country's health care system that would have stopped what I believe are wasteful payments to health care providers and people making money off the system to the tune of $480 billion, real deficit reduction that we all voted for. No one—with one exception—on the other side voted to do that.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from New Jersey has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentleman 1 additional minute.

Mr. ANDREWS. I thank the gentleman. The second way to reduce health care costs is to change the health care system so there is more competition, so that insurance companies have to compete for people's business and keep costs down that way. We'll all have a chance to vote on a bill that does that next week.

And yes, the third thing that I think you have to do is to raise some revenue. The President and most of us ran on this proposition. We do believe that couples who make more than $250,000 a year and individuals who make more than $200,000 a year should be asked to pay the tax rates that they paid before the Bush tax cuts of 2001. Now we heard in 1993 that this would ruin the economy. It would cause calamity. It would be the end of the American economy as we know it. Mr. Gingrich said this. Others said this. They were wrong. After they said these things, the economy created 23 million new jobs. When we followed their way, the economy lost jobs in the succeeding 8 years.

The American people want to know what we intend to do, and we've said what we intend to do. We know it can be better.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, it's a good thing we're here on the floor of the House where we're exempt from things like deceptive practices, because this body would be guilty today. Here we are with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010. Madam Speaker, 32 pages of this 56-page bill are exemptions to pay-as-you-go. So 32 pages are—Oh, we say we're going to have pay-as-you-go—but 32 of the 56 pages are, I'm sorry, but it does not apply to the following items. Madam Speaker, that's deceptive.

Madam Speaker, at this time I yield 3 minutes to the favorite son of Dallas, Texas, the gentleman Mr. HENSARLING.

Mr. HENSARLING. I thank the gentleman for yielding. Madam Speaker, I heard one of my Democratic colleagues say that today is a historic day, that there is a historic opportunity. And yes, history is being made today because never in the history of America has the debt limit been increased to $14.294 trillion. Here we are again, just a few months later, enacting yet another increase in the debt limit. The new debt limit, again, $14.3 trillion, costing every American household over $120,000.

What do I hear from my Democratic colleagues? Well, we hear the old blame game. That's the first thing that we hear. We hear a lot of names from the past. Well, facts are pesky things, Madam Speaker. Listen, there is blame to go around. My party spent too much money. I have a chart right here. It's Congress that controls the purse strings, as we all know. And when the Republicans controlled Congress—this is the blue—these were our deficits. They averaged about $104 billion a year. I'm embarrassed about that. It's much too high. Now in their 3 years of control by the Democrats, we have deficits that are averaging over $1 trillion, $1.1 trillion. That's the difference. What was once our annual deficits have become their monthly deficits, Madam Speaker. That's totally unacceptable.

More history was made earlier this week when the President submitted his proposed budget that so many of my friends on the other side of the aisle decided to embrace. It made history. It is breathtaking in its red ink. It spends $3.8 trillion. The largest budget in American history is being proposed. It proposes a $1.6 trillion deficit, the highest deficit in the history of our Nation, over 10 percent of our economy. We haven't seen debt-to-economy ratios like this since World War II. It triples the national debt in just 10 years. Yes, this is a historic day because, once again, we are here to accommodate the spending agenda of the Democrats with a historic new increase in the debt limit.

Madam Speaker, I will just ask this question: Where are the jobs? We were told that if we went off and if we passed this government stimulus plan, that somehow unemployment would never go above 8 percent. What do we have? We have an extra $1 trillion in debt from that act, and we are still mired in double-digit unemployment. You cannot spend, borrow and bail out your way to prosperity.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from Texas has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield the gentleman 1 additional minute.

Mr. HENSARLING. I thank the gentleman. Again, we have seen it. It's almost a year later, and yet the Democrats continue to try more of the same. Borrow, spend, bail out your way into prosperity. And what do we have? Again, an additional $1.2 trillion in debt, and over 3 million more of our fellow countrymen have lost their jobs.

Small businesses are wondering who's going to pay for all this? They're concerned about the $2 trillion takeover of health care. Who's going to pay for that? They're concerned about the threatened $800 billion carbon tax, the energy tax. Who is going to pay for that? The omnibuses. Is it any wonder that jobs are not being created in America?

I speak, Madam Speaker, to small businessmen and investors every week, and they tell me, We're too scared to create jobs in this environment. Are we going to have rapid inflation? Are there going to be huge tax increases? Are Congress and the President going to vilify us once again? And my colleagues wonder where, where are the jobs.

You cannot borrow and spend and bail out your way to prosperity.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS), another member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. EDWARDS of Texas. Madam Speaker, getting sailing lessons from the captains of the economic Titanic may be interesting but not very helpful. Let's get serious. Allowing the U.S. Treasury to default on our Nation's debt for the first time in history is not a responsible option. It would devastate our economy, our stock market, and our children's futures. Republicans know it, and Democrats know it. We all know it.

The responsible action is to start getting control of our deficits today, and we can do that by passing the pay-as-you-go law. Pay-as-you-go is a principle that citizens understand and live by every day. It's a principle that helped Congress in the late 1990s turn the largest deficits in American history, created by some of those who have just spoken, into the largest surpluses in American history.

Unfortunately, the Republican House leadership killed the House pay-as-you-go rule that had worked so well. It killed it in 2002. And what happened? The largest surpluses in our history turned into the largest deficits in American history. The Republican-led Congress passed massive unpaid-for tax cuts and the largest expansion of Medicare without paying for a dime of that. Those two actions alone added $6 trillion to our national debt over a period of just one decade, $6 trillion, most of which was borrowed from the Chinese and other foreign governments. It's time to put some discipline back into our Federal budget processes, and that is what pay-as-you-go is all about.

I am proud to have initiated the effort to make this law, this PAYGO, not a temporary law but a permanent law. Had we done that in the 1990s, we wouldn't be facing the terrible deficits that we hear decried today. Pay-as-you-go works for families, pay-as-you-go works for businesses, and then in the 1990s, it worked for the American people in the Federal budget. And when we pass this into law, it will work once again and help us get these intolerable Federal deficits back under control and preserve our children's futures.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, once again, a hyperbole that does not match the action. Out of the 56 pages of this bill, 32 pages are exemptions to pay-as-you-go, 32 of the 56 pages that

our good friends are touting as the answer and the right way to do it. But most intriguing is that we've heard that the way to do it is the way it's being done here, because it's open and honest.

□ 1215

There is not even a vote on the debt limit; it's self-executed in the rule. So let's go and vote for PAYGO and talk about how responsible we are. Oh, at the same time, make sure we fund what we've done, $1.9 trillion. The Rules Committee is pretty good up there, Madam Speaker. Know how to hide things. Know how to obfuscate the real facts of the case. The facts of the case are the American people know what's going on. They K-N-O-W what is going on. Over the last year, I've heard from constituents also, and they want a good economy and they want jobs. And the Democrat majority is simply not stepping up to this.

I'm going to encourage a ''no'' vote on the previous question and a ''no'' vote on the rule when it's our time to get that done. Just so our colleagues understand this, we're going to have a vote on this one here today.

Madam Speaker, at this time I'd like to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Lubbock, Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER).

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express great concern on behalf of our children and our grandchildren who are going to bear the burden of this expansion of our national debt. Today we're going to vote on the sixth increase in the debt limit in the past 2½ years. After today we will have added $4 trillion to the government credit limit. Who's going to pay this bill? Congress must address the root of this debt limit increase. It's the spending.

I want to point to a chart here that the President the other night came and talked to us about his spending freeze. So here is the impact of the freeze on spending. I know it's a little hard to tell, but if you look real closely, you see that you get a 49.27 percent growth in spending without the freeze, but with the freeze you get a 49.01 percent increase in spending.

It's a gimmick. This whole PAYGO thing is a sham. We just had a gentleman in New York that was doing a kind of a sham transaction, and he's probably going to—in fact, he is in prison for a Ponzi scheme. That's what this whole situation is is a Ponzi scheme, because what we're doing is we're borrowing and spending and borrowing and spending; we're borrowing the money to make the interest payments on the debt that we already have. And what do the Democrats want to do? They want to borrow some more money.

If you were serious about spending, I offered two amendments yesterday to the Rules Committee that would have put some caps on spending, would have begun to decelerate the growth of government. Those rules, are they eligible to be considered on this floor today? No, they were denied.

You see, if we keep putting off and playing the Ponzi scheme game, we're going to keep running up the debt for our children and our grandchildren. What does PAYGO really mean, the PAYGO vote that we're going to have? It means the American people get to pay and the Democrats get to go spending, taxing and borrowing, just like they've been doing since they took control of this House 3 years ago. But they want you to think today that they have brought some real reform to this body. We passed PAYGO in 2007. Guess what we've done since we've passed PAYGO? We've raised the debt limit five times. And, in fact, in 1998, of the bills that came across this floor, 98 percent of the time, PAYGO was either waived or exempted from that.

And as the gentleman pointed out a while ago, and I appreciate him doing that, a majority of the text of this bill isn't about how we're going to cut spending; it's about the things that we're going to waive that aren't going to be subject to PAYGO. So if we're serious about cutting spending in this country because we're serious about this debt, then why aren't we taking steps that really are going to address spending? The reason that they don't want to address spending is they don't intend to cut spending. They intend to raise taxes. I encourage my colleagues to vote against the rule.

Mr. McGOVERN. Madam Speaker, this debate is laughable. During the Republican-controlled Congress and under President Bush from 2002 to 2006 the debt limit was raised by over $3 trillion. That's just a fact. You can't deny that. Secondly, why are they so against PAYGO? Why are they so against being responsible? Because they have an alternative plan. And we saw the outline of that alternative plan in the Budget Committee the other day, and their plan is to try to reduce the deficit and balance the budget by going after Medicare and Social Security, privatizing Medicare, privatizing Social Security, letting Medicare wither on the vine, going after these programs, which is something they have tried to do time and time again.

But let me just say this for the record: while the Democrats control this Congress, we're not going to let you destroy the two most important social programs that have ever been enacted in this country.

At this time I'd like to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I find it interesting that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, the Republicans, say that this is a sham. You know what? It was the law for a decade under the Clinton administration, and I guess it wasn't a sham because the first thing the Republicans did was to repeal PAYGO so that they could run up the massive deficits of the Bush years. We're asking to put this back in place because this is how we cleaned up the unsustainable deficits of the Reagan years. This is how we got, for the first time, a surplus for this country that evaporated in the Republican irresponsibility. PAYGO's not a sham. There's no more sacred cows.

The fact of the matter is, you'll have to choose your priorities. Our priorities may be different, but you don't get to charge them off to the future. You're either going to pay for them, you're going to raise revenues, or you're going to cut something else. The fact is it worked and it worked and it worked and it worked and the deficit came down. And the fact of the matter is, I offered this in 1983, but it couldn't get to Congress because they thought it was too tough. Finally, under President Clinton we did it and the deficits came down, and we left you with an inheritance of $5 trillion that you squandered, you wasted. And now you want not to play by the rules. The rules are you should pay as you go.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I'd love to engage the gentleman if he would take the time; but I'd like to ask him, if he says it's so good, why are 32 of the 56 pages exemptions to PAYGO? And I would like to find out if this is so real——

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I'll be happy to respond because those were some of the same exemptions that existed in the law, and the fact is the deficit came down. We erased the $300 billion annual deficits of the Reagan administration. We did it over time, and we left you $5 trillion that you squandered.

Mr. SESSIONS. Good. I'd like the gentleman to address why are 32 of the 56 pages——

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. It's the same law we had before.

Mr. SESSIONS. Oh, we're going to blame it on Ronald Reagan now. I reclaim my time and I appreciate the gentleman for blaming this on Ronald Reagan. I tell you what, I would be very pleased to engage in a dialogue with the gentleman if you'll answer one question.

Mr. ANDREWS. Yes, sir.

Mr. SESSIONS. Why are you down on the floor, your party saying this is the real deal and yet 32 of the 56 pages exempt spending?

Mr. ANDREWS. May I answer the question?

Mr. SESSIONS. I would enjoy the gentleman doing that. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. ANDREWS. They do not exempt spending. Here's what they say. As the gentleman knows, the structure of this bill is that increases in mandatory spending or decreases in revenue must be offset. There are four exceptions, the so-called ''doctor fix,'' the SGR payments; middle class tax cuts; the estate tax fix, which I think both parties have tried to support.

Mr. SESSIONS. Then why are we—we did the same thing but now it's okay for you.

Mr. ANDREWS. If I may, I'm trying to answer. Would the gentleman yield so I could answer?

Mr. SESSIONS. I am engaging with the gentleman.

Mr. ANDREWS. The pages the gentleman is talking about are what are called the sequestration rules; and what that means is, if the Congress violates pay-as-you-go, and it spends more than it should under those rules, then there is an automatic reduction in spending to make the so-called score card balance out, to make sure things are brought into balance. Sequestration has happened once in the years that pay-as-you-go were in effect. It was when Mr. Darman was Budget Director. It has never happened before. What these rules say is if there's a sequestration, there are certain programs that are off limits to the sequestration. But they're not exceptions to the PAYGO rule.

Mr. SESSIONS. I appreciate the gentleman. You know, I think the best evidence, and reclaiming my time, I think the best evidence that this is not working is the deficit rising from $161 billion in 2007, to $1.4 trillion last year and $1.6 trillion this year; $161 billion in '07 to last year, $1.4 trillion and this year $1.6 trillion.

I would say that the preponderance of the evidence does not support the hypothesis. Today, in this rule, we didn't really debate the debt limit about being honest about the vote; but we're going to go ahead and have an opportunity, Madam Speaker, when my colleagues vote ''no'' on the previous question, that we will be allowed to amend this rule to consider an end to the TARP Act to stop the bailouts which are a part of this problem. This act would immediately terminate the Troubled Asset Relief Program and reduce the debt ceiling by the amount of remaining authorized TARP funds, which is nearly now $200 billion.

We cannot continue what we're doing, spending taxpayer dollars and having these bailout programs. This is an ineffective program.

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment and extraneous material prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, America is calling for fiscal responsibility. And I welcome the gentleman from Tyler, Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) to speak for 2 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, we can agree on some things. Default is not responsible is one of them. It isn't responsible. But there are things that can be done to avoid defaulting other than raising the massive debt ceiling beyond anything anybody ever dreamed of before. And we keep being told that Clinton gave you a balanced budget. The President does not vote on a balanced budget. He signed, and wasn't real happy there at first about signing a balanced budget that was pushed over there by the Republican majority that was voted in in 1994 because of the Democrats' irresponsibility.

And so things went well as the Republicans did what they were elected to do for a time. But you are right: when President Bush got elected, 9/11 happened, and the spending began anew, and it was not responsible as it should have been. And when I was elected in 2004, one of the things that we dealt with was too much spending. And it continued. And some of us fought to bring it down, but it was not enough.

And as a result, the Democrats have been in charge since 2007. And so pay-as-you-go—let me tell you, I was asked earlier today by our whip, ERIC CANTOR. You know, we checked our records. You voted for this one of the times they brought it up last year. Why'd you do that? And I said, it was my mistake. I thought they were serious. But they keep waiving and exempting, keep adding it to bills, and here it is back again. They won't fool me again because I know they're not serious about it anymore.

We heard from Art Laffer, who was the architect behind turning around double-digit inflation, double-digit unemployment, double-digit interest rates. How'd he do it? He cut taxes 30 percent. And Art Laffer 2 weeks ago said you want to deal with this deficit? You have so much in the way of assets in the western part of the country. You own most of the country. Start selling some assets. That's what people do who are responsible.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. I yield the gentleman an additional minute.

Mr. GOHMERT. What responsible people do, and I appreciate being lectured on responsible, is they bring down spending immediately. You don't have a President or a head of a household saying we're going to get responsible next year. Yeah, that's it. Next year. No, you do it now. You don't keep going on. And I'll give you a personal, very personal example. We have three kids who have been going through college. We owe a lot on student loans. We have a home that I'm not in 4 or 5 days out of the week. I love that home. I hoped that home would be my home the rest of my life. But we're putting it up for sale because it's an asset; it will allow us to pay off debt.

Let's start selling some of our assets. But instead, oh, no. Last week we voted to buy a bunch of the Virgin Islands. We voted in here, because of the majority, we're going to buy homes in foreign countries for rare dogs and cats. We're going to buy homes for cranes that don't live in this country. It's time to get responsible all right. Let's vote down this bill, and let's come back and be responsible immediately.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, again I remind my colleagues of $4 trillion in Bush tax cuts that weren't paid for. And during the Republican-controlled Congress under President Bush from 2002 to 2006 the debt limit was raised by over $3 trillion. I didn't hear any complaints at that time. My colleague talks about selling assets. The problem is the assets they want to sell are Social Security and Medicare, and we don't want any part of it.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH).

□ 1230

Mr. FATTAH. Let me thank my colleague for yielding me this time.

If we roll the tape back, I can hear, as if it was yesterday, Alan Greenspan, Chairman of the Fed, testifying before this Congress—and right after President Bush was sworn into office—about the fact of this $5 trillion surplus and the opportunity to pay off the debt. We were having a discussion about whether it would be good for our economy—this is in the record of this Congress—whether it would be good for our economy to pay off all of our debt or rather we should leave some debt on the books. That is what was projected. It was said at the end of the Bush Presidency, we can be an entirely debt-free country. Well, here we are today in a much different situation.

Now, if you want a balanced budget, then you should follow those people who know how to get us there. Democrats led the way under President Clinton, and we had a surplus. We had a balanced budget. We were paying down national debt. And that is where we are returning our country to, which is a responsible fiscal policy.

And as we see the economic turnaround, gross domestic product, 6 percent in the negative a year ago. We saw $700,000 lost in January a year ago. What we see now is a 5.7 percent increase in gross domestic product. We see purchasing orders up, manufacturing up, in today's report, by 1 percent, which is the second month in a row. We see home sales up. We see a country on the rebound.

And the fact of the matter is that PAYGO, as structured under this rule, not only says that you have to pay as you go, it also directs the Government Accountability Office to look for duplicative programs in the Federal budget that can be cut.

Now, I am going to be offering additional legislation next week on dealing with the debt that has been accumulated by the Republican President and the Republican majority over the last 6 years of the Bush administration, and we can do even more.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, if I could engage Mr. MCGOVERN for the purpose of letting him know that I am down to my final few minutes, I have two additional speakers. He has a lot of time remaining. I would ask that he engage his speakers and his time as we roll it down.

Mr. MCGOVERN. May I inquire how much time is left on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas controls 3 minutes, and the gentleman from Massachusetts controls 9 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield myself 2 minutes, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, we don't even need lectures from the Republicans on fiscal discipline. We did it, and we're going to do it again. And the President and the leadership here of this House has outlined how we're going to do it.

But I want to point out that my colleagues on the other side don't like statutory PAYGO. They don't want to pay for tax cuts for rich people or for corporations or for big oil companies because they have a different plan, and their plan is to reprise the Bush-era proposal to privatize Medicare and Social Security.

In the Budget Committee the other day, the ranking Republican introduced his plan, which makes it very clear that he wants to privatize Social Security and Medicare. Ezra Klein of The Washington Post writes, This proposal would take Medicare from costing an expected 14.3 percent of GDP in 2080 to less than 4 percent. That's trillions of dollars not going to health care for seniors. The audacity is breathtaking.

The Congressional Budget Office said of that proposal that starting in 2021, new enrollees would no longer receive coverage through their current program but instead would be given a voucher with which to purchase private health insurance. CBO says traditional benefits would be reduced below those scheduled on the current laws for many workers who are aged 55 or younger in 2011.

Peter Orszag, the Director of OMB, says, The proposal takes the Medicare program and, for those 55 and below, turns it into a voucher program and that it introduces individual accounts privatizing Social Security.

Madam Speaker, we have some challenges before us, but I would like to think that we can all agree that balancing the budget by letting Medicare wither on the vine and privatizing Social Security and destroying two of the most important social programs in the history of the country is not the way to go. And so that is the choice.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield myself an additional 30 seconds.

We do what's fiscally responsible and enact the statutory PAYGO and pay as you go. If you want to increase education programs or programs for health care, you have to find an offset. You have to cut another program to find additional revenue. If you want to give tax cuts to rich people, you've got to pay for it. But I think that's the responsible way to go. Going their way, going after Medicare and Social Security, is the wrong way. We've seen this movement before. We don't want to go there.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, spin zone. I love it. The gentleman is talking about all these Republicans want to privatize Social Security and Medicare. We're responsible. Well, what the gentleman forgot is it's the Democrats' proposal that takes $400 billion out of Medicare, $400 billion. Those are not only talking points from the 1990s that the gentleman is hung up on, it's not truthful.

I would like to yield to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PAULSEN) 1 minute.

Mr. PAULSEN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to this self-executing rule which will raise our national debt to nearly $2 trillion. That's 12 zeros. I urge Members to vote ''no'' on the previous question so that we can immediately have the House consider H.R. 4566, the END TARP Act, that will end the TARP bailout program once and for all, saving taxpayers about $200 billion.

In the most recent report, the Special Inspector General of TARP himself said the program has failed to boost bank lending and it's also failed in halting the spread of home foreclosures. If the program isn't helping small businesses, if the program isn't helping homeowners, two of its major goals, why do we consider to throw hundreds of billions of dollars of taxpayer money at it?

It's time we got serious about fixing our national fiscal house and spending problems. I urge Members to vote ''no'' on the previous question so that they can bring up the END TARP Act. We can end the bailouts once and for all and not raise the debt ceiling by nearly $2 trillion.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I again inquire how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts controls 6½ minutes and the gentleman from Texas controls 1½ minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

Madam Speaker, we have had an enlightening debate here today, and I guess the difference between Democrats and Republicans couldn't be clearer and this debate couldn't come at a better time.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle believe that we should balance the budget by going after Medicare and Social Security. They introduced an alternative budget in the Budget Committee. It's there in black and white. It's easy to understand. No one denies it. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) who was on the floor earlier was on MSNBC talking about the need to ''reengineer Social Security,'' which is a code word for privatization.

My colleagues on the other side say they don't support PAYGO and they don't support increasing the debt limit. I guess that means they'd rather play politics than act responsibly to fix the problems that this country faces.

President Obama said that fixing this economy would not be easy and it would not happen overnight, and that's clear. He took office and he implemented a bold plan to jump-start the economy, and in the fourth quarter, we saw the U.S. economy grow at a 5.7 percent rate. Mark Zandi, the cofounder of Moody's Economy.com and former McCain economic adviser, said, We're headed in the right direction. The recovery has begun. I think prospects are that job growth will continue and we will have enough job growth to bring up unemployment and then good things will happen. That's a Republican economist.

Instead of working together to fix the economy, my Republican colleagues have decided to try and use this recession for political gain. They've obstructed and opposed all efforts to jump-start the economy. They voted against the Recovery Act, which put millions of people to work and saved millions of jobs. They would have rather fired cops and firefighters and teachers. They would have denied new emerging industries the important money to hire more people. They voted against the jobs creation bill and, except for one brave vote, against the health care bill that, according to CBO, would reduce the deficit. Instead, they have dusted off the tired old standbys: corporate tax cuts and privatization of Social Security and Medicare. Unfortunately, they're stuck in the past and are simply repeating the mistakes that put us here in the first place.

Madam Speaker, we were elected to do responsible things, to do what's right. We were elected to solve problems and to make this country a better place. Democrats say we cannot default on our debt and that we will reduce that debt through PAYGO, bending the cost curve of health care and freezing spending.

I believe we need to look at all parts of Federal spending, including wasteful and unnecessary spending at the Defense Department, but it's clear we need to prioritize our spending. In fact, Democrats say we're going to cut capital gains—something that Republicans have been touting for years—but Republicans are opposing that, too, simply because President Obama is proposing it.

Madam Speaker, there is a time and a place for politics, and I get that. But to paraphrase JOHN MCCAIN, sometimes you have to put the country first. It's unfortunate that my Republican colleagues would rather play politics instead of acting responsibly to attack our country's problems.

Madam Speaker, at this time I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, in the remaining time, I would just like to say that I think the American people are watching and they are listening, and they heard a good debate here

on the floor about these corporations that Republicans try and get all of these tax breaks for. I'd like to remind the gentleman those are called employers, and employers in this country have the second highest tax rate of any country in the world.

Darn right Republicans are trying to cut taxes, because we want the American people to get employed again, and attacking employers is the key thrust of what the Democratic objective is all about. No wonder we've lost jobs. We're attacking employers, attacking employers. The President, the gentleman Mr. HOYER, the Speaker, Mrs. PELOSI, attacking employers. No wonder we've got an unemployment problem.

But this budget is filled with reckless spending and unsustainable debt. Don't blame that on somebody else. Accept the responsibility yourself. This is the biggest budget we've ever had. And for the President to come and say, as a takeaway, Just as you know, American people, we're going to start this spending process to where we freeze spending, it's really a joke.

The bottom line is the American people know what the problem is. They've clued in on it. They even know the pages of the bills where they have seen the majority party try and take advantage of the taxpayer, rip health care out from their advantage where they could have their own health care, take dollars away from their employers and tax them.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. I will tell you, the Republican Party is going to stand up for jobs again today.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, how much time do I have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts controls 3½ minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield myself 1 minute.

Before I yield to our last speaker, let me again just remind my colleagues what this debate is about. It is about whether we should pay as we go. That is what families do. That is what we should do here. I don't know why that's a radical idea in the Republican Conference, but it's the responsible thing to do.

My friends on the other side are responsible for creating this economic mess. They should share that responsibility with us now to get this economy out of the ditch.

And one final thing, Madam Speaker, trying to balance the budget by going after Social Security and Medicare is the wrong way to go. These are important programs that provide important benefits, mostly to our senior citizens, and we should not allow them to wither on the vine and be subject to a Republican budget that would basically take a meat-ax to those programs. That is the wrong way to go.

□ 1245

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from Massachusetts has expired.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield myself an additional 30 seconds, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, again, I would remind my colleagues that we are facing tough times, but tough times require tough decisions. And statutory pay-as-you-go to basically pay our way is the responsible thing. We can't keep on adding to our deficits and to our debt. We have responsibility to our kids and our grandkids. I would ask my Republican colleagues to join with us. If they don't want to do it, then I guess we will have to do the responsible thing on our own.

Again, I would urge my colleagues to vote for the rule.

I yield the remaining time to our distinguished majority leader, Mr. HOYER.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

The last time we voted on this issue, the floor was packed on both sides of the aisle. And I observed at that time that, and I repeat today, I really doubt that there are any of the 435 of us, Madam Speaker, who believe that this matter that is included in this rule ought to be defeated. I would hope that's the case.

The gentleman who represents the minority party on the Rules Committee has confronted this issue in the past. He confronted it in 2002. He confronted it in 2003. He confronted it in 2004 and again in 2005. On each of those occasions, he voted to increase the debt limit. His party was in charge. Unfortunately, my party voted against it at that point in time because we weren't in charge.

The point I make is that the American public too often believes that we do not do what we think is the responsible thing for our country but what we think is the right thing to do from the perspective of our party. They are not impressed by that kind of action. In fact, not only did Mr. SESSIONS vote to increase the debt limit on numerous occasions, many of us voted against it essentially for the same reasons, because we said the other party had incurred liabilities with which we did not agree. In fact, I'm sure all 435 of us could say we incurred certain liabilities in which we did not agree.

But the fact of the matter is that America, voting through its representatives in the House and in the Senate, incurred those liabilities. Creditors throughout the world relied on the fact that the United States of America, the world's wealthiest Nation, would, in fact, pay its bills.

I will say that in the future when this issue comes up, I will not repeat again the mistakes that I made in the past. I said that last time. And if it so happens at some time in the future the other party is in control and we come to the necessity of ensuring that America can pay its bills, it will be my intention to vote with the majority party to increase the debt limit—not because I want to see us deficit spend; I don't. I voted for constitutional amendments to balance the budget to constrain the spending of this body.

In a few minutes, I will speak strongly in favor of adopting statutory PAYGO, which is made in order by this rule. Statutory PAYGO will be a constraint on the spending that this Congress votes for, a restraint to bring in line spending on mandatory items with the revenues and abilities that we have.

And so I say to both sides of the aisle, this is not a vote about party. This is a vote about country. There is no one in this room, no one who has raised his or her hand to defend and protect the Constitution of the United States, not one of us who honestly can say that it is an alternative available to us to not ensure that America can pay its bills. That's what this is about.

That's why my friends on the Republican side, when you were in charge, you voted, in some cases almost to a person, almost unanimously, to increase the debt five times under President Bush.

Very frankly, I tell my friends on the Republican side, when President Bush was in office, we did the same thing you're going to do today. We pretended that somehow because we did not agree with the policies that had led us to the place where we had incurred those debts that somehow we would take no responsibility for paying those debts. Ladies and gentlemen, our creditors around the world on whom we are now relying in order to fund our government don't really care about our partisan politics. They do care, however, about the will that we have to meet our responsibilities to pay our bills and to meet our obligations to them.

Everybody understands that if we did not increase this debt limit, at some point in time, not too long thereafter, checks to Social Security recipients would have to stop, checks to veterans would have to stop, and checks to employees who work for the government would have to stop. No one thinks that's a rational alternative. We may think there ought to be less or more, but no one thinks that we ought to have none.

And so I say to my colleagues this is a vote for American responsibility, not Republican responsibility or Democratic responsibility, but for American responsibility.

Both of us—both of us have pursued politics in this matter. The American public is hopeful, as we all can see, that at some point in time we all realize that playing politics is not the policy that Americans want us to pursue. They want us to pursue the well-being of our country and of our citizens. We've incurred debts. We expect people to pay the debts they owe us, and they, in turn, expect the same. That's what this vote is about.

And so there are not a lot of Members on this floor. I hope a lot of Members, Madam Speaker, are watching, because I hope when they come to this floor to vote for this rule, which will deem the authorization of the ability of America to meet its responsibilities,

that they will vote for their country, for our citizens, and for our responsibility. It's the right thing to do.

Every one of us on each side of the aisle, Republican or Democratic, knows it's the right thing to do. Let's do the right thing. I urge support of this rule. I urge support of the statutory PAYGO provision made in order by this rule, which will say that, notwithstanding the fact that we have authorized additional debt, we are also, at the same time, going to constrain the incurring of additional debt beyond that which we are prepared to pay for. That's what families have to do. That's what we need to do.

Vote for this rule. It's the right thing to do.

The material previously referred to by Mr. SESSIONS is as follows:

AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 1065

OFFERED BY MR. SESSIONS

At the end of the resolution, add the following new section:

SEC. 2. On the third legislative day after the adoption of this resolution, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV and without intervention of any point of order, the House shall proceed to the consideration of the bill (H.R. 4566) to terminate authority under the Troubled Asset Relief Program, and for other purposes. The bill shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill to final passage without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except: (1) two hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairmen and ranking minority members of the Committee on Financial Services and the Committee on Ways and Means; and (2) one motion to recommit. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 4566.

(The information contained herein was provided by Democratic Minority on multiple occasions throughout the 109th Congress.)

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Democratic majority agenda and a vote to allow the opposition, at least for the moment, to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives, (VI, 308–311) describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

Because the vote today may look bad for the Democratic majority they will say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the definition of the previous question used in the Floor Procedures Manual published by the Rules Committee in the 109th Congress, (page 56). Here's how the Rules Committee described the rule using information from Congressional Quarterly's "American Congressional Dictionary": "If the previous question is defeated, control of debate shifts to the leading opposition member (usually the minority Floor Manager) who then manages an hour of debate and may offer a germane amendment to the pending business."

Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Democratic majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

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

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed. Votes will be taken in the following order:

Suspending the rules and adopting House Resolution 1022;

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 1065;

Adopting House Resolution 1065, if ordered;

Suspending the rules and passing H.R. 4532.

The first and third electronic votes will be conducted as 15-minute votes. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

HONORING MEDGAR EVERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1022, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1022.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 426, nays 0, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 44]

YEAS—426

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Adler (NJ)
Akin
Alexander
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Austria
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boccieri
Boehner
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Bright
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Cao
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cassidy
Castle
Castor (FL)
Chaffetz
Chandler
Childers
Chu
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cohen
Conaway
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Dahlkemper
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Dreier
Driehaus
Duncan
Edwards (MD)
Edwards (TX)
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emerson
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Flake
Fleming
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gallegly
Garamendi
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Gordon (TN)
Granger
Graves
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Guthrie
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Halvorson
Hare
Harman
Harper
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Heinrich
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Hunter
Inglis
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson Lee (TX)
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kilroy
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kirkpatrick (AZ)
Kissell
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Kosmas
Kratovil
Kucinich
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)