

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Speaker, in spite of the empty rhetoric of politicians who promise now and pay later, not even the United States Federal Government can run from the simple principles of economics. When a family continues to spend more than they make, debt will crush them. It will strain their relationships and consume their thoughts. Parents look at their children and wonder how they will afford college.

Motivated by their love, Mom and Dad pull out the checkbook, they go to the kitchen table, and they make a plan. What are we spending now? How can we spend less? Where can we make do? And how can we put us back in the black? Mr. Speaker, that's called a budget. It works in Indiana. And if it works well enough for us Hoosiers, it's good enough for the Federal Government.

Unfortunately, it's been over 800 days since the Senate even passed a budget. Both parties have their fair share in the blame for running us into the red. A balanced budget amendment, however, ought to get bipartisan support here in Washington.

Now is the time for action.

□ 1210

DIRTY WATER

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, today the House will take up the so-called Clean Water Cooperative Federal Act, a bill that would more aptly be named the "Dirty Water Act."

Rarely does this body so blatantly attempt to deceive and misinform than in the case of a bill that in neither spirit nor practice seeks cleaner water.

This legislation would render the EPA toothless to enforce the Clean Water Act, giving polluters more leeway to break from clean water standards and make it more difficult for the Army Corps of Engineers to receive constructive advice from environmental experts during the permit process.

Additionally, the bill would make it impossible for the EPA to adjust clean water standards accordingly if new science emerges, an appropriately anti-science provision for those who have promoted a head-in-the-sand attitude toward addressing our environmental problems. We cannot stand by quietly during this attempt to lower water quality standards under the Orwellian mantle of "clean water," and I hope this body does not fall for the "Dirty Water Act."

NO-JOBS AGENDA

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

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, we are now in week number 27 of the Republican no-jobs agenda.

It is apparent that after last week's disappointing jobs report, that job growth should be our number one priority. But my colleagues across the aisle seem to have not received this message.

Since January 1, not a single bill focused on job creation has come to the floor. Instead the majority has chosen to have focus on legislation that would roll back energy efficiency standards, clean water protections, and health care improvements.

Now, it seems the majority is threatening to hold the economy hostage. They are refusing to raise the debt ceiling unless we continue providing tax breaks for Big Oil and companies that ship jobs overseas. Instead of focusing on an agenda that balances the budget on the backs of America's middle class and seniors, this Congress needs to focus on a plan that will put America back to work.

My Democratic colleagues and I launched an ambitious Make It in America agenda that will rebuild our manufacturing base, create jobs, and position us for long-term economic competition. Mr. Speaker, the millions of unemployed Americans need us to work together to come up with a viable solution to job growth and rebuild our economy.

MAKE IT IN AMERICA

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

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I too rise today because it's obvious to all of us we need initiatives that make America more competitive.

We need to tap into the can-do spirit of Americans and out-innovate the rest of the world, all those things that made this country so great. We must be able to out-innovate, out-educate, and out-build the rest of the world.

As my colleague said, we need to Make It in America. And, yes, we can do it at the same time that we address long-term national debt. We can cut waste and balance the budget, but we also have to ensure the opportunity for growth exists.

In southern Minnesota we have a rich tradition of small businesses building from the ground up, becoming world class, like the Mayo Clinic. We are leading the Nation in renewable energy, biotech research, and ways of providing food for not only this country but the world.

We can support job creation today and in the future by encouraging businesses to make products and innovate here in the United States and sell to the world. Mr. Speaker, when we Make It in America, American families will make it too.

Let's create good-paying jobs here at home, and let's rebuild the middle class.

MOURNING THE PASSING OF FORMER MEMBER FRANK MASCARA

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

Mr. HOLDEN. Mr. Speaker, it is with deep regret that I rise today to inform the House of the passing of our former colleague and my dear good friend, Frank Mascara. Frank passed away earlier this week and will be laid to rest tomorrow in his beloved Washington County in western Pennsylvania.

Frank dedicated his life to public service, serving as county controller in Washington County, followed by 15 years as a county commissioner in Washington County. He then served with distinction in this body from 1995 to 2003, where he dedicated his career to working on transportation issues important not only to his district but to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and all across the country.

Frank will truly be missed. We extend our thoughts and prayers to his wife, Dolores, and their children.

WHERE ARE THE JOBS?

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to stand this morning and simply ask the question, where are the jobs, and why have we been here for some 27 weeks and we have not been able to say to the American people we are on your side?

Let me deviate for a moment and say the debt ceiling that has consumed us is a procedural matter that has occurred over the years and decades of Presidents, Republicans and Democrats. And so let's not castigate President Obama and say a deal would not be made because he is here. Let's look at ways of finding jobs.

The energy industry, for example, has a program that says veterans to jobs, energy jobs. Let's have youth to jobs, 18-35, energy jobs, and begin to create the jobs that Democrats have been fighting for, putting on the floor of the House, job creation.

Let's have the energy industry broadly look at a tax structure that is responsible and invests back in America. And let's realize that the vulnerable cannot be the brunt of our confusion about the debt ceiling. This is not a fight that we need on behalf of the American people.

What we need to do is to say to the American people here is a job, and we are staying on this floor 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to create jobs.

Now is the time for jobs.

THE REPUBLICAN ANTI-JOB AGENDA AND THE BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

(Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia asked and was given permission to address

the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, 27 weeks the Republicans have been in charge of this House, and they have not brought a single jobs bill to the floor.

Instead, House leadership has set its eyes on dogmatically asserting its goals of repealing health care reform and dismantling even the most basic of environmental regulations. Republicans have brought us so far down the path of mass deregulation that even the most basic safeguards are under threat.

They have brought forth insipid legislation to repeal bulb efficiency standards and are still fighting against essential clean water regulation.

The reality is that both of these efforts will kill jobs and hurt innovation, but the Republicans seem perfectly comfortable in sticking to the rhetoric of anti-regulation regardless of whom it harms.

We have gone so far down this path that the anti-tax dogma of the House majority is now bringing debt ceiling negotiations to a terrible, terrible brink of catastrophe. They would rather preserve tax breaks for their corporate jet and oil companies than compromise on a plan that will benefit the middle class of America by better distributing that tax burden.

It's wrong. Let's come to the table.

JOBS AND THE ECONOMY

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

Ms. CHU. Mr. Speaker, last week the Nation heard disheartening news: Unemployment is up to 9.2 percent.

But the American people don't need reports to tell them what they already know, that job growth should be Congress' top priority.

But the Republicans still aren't getting the message. It's been 27 weeks since they took control, and they have done nothing to create jobs. In fact, they haven't put a single jobs bill to a vote. Instead, they are threatening the loss of countless more American jobs by bringing the debt ceiling talks to the brink of economic catastrophe. They are holding America's economy and the American people hostage to their agenda of tax cuts for the rich and loopholes that help mega-corporations.

We need House leaders looking out for the American people and creating jobs, not cutting them. We need strong House leaders who will protect the American people, not corporate interests.

TAX MARIJUANA AND HEMP

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, there are ongoing negotiations about how to deal

with our Nation's budget deficit. And while we need to make the tough cuts as part of the package, we also need new revenues.

One idea for new revenues would be to regulate and tax marijuana and hemp across the country. Fifteen States and the District of Columbia have various level of degrees of medical marijuana or legalized medical marijuana. And yet rather than have any tax at the Federal level that actually produces income, we effectively have 100 percent tax; namely, it's confiscated by the Federal Government if it's discovered.

By reducing the tax rate on marijuana and hemp to be in line with alcohol and tobacco, we will generate tens of billions of dollars for revenue to reduce the deficit, and it won't make marijuana or hemp legal in any jurisdiction in this country where it is currently illegal. It will simply collect revenue from the States that have chosen to go down the route of medical marijuana or marijuana legalization and create revenue for the taxpayers to bring to the table as part of this deficit deal.

I encourage my colleagues to support reducing the marijuana tax.

□ 1220

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN VIETNAM

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

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, on October 15, 2009, I received disturbing reports that a democracy activist, Tran Khai Thanh Thuy, and her husband, Do Ba Tan, were beaten in front of their 13-year-old daughter and imprisoned by the Vietnamese police and government. Since then, I, along with some of my colleagues here in the House, have written countless letters to the Vietnamese Government urging the government to release Mrs. Tran. I have also engaged in direct communications with Secretary Clinton strongly advocating that the United States put pressure on the government in Vietnam to release her and so many other activists who simply want human rights to improve in Vietnam.

Fortunately, last month, thanks to the work of human rights organizations and Members of Congress, Mrs. Tran was released, and the State Department was able to bring Mrs. Tran to the United States where she now resides with her daughter.

Mrs. Tran, along with other activists, were all arrested simply for wanting human rights. I urge my colleagues to please help us with this issue.

CLEAN ENERGY JOBS

(Mr. TONKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about jobs. My home district, the capital region of New York, is a leader in clean energy jobs. But don't take my word for it. The Brookings Institution recently completed a study that found that the capital region has the largest share of green jobs in the country. That's over 6 percent. That's over 28,000 green jobs. And not only is the region growing now, it is poised for growth in the future. Whether at Albany NanoTech, GE, Plug Power, AWS Truepower, or GlobalFoundries, the capital region is producing the high-tech manufacturing jobs of today and tomorrow.

This doesn't just impact our domestic economy. Along with L.A., New York, and San Francisco, Albany is the only other metro area contributing \$1 billion annually to the clean export economy. We can "make it in America." We can manufacture the best products in the world here and do so in a way that grows jobs and rebuilds our economy.

The real question is: Does this Congress believe we are worthy of that investment? I think we are. Let's invest in jobs for America, and in so doing, let's cut the deficit. This report from the Brookings Institution proves it.

THE DEBT CEILING

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

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I stood on this floor with 3 weeks to go before August 2, the debt ceiling, to make the argument that we should abide by the commitments that we have made in the past. Today, I heard Chairman Bernanke of the Federal Reserve say that to fail to raise the debt ceiling would be devastating for jobs.

So what's the holdup? Don't take it from me. Let me read you a paragraph from The Economist magazine. This is not Mother Jones. This is not even The New York Times. This is The Economist magazine.

"The sticking point is not on the spending side. It is because the vast majority of Republicans, driven on by the wilder-eyed members of their party and the cacophony of conservative media, are clinging to the position that not a single cent of deficit reduction must come from a higher tax take. This is economically illiterate and disgracefully cynical."

Let me read that again: "This is economically illiterate and disgracefully cynical."

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2018, CLEAN WATER CO-OPERATIVE FEDERALISM ACT OF 2011

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I