

position, all Americans should be prepared to make the sacrifices as the gentleman before me has.

I think it's so unfair and borders on corrupt when people talk about where our American men and women should be, defending freedom in foreign countries, when America hasn't spoken. Presidents haven't declared war. And we find ourselves talking about volunteers when it's abundantly clear that everybody does not assume the same sacrifices, whether we're talking about taxes or loss of life.

So whether we're talking about Australia, Afghanistan, Iraq, before the people make a decision—and that's what we're for in the House—before they make a decision, at least say that everyone has to participate in that decision and not those who, for economic reasons, find themselves in communities with the highest, the very highest unemployment.

And I laud what happens to all of us who volunteered, because when that flag goes up, you salute the flag. The President becomes the Commander in Chief, and there is only one thing to do. And that's win and protect the integrity of the United States.

But I submit that we have to have a draft that's a part of—what?—the United States, and not a plea for those people, for economic reasons, who will have to protect themselves. I don't think I've ever said this before, but I was thinking that my brother volunteered long before Pearl Harbor, which today we commemorate, and so he was unable to say, nor I, that he volunteered because we were being attacked.

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Several years later, in 1948, when the war was over, I volunteered, and that was before the North Koreans invaded South Korea. I would like to walk away by saying how patriotic we both were; but really what motivated me was the excitement my mother would get in receiving a check from my older brother. It wasn't a question of whether she loved him more; it was that she needed it.

I was a teenager—11, 12 years old. The one thing I knew, I wanted to make my mother as happy as my brother did and send her that allotment check. Yet, today, I have medals, and I've been lorded by the Koreans and everyone else; but when I think about it, there were economic reasons that made me a "hero," and there are economic reasons that make the heroes that we have who defend our country and our flag so well.

I didn't expect to talk about that; but in hearing that, 70 years ago, we were attacked and of the American lives that were lost and then of coming back to what has happened in Afghanistan, I am reminded of how unfair this system is for the greatest country in the world and of the hope and division that we're losing and of what separates us from so many other countries in which you can be born into the pits of

poverty, and yet you can always dream that, in this great country, you can succeed.

So many Members of Congress and so many members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus are the first ones who ever went to college—their parents were the first ones in generations who were able to become professionals—and then had the great honor to represent the United States of America in this Congress.

I am sorry to have deviated from why I came to the well. What I can say to other Members is: God bless America. We have to keep fighting for equality and justice for all.

IN HONOR OF THE BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA

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

Mr. TIPTON. Yesterday, legislation that I sponsored, along with Senator MICHAEL BENNET from Colorado, passed the House floor. This bill for the Blue Star Mothers of America updated their congressional charter for the modern era.

Mr. Speaker, I am privileged today, particularly on this day as we commemorate the attack on Pearl Harbor 70 years ago, to be able to rise to honor the Blue Star Mothers of America—the people, the women of America, who have been providing much needed assistance to our Nation's active duty servicemen and -women, veterans, and military families since 1942.

Founded during the height of World War II, the Blue Star Mothers are a nonpartisan veterans' service organization, composed of mothers of current and former servicemembers. Today, over 5,000 dedicated women perform a wide variety of important volunteer services for our troops, providing transportation, supplies, food, and emotional support. More than 225 local chapters across the United States carry out the mission of supporting our troops, our veterans, and the families of our fallen heroes, as well as developing individual projects to assist the specific needs of the military in their own communities. Last month alone, thousands of care packages were sent to our troops overseas, and chaplains and commanders across the military received boxes of supplies and gifts to be able to be distributed to the comrades.

The Blue Star Mothers were originally formed to bring their children home, to ensure that they were given the benefits that they deserved, and to provide them with a vast support network upon their arrival. The organization has since expanded to include other forms of assistance, including rehabilitation, family services, and civil defense. This was chartered by Congress in 1960.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be able to recognize the Blue Star Mothers of America, and I rise today to thank

these patriotic women for their commitment to serving the needs of America's military community and for making a difference in the lives of those who sacrifice the most.

Several years ago, I had the opportunity to be at the graduation at the United States Air Force Academy. My son-in-law was graduating, and Secretary Gates delivered the commencement address. At that time, he noted that that freshman class was the first to enter the academy after 9/11, knowing full well that they would be putting themselves in harm's way.

We have the finest volunteer military that the world has ever seen. May God continue to bless this country with such men and women who will always stand for freedom.

WALL STREET AND MF GLOBAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, numerous stories have come out over the last few weeks, all detailing the corruption and outright fraud on Wall Street.

First, there was the recent news about former Secretary of the Treasury Hank Paulson's inappropriately tipping off a few key friends from Goldman Sachs and other Wall Street tycoons about the impending collapse of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac so that those friends could hedge and make money on that insider knowledge. Then a judge in New York threw out one of the orchestrated settlements between Citigroup, which was a bank at the center of the wrongdoing, and the Securities and Exchange Commission, which allowed that bank to walk away from cases of fraud without admitting any wrongdoing.

This past weekend, "60 Minutes" interviewed a former executive vice president at Countrywide Financial, a giant and duplicitous player in the U.S. mortgage business. This woman was in charge of fraud investigations at the company before the financial crisis.

According to her, "Countrywide loan officers were forging and manipulating borrowers' income and asset statements to help them get loans they weren't qualified for and couldn't afford." She went on to say that all of the recycle bins, wherever they looked in that company, were full of signatures that had been cut off of one document and put onto another and then photocopied or faxed. According to her, the fraud she witnessed was systemic, taking place in Boston, Chicago, Miami, Detroit, Las Vegas, Phoenix, and elsewhere. She was fired before she could speak to government regulators about the extent of fraud she had documented.

What is most troubling is that these stories are not isolated. The FBI testified before Congress as early as 2004 that they were seeing an epidemic in white collar crime. They stated the FBI did not have anywhere near

enough agents to investigate major white collar crime like the financial crisis. There are moments when I do wonder if the FBI has the will to prosecute; but still, today, the FBI has nowhere near enough special agents or forensic experts to properly investigate the level of corruption that we know occurred.

Frankly, the Congress has shorted the FBI—some might say purposely—of the resources it needs to do the job. I have a bill, which I invite my colleagues to support, H.R. 3050, the Financial Crisis Criminal Investigation Act, authorizing an additional 1,000 FBI agents to aggressively investigate the kind of fraud that has destroyed the economic future of millions of our people and that has upset the global financial system.

Back when we had the S&L crisis in the 1990s, we had 1,000 agents. Do you know how many were working when this financial crisis started? Forty-five. The others had all been reassigned to terrorism. We're only up a little over 200 agents now investigating white collar crime. Think about that, America. Why do you think these financial wrongdoers aren't in jail? Frankly, this Congress has not taken its responsibility to investigate seriously.

Despite the robust public reporting of misdeeds on Wall Street, it has not been until the MF Global case, one of the top 10 bankruptcies in this country, that Congress has shown some mild interest in the magnitude of the inquiry required. In November, we got an inside look into the stunning misdeeds—and let's be blunt—outright thievery that occurred at MF Global in the days before it declared bankruptcy. The total amount missing from private accounts has fluctuated over the weeks. As much as \$1.2 billion could be missing from private customer accounts.

Congress is finally having hearings on this subject tomorrow, and we'll see how seriously an investigation is pursued. Let me say that the public has a right to know on what specific dates throughout 2011 money from customer accounts was wire-transferred in order to meet MF Global's margin calls.

□ 1050

This is the key question. Members should ask, probe, and exact the truth. The public has a right to know on what specific dates through 2011 was money from private customer accounts at MF wire-transferred in order to meet MF's global margin calls.

If Mr. Corzine authorized the taking of those funds, then this body should remind him that no one is above the law, not even someone who was a former Goldman Sachs CEO, former Governor and U.S. Senator. Whichever friends and associates aided his actions in that company should be brought into full sunlight, as well as other companies that were likely involved in those wire transfers.

The fact that hundreds of millions of dollars, if not over a billion dollars,

can simply be stolen from a major banking institution from the inside requires full investigation, not just by the Congress, but by the FBI. I'm reminded of that book, written by Professor William Black, "The Best Way To Rob a Bank is To Own One." Well, I wonder how much of that applies in this case.

It's time that Wall Street, white collar crimes, be prosecuted seriously, that this Congress do its job. Let's provide the FBI the resources it needs to fully investigate and prosecute, and the committees of this Chamber use their full authority to do no less. We surely owe this to the American people and the cause of justice toward all.

SUPPORT REINS ACT AND GOP REGULATORY REFORM AGENDA

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak today about the Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny, or the REINS, Act.

This bill, which I have cosponsored, restores accountability to the regulatory process by requiring an up-or-down vote in Congress and the President's signature on any new major rule before it is enforced on the American people.

Over-regulation, Mr. Speaker, is devastating our economy and hindering job growth. Of the current administration's new regulations, 200 are expected to cost more than \$100 million each. Seven of those new regulations, however, will cost the economy more than \$1 billion each. At the current pace, the current regulatory burden for 2011 alone will exceed \$105 billion.

And the Federal Government has created more than 81.9 million hours' worth of paperwork this year alone, costing employers \$80 billion just in compliance. It's no wonder a recent Gallup Poll found small business owners citing "complying with government regulations" as "the most important problem" they face.

Nebraskans have not been immune to the reams of red tape being handed down by Federal regulators. Just yesterday it was reported the city of Grand Island, Nebraska, population 51,000, will be saddled with a \$3.2 million compliance cost due to a new Federal emissions regulation. This EPA Cross-State Air Pollution Rule was finalized June 1 and will be enforced January 1.

But this is only one example. There are additional, even more costly rules and unworkable timelines coming down the pike, all of which mean a much longer winter for Americans struggling with high energy costs.

But it doesn't stop there. Recently, the Department of Labor proposed a misguided rule which would restrict youth involvement in agriculture work. Yes, Mr. Speaker, anything from milking cows and feeding calves to

hauling and detassling corn would come under fire under the Department's current rule.

Everyone agrees the safety of these young people and workers everywhere is of the utmost importance; but by allowing such heavy-handed thoughtless regulation, we're greatly restricting opportunities for rural youth. These jobs, often seasonal, teach young people responsibility and the value of hard work; and they're able to earn a little spending money in the process.

I'm also a proud cosponsor of the Farm Dust Regulation Prevention Act of 2011, H.R. 1633, which the House is slated to consider later this week. This bill would prevent the EPA from regulating farm dust, or the type of dust which naturally occurs in rural areas.

Farmers and ranchers already are subject to strict Federal and State regulations to control dust. It makes no sense for the EPA to impose costlier requirements on top of the existing standards. While the EPA has backed off without legislative action, nothing certainly prohibits the agency from regulating farm dust in the future.

During a time of economic hardship, keeping the door open for additional regulatory overreach is not the answer. Actually, I'm often reminded of a meeting I had in southeastern Nebraska with representatives from a Federal agency, good people they are. One of them said it had been more than 20 years since he'd ridden on a gravel road.

For me, this meeting certainly emphasized the disconnect between Washington and rural America. These are only a few examples of the regulatory burden and uncertainty facing Nebraskans who recognize economic growth ultimately depends on job creators, not regulators.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support commonsense regulatory reforms like the REINS Act.

This is yet another step towards increased accountability, improving the regulatory process, and providing certainty for job creators in my home State of Nebraska and in States all across this country.

SMART: MORE SECURITY AT A FRACTION OF THE COST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, the violence rages on in Afghanistan. Earlier this week, suicide bombers struck in three different cities, in each case targeting Shiite worshippers who are observing a religious holiday.

The death toll is at least 63, according to a news report; and a Pakistani extremist group has claimed responsibility for the attacks. One eyewitness told The New York Times: "We saw 30 or 40 people on the ground missing arms or legs." Another said the Kabul