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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PALAZZO).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 25, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEVEN M. PALAZZO to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 17, 2012, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 12:50 p.m.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

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

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, 3 years ago President Obama promised Congress that the American people would have 6 percent unemployment in exchange for trillions of taxpayer dollars to pump into the economy. Today we know that the stimulus program was mismanaged, ill-conceived, and failed to create the jobs promised by the President. For 38 straight months and counting, the unemployment rate has remained above 8 percent.

The American people realize something that my Democrat friends don't seem to understand: that government cannot create jobs and shouldn't be in the business of handing out jobs. In 2010, the American people sent me and many of my colleagues to Washington to cut government spending and offer real solutions to job creation. We have been aggressively fighting to achieve that challenge.

Our country needs commonsense, pro-growth policies that will help small business regain their confidence. When business owners have faith that the government will not raise their taxes, impose new, unnecessary regulations, and pick winners and losers in the marketplace, they'll invest more. When they invest more, the company grows, and the opportunity for American jobs grows with it.

Just last week, we saw a very clear picture of the different visions for job creation held by folks in Washington. My friends in the Senate voted on but thankfully failed to pass the Buffett rule. The act would impose a tax hike on one class of Americans and would pay for approximately 11 hours of government functioning. Talk about a cynical ruse serving only to divide our country for political purposes.

But while my Democrat colleagues in the Senate are working to raise taxes on Americans and America's job creators, the House is trying to lower them. Last week we passed a small business tax cut, which will give businesses with fewer than 500 employees a 20 percent tax reduction off their active business income and encourage the creation of more jobs for our citizens.

Data shows that 7 out of every 10 jobs in this country are created by companies with fewer than 500 employees. My Republican colleagues and I truly believe that small businesses are the backbone of our country's economy and their success is vital to our economic recovery. We continue to act

proactively and, as reflected in the 27 job-creating measures passed by the House this Congress alone, to ensure job providers are able to create, innovate, and lead.

We hope our friends in the Senate and White House will decide to join us as we say "yes" to American jobs for American people.

AMERICAN LEGISLATIVE EXCHANGE COUNCIL

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen, a shadowy collection of wealthy businesses and conservative Tea Party Republican State lawmakers is undermining our democracy.

Last week I discussed the connection between the American Legislative Exchange Council, known as ALEC, and the proliferation of shoot first and ask questions later legislation that supported the Trayvon Martin case that we all know about, and other draconian criminal justice laws.

According to the New York Times:

ALEC lawmakers typically introduced more than 1,000 bills based on model legislation each year and passed about 17 percent of them. A members-only newsletter from 1995, found in an online archive of tobacco company documents, bluntly characterized that success ratio as a "good investment."

I agree. ALEC's corporate members have gotten an outstanding return on their investments, but it's been at yours and my expense. Due to ALEC, the NRA, and the private for-profit prison industry, we are all less safe and more likely to be put in jail.

The for-profit prison industry, on the other hand, has reaped huge financial rewards from ALEC-sponsored efforts to incarcerate more Americans and put them, as well as illegal immigrants, into this private prison system. For

This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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