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## House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Nebraska).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,  
June 5, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ADRIAN SMITH 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 each party limited to 1 hour 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 1:50 p.m.

### WHAT WOULD RONALD REAGAN DO?

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

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, when we look at this economy, we should ask: What would Ronald Reagan do? When he took office in 1981, President Reagan inherited an economy in deep recession. During the past 3 years, we've heard a number of current Republicans laud the accomplishments of Ronald Reagan in spurring economic recovery during that decade.

As they often point out, President Reagan cut taxes. Of course, so did President Obama. The Recovery Act, which I proudly supported, cut taxes for 95 percent of all Americans, averaging \$400 for individuals and \$800 for families. When that tax cut expired—and when Republicans refused to extend it—I was again proud to join President Obama to enact the payroll tax cut, averaging \$1,000 per family. But tax cuts alone do not make a robust recovery.

The other notable thing Ronald Reagan did was preside over a Nation with a sharp increase in public sector employment from local, State, and Federal levels. Because, while today's Republicans may try to argue otherwise, teaching jobs are jobs; firefighters have real jobs; police jobs are jobs. In fact, three of the last four economic recoveries had one thing in common: public sector employment increased. Two and a half years into the recovery from 2001, total public sector employment was 1 percent higher; 2½ years into the recovery from the 1980 recession, total public sector employment was 3 percent higher. And 2½ years into the recovery from the 1980 recession, total public sector employment under Ronald Reagan was almost 3½ percent higher than it was at the start of the recovery.

In contrast, today's recovery from the recent recession has seen total public sector employment decrease by 2.5 percent, largely because the Republicans have gotten their way in trying to shrink the public sector. Real jobs were lost. Had total public sector employment merely held steady over the last 2½ years, the unemployment rate today would be 7.8 percent, not 8.2. But instead, we've lost 600,000 public sector jobs: teachers, police officers, firefighters, librarians, and other dedicated public servants. If the goal truly were to foster a robust economic recovery, you'd think today's Republicans

would be looking at how the Nation worked its way out of previous recessions. But, obviously, that's not the case.

Last September, President Obama put forward the American Jobs Act, a proposal to cut taxes on workers and businesses to incentivize hiring and to fund necessary infrastructure improvements. Economists predicted the American Jobs Act would have added up to 1 million new jobs and spurred GDP growth by an extra 1.5 percent.

These are proposals that have traditionally earned bipartisan support. For example, one of the single largest infrastructure projects ever was under the creation of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, the interstate highway program. In 1982, while he was still working toward economic recovery, Ronald Reagan proposed a highway and bridge repair program to create jobs in the public sector. But, sadly, Republican opposition has kept the American Jobs Act from even coming to the floor for a vote.

Many Republicans decried the use of additional revenue to help offset any increase in national debt. Apparently, they forgot that when faced with rising deficits, Ronald Reagan looked to revenue increases, broadening the tax base, closing loopholes, and raising taxes. Yes, he raised taxes in 1982, 1984, 1985, 1986, and 1987.

It's unfortunate that today's Republicans have lost sight of the value of investing in America in a fiscally responsible manner, because the Nation's construction industry has been the hardest hit. America lost more than 2 million construction jobs in the recession that began in 2007.

Infrastructure investments don't just create jobs, they also repair dangerous bridges and make our roadways safer. They build needed schools to lessen overcrowding; they renovate hospitals and improve water treatment plants.

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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