

The bigger picture in Illinois is equally devastating. Sequestration will cost Illinois more than 53,000 jobs and \$5.3 billion in the State's economic output. Nationwide, sequestration threatens our physical safety as well as our economy. Ten percent of the FAA's workforce could be furloughed, resulting in reduced air traffic control, longer delays, and economic losses for our tourism industries. Meat and poultry inspectors at USDA would also face furlough, potentially shuttering meat processing facilities and even affecting restaurants and grocery stores. Layoffs at the FDA would mean 2,100 fewer safety inspectors. There would be 25,000 fewer breast and cervical cancer screenings for low-income women. Mindless cuts to military and law enforcement affect our ability to protect our borders and meet the ever-present threat of terrorism, both here and abroad.

Madam Speaker, this is unacceptable. Somewhere along the way, buried in the din of the 24-hour news cycle and partisan bellowing, we lost the art of compromise. But that's what allowed the passage of civil rights legislation in the 1960s and saved Social Security in the 1980s. Legislators of both parties sat down and talked to each other, not past each other, to hammer out their differences and achieve something that made this country better.

I have no illusion that everyone in this body agrees with my ideas about reshaping Pentagon spending or reforming entitlements to ensure they provide benefits for generations to come; but I do know that making the changes that are best for the long-term interests of this country can't be accomplished overnight. These decisions require our best effort and precise planning. As the threat of sequester has painfully revealed, a chain saw is no way to create a budget for the most powerful country on Earth.

JUMP-STARTING THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. POCAN. Madam Speaker, as a lifelong Wisconsinite and a proud resident of Madison for the last 30 years, I am deeply humbled and honored to represent Wisconsin's Second District in the House of Representatives. The Second District is home to a world-class university, innovative small businessowners, and hardworking dairy farmers and cheese makers who produce the best milk and cheese you can find.

I ran for Congress because I wanted to ensure these voices, the voices of south central Wisconsin, are heard, respected and represented in Washington. And I am committed to serving their needs by working with my colleagues—all of my colleagues—regardless of party affiliation. But I hate to say it, Madam Speaker, right now the people of Wisconsin's Second District are frus-

trated, and I understand why. When I went home last week, I met with people from all kinds of professions and all walks of life, and their concerns could not have been more different from what we talk about right here in Washington. What they care about is what all families care about: how can they make a living so they can pay their bills, provide for their loved ones, and create opportunities for their children.

They don't care about political finger-pointing. They care about how we in Congress can support an environment where businesses can attract more buyers for their products, hire more workers, and increase wages; in other words, how do we grow the economy.

What I told them, and what I'll repeat here today, is that the sequester and its irresponsible, indiscriminate and across-the-board spending cuts is the exact opposite of what we need to be doing right now to grow our economy. Taken as a whole, these spending cuts represent a harsh austerity policy that I fear could only move our country backwards.

We've seen in Europe the severe effects austerity policies have had on fragile economies working their way back from recessions. Four years after the global economic crisis, our friends across the ocean are at risk of a triple-dip recession. Unemployment is climbing; and even with these massive spending cuts, countries have seen their debt loads increase. Is this the model we want to follow in our country?

Madam Speaker, we must remember that the biggest threat to our long-term economic security is not the deficit. It's the economy. It's a lack of jobs, and it's about the more than 12 million people who are unemployed in this country.

I own a printing shop in Wisconsin; and as a small businessowner, I can tell you that it's about the lack of access to capital because of economic uncertainty, it's about a lack of consumer confidence, and it's about people needing to get back to work. These are the issues we need to address, not austerity; and we are not going to create jobs or help spur spending by gutting critical government programs without any thought to the consequences. To people in Wisconsin, that's just politics as usual.

We need to change the conversation right here in Washington. We need to be talking about what people are talking about in Beloit, in Baraboo, and in Sun Prairie. Instead of asking about how much we can cut, we need to be asking ourselves how we can jump-start the economy, how we can invest in our future, and how we can support our local small businessowners who are the backbone of our communities. That's how we'll fix the economy.

We need to support education, infrastructure projects, research and development, and new industries such as green energy that will help lead to job

growth and bring our unemployment rate down. And by growing the economy, we will fix our fiscal problems.

Now, that doesn't mean I don't see a place for responsible restraint. As the former chair of the Joint Finance Committee in Wisconsin, I understand that when you put together a budget, tough decisions have to be made, and you can stay up all night agonizing over the smallest details, the tiniest programs, because these programs make a difference in people's lives. It's a lot of work, and it should be, because our budget priorities have a direct effect on our middle class families and on long-term economic growth. But the sequester trades in the tough work and replaces it with massive, indiscriminate, and irresponsible spending cuts. It's like taking a meat cleaver to the budget instead of a scalpel.

It could cost 750,000 jobs nationwide, including 36,000 jobs right in Wisconsin. It could mean 70,000 students across the country, and 1,000 in my State, would see their Head Start services eliminated this year, and it would mean \$900 million less in loan guarantees to small businessowners nationwide, including in Wisconsin.

Now, I'm a cosponsor of a plan put forward by Representative VAN HOLLEN that would avert these disastrous spending cuts and replace them with a balanced approach that promotes economic growth while responsibly reducing the deficit. I strongly urge my colleagues to come to the table, stop this irresponsible sequester, and then refocus our efforts.

The time has come to stop talking about harmful spending cuts and start talking about getting the people of Wisconsin and of America back to work. We need less austerity and more prosperity. We don't have time to waste.

SEQUESTRATION AND WEST POINT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, earlier this week, I was home in the Hudson Valley at the United States Military Academy at West Point talking to the cadets there to better understand these arbitrary cuts to that legendary American institution that will happen if we fail to act.

West Point has been educating and training our Nation's next generation of military leaders since 1802. It is as old as the Nation itself. Each year, over 1,000 young men and women from all across our country step into the long gray line where two American Presidents, 18 astronauts, 74 Medal of Honor recipients, 70 Rhodes Scholars, and three Heisman Trophy winners have stood before them.

These kids take the hard road. They give up the easy life to serve us and our country. For many of them, their time