

LARGER TRUCKS

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

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. I rise today in favor of protecting our infrastructure, keeping our roads safe, and reducing emissions. There are serious safety, infrastructure, and environmental concerns involved with allowing even bigger and heavier tractor-trailers on our roadways than are currently allowed. Trucking accidents cause too many deaths, and the 3,373 victims in 2011 alone were disproportionately people who were driving in cars caught in these heavy truck crashes.

These oversized trucks also inflict disproportionate damage on our roads, and especially on our national bridge system. They impose a significant cost on the rest of us to pay for these repairs. Plus, allowing larger and heavier trucks would divert freight away from our rails and onto our highways, increasing congestion and emissions at a time when we are working hard to reduce both.

 RECOGNIZING CATHEDRAL HIGH SCHOOL

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

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary students, parents, and faculty of Cathedral High School in El Paso, Texas.

Yesterday, I had the privilege of meeting with many of Cathedral's best and brightest, along with their principal, Brother Nick Gonzalez, and Chief Justice Richard Barajas, who leads the Center for Advanced Studies. What Cathedral's students have achieved under their watch is truly incredible.

This year, a record six graduating seniors have been designated as Gates Millennium Scholars and five others were finalists for this prestigious award that provides scholarships to outstanding minority students. Two others will be attending service academies.

Overall, 98 percent of the graduating class of 115 has been accepted to college, and 32 seniors will be graduating with a degree from El Paso Community College in addition to their Cathedral diploma.

Cathedral is representative of our vibrant binational community in El Paso. Over 85 percent of the student body is of Hispanic origin, with students from El Paso, Ciudad Juarez, and southern New Mexico. The school's rigorous curriculum emphasizes social justice and community service, so graduates are not just model students, they are also preparing to become model citizens.

I am proud to represent Cathedral High School and expect great things from all the students I had the privilege of meeting yesterday.

 MAKE IT IN AMERICA:
 MANUFACTURING MATTERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WILLIAMS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, it's good to be back here for another week of work. We certainly have work to do. Out across this Nation there are a lot of people that are still unemployed, and it's time for Congress to take this extremely important task and to get it done.

We've been talking here on the floor for a long time about how we can create jobs in America. The Make It in America agenda that my Democratic colleagues and I have put forth over the last 2½ years is an extensive number of bills designed to bring jobs back to the United States. And we need them.

An article that appeared in the newspapers this last day or so talked about this. This is Paul Krugman talking about the long-term unemployment that we now have here in the United States. He cites that for the last 5 years we've been in a crisis. Unemployment remains elevated, with almost 12 million Americans out of work. But the real striking and huge number is in another category, and that's the long-term unemployment: 4.6 million Americans have been unemployed for more than 6 months, and more than 3 million have been jobless for more than a year. The programs that my Democratic colleagues and I have offered over the last 2½ years would have gone directly to that problem.

He argues that when you have this long-term unemployment, you create a problem that these men and women are not likely to ever get back into the workforce, citing several statistics that are found around the Nation. But we can do something about that, and the Make It in America agenda is exactly what we ought to be working on.

Before I go into the specifics of that agenda, I'd like to cover one other issue. This is seen in a report from the International Monetary Fund that they just came out with in the last couple of days warning the United States to be very careful about continued reductions in our budget. They argue that the austerity program that the United States has actually been on for the last 2 years—now, remember, immediately after President Obama became President the United States took on a stimulus program, an enormous stimulus program of a little over \$700 billion. That actually created the start of the rebirth of the American economy, but it only lasted for a year, a year and a half.

Then we undertook, at the behest of my Republican colleagues, an austerity program, one that involved seriously

reducing the Federal budget. Over the decades, beginning in 2011, we will see a nearly \$2 trillion reduction in Federal expenditures in the 10-year period. That is what austerity is all about.

Today, if you were trying to get on an airplane somewhere in the United States, you were beginning to see yet one more effect of austerity, and that is the air traffic controllers going on furlough, so that 1 day out of 10 air traffic controllers will not be working, meaning that there will be a shortage. Some say, well, they should have moved the money around and they could have done it some other way, but that's not the way the austerity program is in the United States, and that's not the way the sequestration law is written.

Sequestration is across-the-board cuts, expenditure item by expenditure item, with no—or very little—authority to shift money from one lower priority to a higher priority. Therefore, today, the air traffic controllers, some were not working. There was a general slowdown of air traffic across the United States resulting in some of my colleagues not getting to work today to vote on the three bills that we had up here on the floor just a few moments ago.

In any case, the IMF warns: U.S. austerity will slow growth. This was a warning that was issued to the United States. It was also issued earlier to the United Kingdom, who have been on a very serious austerity budget for the last 3 years. The result is that the United Kingdom has actually seen a shrinking in their economy, as has most of Europe. Austerity did not work in Europe as an effort to deal with the downturn of the economy and the Great Recession, and it certainly is not working here.

We need to create jobs in the United States. A rational economic strategy would say that when you have a general decline in the economy caused by a lack of consumer spending, then it is time for the government to step in and to provide support for the economy. We can do that in a way that actually is an investment strategy. This is where I would like to take this conversation.

Instead of talking about austerity and cut, cut, cut at the Federal level to deal with the deficit—an issue that, indeed, we must deal with, but that's a long-term issue that we have to get about—but we have a short-term crisis right now with employment and the lack of demand here in the United States.

So, what do we do about it? Well, first of all, we end sequestration; give a rational way for the government agencies to address the \$85 billion of cuts that are taking place in the next 6 months—better yet, to put that off into the future. Let those cuts occur in the years 4, 5, 6, 7, out in the future rather than right now, when what we ought to be doing is increasing the government expenditure on key investments, like keeping the airplanes in the sky, like