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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. HARPER).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,  
October 16, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable GREGG HARPER 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 3, 2013, 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 11:50 a.m.

### TIME TO DEAL WITH BUDGET MATTERS

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, now, after 16 days, one remembers the gleeful Republicans pouring out of the House Chamber on the early morning of October 1 so excited that they got the shutdown, the tool they would use to end the Affordable Care Act. Well, it has now collapsed in disarray on the eve of a far more serious deadline: flirting with the default on our national debt.

I am embarrassed for my Republican colleagues who cannot figure out what they want as they tie themselves into knots, refusing to put a simple, clean continuing resolution on the floor that would end this madness, I guess because they fear all the Democrats and many Republicans would approve it, ending this sad chapter.

It is fascinating what a destructive minority and rudderless Republican House leadership can do, inflicting damage in so many ways. This all would have been unimaginable in normal times. I tried to explain it on the air yesterday to a BBC reporter. I felt foolish and embarrassed. It is inexplicable.

It is time to stop negotiating the terms of the release of the American people and their economy. There is a simple answer, and it is not necessarily calling the Republican bluff on the shutdown and debt ceiling. The answer is to encourage the Republicans to try and pass their own spending bills. Don't insulate them any longer from the specifics.

With the Ryan budget, Republicans are on a glide path to 1962 spending levels; but for an America half a century later, with 150 million more people and three times the number of senior citizens, the math doesn't work for most of us, and it appears that it doesn't work for the Republicans either. Why else would they have stopped the consideration of their own spending bills not even halfway through the process? Remember, we still have pending the Transportation-HUD spending bill that was abruptly halted more than 2 months ago, last summer. It is still pending. It could be brought to the floor at any time.

Let us stop tolerating wildly unrealistic political antics, and dive into budget mechanics. Let them try and pass the Interior spending bill, which they were afraid to even take to the full committee, let alone pass the

Health and Human Services bill. Let us get into specifics and stop the hostage-taking. No one should be allowed to weaponize the process of governance, especially people unwilling or unable to do their own job.

The President should use his bully pulpit to spotlight their refusal to act and his alternatives. By all means, let us look at the looming Social Security cut that is going to occur 20 years from now. How much do we want to cut of future benefits for people who are increasingly struggling in retirement and who already get less than most other rich countries?

Let us deal with the long-term costs of our military, with hugely expensive, outdated, unnecessary surplus nuclear weapons. Let us help the military deal with health and pension costs that greatly concern the military leadership because they know they are not sustainable.

My Republican colleagues cannot have it both ways: attacking the President for including the chained CPI in his own budget proposal as an assault on senior citizens, as alleged by my friend and colleague GREG WALDEN, the head of the Republican Campaign Committee in the House, when that is actually what many of my Republican friends want; attacking the President and Democrats for having obtained \$700 billion in Medicare savings without cutting payments to seniors and then making that into a campaign issue in 2012, and then claiming the President and Democrats don't want to deal with entitlements. How hypocritical.

Let us stop the hostage-taking and deal with specifics. We can resolve these matters in, actually, a matter of months if the American public and the Congress are forced to confront the realities of fantasy budgets and political slogans. The American people deserve better. Now it is time to give that to them.

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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