

budget amendment to the Constitution has not been considered in the Congress for 15 years, despite overwhelming public support across this country.

Now, I'm for the version of the balanced budget amendment with various limits, but I believe it's vitally important that Republican leadership has chosen to bring the bipartisan version to the floor, to play it straight and give us a fighting chance to get those two-thirds votes necessary to amend the Constitution.

So I rise to announce my support for the Budget Control Act. I rise to express gratitude to Speaker BOEHNER and Leader CANTOR, who listened to colleagues like myself who thought we could improve the circumstances of this vote by accelerating and improving our choices for a balanced budget amendment. And, frankly, I also rise to commend all of my colleagues who have held out for a better deal. I want to say from my heart, this is better.

History is often made in unexpected ways and at unexpected times. I believe, with the consideration of the Budget Control Act on the floor today, we have an opportunity to make progress toward restoring fiscal discipline to Washington, D.C.; but I believe with consideration of the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States tomorrow, we have an opportunity to make history.

So I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Budget Control Act on the floor today. But I also urge all of my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats alike, to join us as we make a good faith effort to send a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States to the Senate and to the States. Let us put into the national charter that this national government, for this generation and the next, must again live within our means.

POVERTY IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. I rise today as a founding cochair of the 39-Member Out of Poverty Caucus to talk about the millions of people living in poverty in America.

Nearly 45 million Americans live in poverty, and one in five children are growing up in poverty. The recession may be over for big corporations and the superrich, but for far too many Americans the recession is actually a depression.

Yesterday, the Out of Poverty Caucus held a press conference with organizations working on the front lines with low-income and poor people. We heard stories of more homelessness, long lines at food pantries, and the desperation felt by so many. Our Nation's unemployment rate remains at an unacceptably high 9.2 percent. Millions of Americans who have lost their jobs are

finding it harder and harder to find a new one. These new ranks of the long-term unemployed and their families are facing the stark reality of life in poverty for the first time.

The ongoing impact of the recession on struggling families and those facing or living in poverty simply must not be ignored. But instead of working to improve the lives of millions of Americans in poverty, the Republican Party continues their drive to plunge our Nation into default and our economy over the brink.

Speaker BOEHNER has unveiled yet another Republican plan that fails to do what America needs. His plan fails to end the threat of default. His plan targets the programs aimed at America's most vulnerable—our seniors, our children, and our low-income families—for more draconian cuts.

Trying to balance the budget on the backs of the poor is morally wrong.

□ 1100

We need a balanced approach that balances targeted cuts with the revenue that we need. We must make sure that we can pay the benefits that we owe to our seniors, protect Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security, and safeguard our most vulnerable communities.

Mr. Speaker, while the Nation's unemployment level remains unacceptably high, for some minority communities it was double digits even before the recession began. The unemployment rate for African Americans today is recorded at 16.2 percent and Latinos recorded at 11.2 percent. And what many of us have known for a long, long time now, African Americans and Latinos have lost 18 to 20 times their net worth, more so than white Americans due to structural inequalities where race is a factor. These numbers are horrific and speak to the larger crisis facing our Nation, the jobs crisis.

Let me share the story of one American who is looking for a job. Reverend David was laid off from his job as the successful director of a faith-based nonprofit that served the disadvantaged and worked to put people on a path to self-sufficiency. Now he is relying on the very safety net programs that he used to connect others to. He diligently job hunts week after week. David and his wife rely on unemployment benefits to make ends meet, and he is worried about what he will do when he reaches the 99-week limit of those benefits.

Reverend David is not alone. Forty-five million Americans worry about where they will sleep at night, if their children will eat, what will happen if they need medical attention, and when will they secure a living-wage job.

We must work together to help the millions of Americans who are still struggling to recover from the Great Recession.

As the first order of business, I call on the Speaker to bring my legislation, H.R. 589, to the floor for an up-or-down

vote immediately. It would add 14 weeks of retroactive emergency unemployment benefits to those long-term unemployed known as 99ers who continue to face uncertainty and hardships. Passing this extension will stimulate our economy, not to mention that it is our moral responsibility to help those in need.

But people really want to work. Instead of creating jobs, Republicans are holding our economy hostage, putting forth policies that will create more unemployment and more job loss. Instead of quickly passing a clean debt ceiling vote, the Republicans are marching lockstep to create this default.

Instead of supporting the vital human needs programs that will protect our most vulnerable, Republicans are trying to balance the budget on the backs of the poor while maintaining these tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires and Big Oil.

Mr. Speaker, there is no more time for these Republican games. The American people expect us to put partisanship aside to protect our economy and create jobs. The American Dream has been a nightmare for the 45 million living in poverty, and is turning quickly into a nightmare for millions who are falling from middle income into the ranks of the poor.

The bill put forth today by Republicans guarantees this tragic outcome.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2608. An act to provide for an additional temporary extension of programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958, and for other purposes.

LEGACY OF FREEDOM

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

Mr. NUNNELEE. Mr. Speaker, last week the remains of Corporal Judge C. Hellums of Paris, Mississippi, were returned from the Parroy Forest near Luneville, France, and given a proper burial in Arlington National Cemetery.

In the fall of 1944, following the Normandy invasion, Corporal Hellums' unit, the 773rd Tank Battalion, was fighting its way east through France toward the German border. The M-10 tank destroyer to which he was assigned was attacked. Two men survived with serious injuries, but Corporal Hellums, along with Private First Class Lawrence N. Harris of Elkins, West Virginia, and Private Donald D. Owens of Cleveland, Ohio, were killed in the attack. All evidence at the time indicated that their remains had been destroyed.

Over the last decade, through the cooperation of a French citizen who had been exploring the forest and the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command using DNA evidence and forensic identification tools, the remains of these heroes were identified.

On July 20, 2011, 67 years after their deaths, they were given the proper burial they had been denied as they were laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery.

To these heroes, we say: Welcome home, and may you rest in peace.

While these soldiers were identified, we still have 72,000 American soldiers who are unaccounted for from World War II, and more than 83,000 from all wars who are missing in action.

Staff Sergeant Leroy Leist is one of those Americans. In 1944, his World War II bomber was shot down over the North Sea. His body, along with several of his fellow crewmembers, was never recovered. For more than a decade, Adrian Caldwell has worked tirelessly to locate her father's remains and bring them home. All of our fallen war heroes deserve a proper burial, and my office is working with Mrs. Caldwell to ensure that her father receives what he earned—the honor and gratitude from the country he served and gave his life to defend.

This repatriation reminds us that freedom is not free. We enjoy the liberty of a free Nation today because of men like these who answered freedom's call. And the way we honor their sacrifice is to remember them and call them by name.

The Greatest Generation is passing to their heavenly reward at a rate of over a thousand people a day. These are veterans who left their homes to fight in faraway places. These are families who supported those efforts. We cannot thank them enough before they are called home.

The other way we honor their sacrifice is to pass on the legacy of freedom that they died to defend. When I conduct town hall meetings around Mississippi, I ask a question: Do you believe your grandchildren will live a better life than you lived? For the first time in American history the answer to that question is no.

Sixty-seven years from now, and 167 years from now, successive generations will review the actions of our generation. Only history will record if we answered freedom's call.

AMERICAN DREAM SHATTERED BY NIGHTMARE

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

Mr. RANGEL. My colleagues, yesterday I was talking about the American Dream. But then again, I was thinking about how many people woke up this morning concerned about our national debt.

When you represent the type of district that I do, and many other Mem-

bers, they're concerned about can they get a job or can they keep the job they have. They're concerned about the bills and obligations that they have. They're concerned about whether they can keep their kids in school and whether they can keep food on the table, whether they can keep the dignity and pride and not have their dream shattered by this nightmare that their country owes \$14.3 trillion.

We're making a special appeal to Americans, Republicans and Democrats, not to allow our country to get caught in a position that we don't pay our bills. I suspect that a lot of my constituents would say: Well, how the heck did I get that bill? How do we owe \$14.3 trillion, and what did I have to do with it?

And I guess we have to say honestly: You didn't have much to do with it. You did not go into countries and get involved in three wars. You were not responsible for saying that the richest of Americans and corporations that are receiving large profits should have and continue to have preferential tax treatment.

Well, why are you telling me then that I have to pay the debt? If we all have to pitch in on this, what about the guys who will not be making a sacrifice?

Well, that's kind of difficult to explain to these people. But you tell them that there are people in the Congress who truly believe that they can address their problem by having a constitutional amendment.

□ 1110

I know it's a stretch, but that's what some of us have to deal with in the Congress. But you've heard some of them this morning say the only answer to our problem is to have a vote in the House of Representatives and persuade two-thirds of our Members that in the United States Constitution we will require a balanced budget.

Now, after we get two-thirds here—and we can't get two-thirds to agree to anything but, hey—then we have to get two-thirds from the Senate. And we only hold the Senate by one vote, but it's a commentary because after we do that, then we have to go out to the States and ask the State legislators to approve what we have done, at least two-thirds of the States. That's their answer to those people who had an American Dream.

It would seem to me that along the line they may ask: Who received the benefits of all of this debt? And I would suspect that a lot of the people that manufacture military equipment had a windfall. I would suspect that those people that were able to take jobs overseas, the profit-and-loss books look like they did pretty well. And the financial section, our committee voted for and it was approved by the President, \$789 billion to be given to the financial community. And God knows they say these are the people that can create the jobs.

Well, I don't know whether any economist agrees with that, but they have enjoyed these tax cuts for decades, and we now are at the highest unemployment that we've ever been. And it would seem to me that those who have, through the benefits of all of our taxpayers, received this windfall, that it's not asking too much to ask them to invest in their country, to invest in jobs, to not look at how much profit they can make overseas but how many lives can they have to get a decent salary, to be able to join the union, to be able to pay their bills, and at the same time be able to go back to work.

This answer that everyone makes a sacrifice, it's not talking about the private sector that made the money. I don't even know why "sacrifice" is even used in any dialogue. What we're basically saying is that we have to cut spending. Well, everyone would agree to that. But these people that are receiving benefits from their government are the ones that will be making the sacrifice. And as we cut the benefits—whether we're talking about education benefits, health care benefits, supplements to pensions, or sometimes the only funds that they have in retirement, Social Security; whether we're talking about checks for the disabled who cannot work—now they want to cut those programs and the people that provide the service. So that means that they will be increasing the number of people that are unemployed.

It just doesn't make sense that we have unemployment compensation and other things for people to have disposable income, but we cut \$4 trillion from those people that are trying to survive.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to address the House.

DO THE RIGHT THING FOR AMERICA: BALANCE THE BUDGET

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, there's no question this Congress for many years has had a problem with spending.

The Democratic Congress developed a bigger and bigger appetite for spending for 40 years, as it held the majority for years and years.

Then Republicans took the House in 1995, and they forced a balanced budget on President Clinton. They had friction between the President and the Congress, and that allowed this country to have a balanced budget.

Who would have ever thought—I certainly wouldn't. I know I have got some Democratic friends who would have thought it, but I wouldn't—but when we got a Republican President and we had Republican majorities in the House and Senate, we began to spend again. There wasn't the friction there to hold spending down, and Republicans, I would submit, lost their way and began spending too much money.

My first year in Congress, in 2005 and 2006, we shouldn't have spent the