

In Florida, unemployment remains at 12 percent. People want to work. They want Washington to lead with a jobs plan. With construction and housing so integral to Florida's economy, stabilizing this sector is critical to our recovery.

Close to 1 million Florida families and seniors have lost their homes since 2009. Now, through no fault of their own, nearly half of all mortgages in Florida are underwater. But instead of creating jobs, Republicans want to kick middle class families while they're already down. Rather than improve mortgage modification programs by working with Democrats, my Republican friends want to shut them down altogether.

So to families and seniors across America who owe more to the banks than their homes are actually worth, what's the Republican plan? What's the response? Pay up, even if you have no job, no income, no health care. Under today's Republican bills, soon you and your family will have no home.

EGYPTIAN CHRISTIANS KILLED

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, this week, 13 Coptic Christians in Egypt were killed in clashes with Muslims. Recently, a church in the town of Sol was burned to the ground, leading many Christians to flee the village in fear of their lives. This comes only 2 months after 24 Christians were killed in a church bombing.

For thousands of years, Coptic Christians have lived and worshiped in Egypt, but some extremists want to use the chaos in the country today to drive them out of their homes and places of worship.

Egypt is in the process of developing a democratic government, one in which all the Egyptian people will have a say. These attacks undermine freedom and democracy. Democracy without protection of minority rights is mob rule and not true freedom.

I invite all my colleagues to join me on a letter to the commander in chief of the Egyptian Armed Forces calling on him to protect the Egyptian citizens during this critical period in his nation. We are glad to see the Egyptian people building a better government, and we must remind them that fundamental respect for human rights must be protected.

WISCONSIN SHENANIGANS

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

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, middle class Americans around the country are very concerned about what's going on in Wisconsin for two reasons. The first reason is that they fundamentally

understand that while we all have to tighten our belts—and they've seen workers do that in Wisconsin, to give up various rights under bargaining agreements—they understand fundamentally that we can't solve this problem by attacking the middle class. And second, they understand that the shenanigans that went on last night in Wisconsin are an assault on some democratic principles that we have long enjoyed.

We have long enjoyed the right to petition our government for redress of grievances. It's right there in the grand old document that we took an oath to. And fundamentally, this is a reduction in the ability of Americans to work together, to speak with one voice to and with their government.

This will not abide. We've got to respect the middle class. We've got to respect democracy and move forward together as a country.

WE MUST REDUCE GOVERNMENT SPENDING

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, some new statistics have just come out on government wages and salaries in this country. Government payouts, including Social Security, Medicare, and unemployment insurance, make up more than one-third of total wages and salaries of the United States population, a record figure that will only increase if action isn't taken before the majority of baby boomers enter retirement.

Social welfare benefits make up 35 percent of wages and salaries this year. In the year 2000, that percent was 21 percent. In the year 1960, it was 10 percent. And these are statistics that came from the Bureau of Economic Analysis data.

Recently, it was quoted that the U.S. economy has become alarmingly dependent on government stimulus itself. So, in this country, we have a stark choice: We have to reduce government spending. Otherwise, not only will we go bankrupt, but there will become a tipping point, a tipping point where the government payout for wages and salaries will become 50 percent of all U.S. wages. All of us should know what that means.

□ 1220

WHERE ARE THE JOBS?

(Ms. WILSON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today I rise with my colleagues for one reason—to talk about jobs again.

My constituents still need help. They want to work, but I don't hear any solutions. I've been here for over 2 months, and I'm still waiting to hear a

Republican plan for jobs. I came to Washington to focus on jobs. When are we going to talk about jobs?

I asked this same question 2 weeks ago. If I have to get up here every 2 weeks for the rest of my term and ask the same question, I will.

When I go home this weekend, I will be asked, "What are they doing in Washington to help me find work or provide jobs for others who want to work? I want to work to support my family. I want to start a business. I've lost my home, lost my job. And the Congress promised to help the economy so that I could find a job."

My constituents will ask me, "Why did they cut job training? Why are they cutting educational opportunities for young people?"

People are hurting and people are suffering. Listen to the people.

Let's stop the partisan bickering and help the people find work. If not now, when? If not us, who? If not here, where? The people want to work.

REPUBLICANS CONTINUE ASSAULT ON THE AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE ACT ON 1-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the 1-year anniversary of the passage of the Affordable Health Care Act to voice my disappointment with my Republican colleagues' continued assault on the historic law that has already begun to provide aid and relief for countless Americans.

One year ago, my colleagues and I came together to enact a law because of the call to action from our constituents. We heard from seniors who could not afford their prescriptions and were in the Medicaid doughnut hole, parents whose children were being denied coverage due to preexisting conditions, individuals who were being denied treatment due to lifetime limits, and taxpayers who are bearing the costs of uncompensated health care.

We answered the clarion call from our constituents who asked us to protect them. Yet the Republican colleagues continue to assault the law. Siding the special interests, particularly the health care insurance companies that stand to lose from health care reform, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle continue to assault our program.

With that, I say let's keep the law in force and let's move forward with progress.

JOBS AND 99'ERS

(Ms. LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, the American people want to know where are the