

MEMORANDUM

TO: House Republicans

FR: Eric Cantor

DT: Friday, March 21, 2014

RE: March / April 2014 Legislative Agenda – An America that Works

Helping to build an America that works for all Americans continues to be the focus of House Republicans. We will continue working to reduce the middle class squeeze; create an environment for economic growth and job creation; reform our health care system in a way that improves patient choice, access to doctors and hospitals, and lowers costs; and ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to get ahead by having access to a quality education and job training.

Over the past three weeks, we passed legislation to solve problems facing the American people and to build an America that works. During March, American families, already pressured by stagnant wages, were figuring out how to pay for another large home heating bill (up an average of 7% this winter). We passed five bills, all with bipartisan support, to reduce energy and home heating costs.

In fact, Chairman Bill Shuster's legislation to make it easier to transport propane to areas with shortages passed the House by voice vote, cleared the Senate by unanimous consent, and is now on its way to the White House to be signed into law. This is good news for the 2 million families in the Midwest who heat their home with propane and have seen prices skyrocket by 66% this year. Our conservative solutions that increase the supply and availability of domestic energy will lower home heating costs and reduce the squeeze facing working middle class families. I urge Senator Harry Reid to pass the remaining home heating bills as soon as possible.

We also took important steps to provide an environment for economic growth and job creation. Knowing that excessive and burdensome regulations imposed by Washington already amount to \$7,755 per employee for a large business and a whopping \$10,585 per employee at a small business, we passed a series of bills to reform the regulatory process. For the first time, we adopted a requirement that agencies take into account the impact of proposed regulations on individual employment sectors (like construction, and mining) and on wages.

In addition, the House cleared three bills to combat the imperial presidency and restore the balance of power created by our Founders to require the president to faithfully execute our nation's laws.

The House also passed three overwhelmingly bipartisan bills providing relief to Americans from Obamacare's individual and employer mandates. Representatives Aaron Schock, Rodney Davis, and Lou Barletta each authored legislation to expand religious conscience exemptions from the individual mandate, exempt veterans on TRICARE from counting towards the 50-employee threshold, and ensure that volunteer emergency responders are not considered employees in relation to the employer mandate, respectively.

Expanding on these successes in building an America that works, I expect our efforts in the House over the next three weeks to include:

The Path to Prosperity

Three out of four Americans now say they are living paycheck to paycheck. Meaning each month, hardworking middle class Americans do the hard work of setting a budget and figuring out how to balance paying the bills while still planning for the future. Congress should be no different. The Bipartisan Budget Agreement (Ryan/Murray) was a two year agreement that set the top-line 302(a) number. We owe it to the American people to demonstrate how we will allocate their tax dollars and balance the budget.

While the president's budget blows past the spending limit previously agreed to, the House Republican budget, under the leadership of Chairman Paul Ryan, will adhere to the agreed upon spending limits and balance in ten years, as we did last year. Under the Bipartisan Budget Agreement, the current spending level for Fiscal Year 2015 is below the first budget House Republicans passed in 2011.

In addition to the Budget Resolution, I expect the House to consider three additional budget process reform bills to help reduce out of control spending and improve accountability and transparency to the taxpayer:

- Representative Rob Woodall's Baseline Reform Act (H.R. 1871). This bill would require CBO and OMB, when scoring legislation, to assume that the baseline does not increase or decrease for discretionary programs. Under current law, CBO and OMB must assume that current spending will continue and grow by inflation. In 2013, this added \$1.2 trillion to the base line.
- Representative Tom Price's Pro-Growth Budgeting Act (H.R. 1874). Current CBO estimates do not take into account the overall impact on the economy. This legislation would require CBO, when scoring major legislation, to create a secondary report detailing the economic impact on key aspects of the economy.
- Representative Scott Garrett's Budget and Accounting Transparency Act (H.R. 1872). Fair value accounting will bring off-budget programs on-budget to provide a more accurate accounting of these programs.

40 Hour Work Week

Restoring Wages to Hourly Employees

Hourly employees can lose up to 25% of their hours/wages as a direct result of Obamacare's 30 hour work-week provision. Coincidentally, the president has now proposed an increase in the minimum wage just large enough to cover the wages lost from a reduction in hours under Obamacare. The CBO says that the president's minimum wage proposal could cost America 500,000 to one million jobs. Rather than lose more jobs and hours in this economy, we should

protect middle class workers from the destructive consequences of Obamacare and restore up to 25% of their paycheck.

According to a Hoover Institution study, 2.6 million Americans are especially at risk of having their hours and wages cut as a result of Obamacare's 30-hour rule. Of that, 59% are between the ages of 19 and 34, 63% are women, and 90% do not have a college degree. Further, families most at risk are those with a median income of \$29,126.

Investor's Business Daily has compiled a [database](#) of examples of employers who have cut or are planning to cut workers' hours. As of the end of January, the database included 401 employers with more than 100 school districts among them. Chairman Kline and the House Education and Workforce Committee are working to [compile](#) data from across the country of school districts and colleges impacted by the 30-hour rule. I encourage you to reach out to school systems and colleges in your district to see how we can help them deal with this growing problem. We will be highlighting the impact of this rule and will deliver a solution.

Chairman Dave Camp and the Ways and Means Committee reported Representative Todd Young's bill, H.R. 2575, the Save American Workers Act, to stop Obamacare from cutting the wages of hard working Americans and put the middle class back to work. We will consider this proposal this work period.

Middle Class Squeeze

Additional Action to Reduce Home Heating Costs

46 million American families heat their home with electricity. On average their home heating bills is up 4.8% this year. If the Administration succeeds in its war on coal (a principle means of electricity production in the United States), next year's bills could be even higher. That is why next week the House will consider Representatives Bill Johnson and Doug Lamborn's proposal (H.R. 2824) to protect coal mining from excessive and unnecessary federal regulation that destroys jobs and raises costs on working middle class Americans.

The Imperial Presidency Continued

The Antiquities Act allows the president broad authority to establish national monuments on federal lands to preserve American history. Unfortunately, presidents of both parties have used the Antiquities Act inappropriately and this current president instills no sense of trust when it comes to the use of his pen and phone. To ensure that the powers of the Antiquities Act are not abused further, the House will consider Representative Rob Bishop's bill (H.R. 1459) next week. Under this legislation, the public is guaranteed participation in national monument decisions and prohibits private property from inclusion unless the property owner consents. This bill is vitally important and a priority for members from the western states and I thank all of them for their leadership.

Ukraine

From Syria to Ukraine to Iran, there is a need for America's leadership in world matters. Contrary to the Obama Administration's aspirations, Russia has not been a constructive world partner under Vladimir Putin's leadership.

If Mr. Putin's ambitions are to be checked, we must take more steps to put pressure on Russia; thus I expect the House to move to impose greater costs on Mr. Putin and the oligarchs from Russia. In addition, as a world leader and a country that keeps its word to its friends, America has a responsibility to support countries like Ukraine who are threatened by their neighbors. Chairman Ed Royce and Foreign Affairs Committee continue to work to support the people of Ukraine.

As always we will have a number of must-do items as well over this work-period, including the expiration of the SGR patch for physicians who treat Medicare patients. Thank you for all your hard work and commitment to helping provide solutions to the problems the American people face.