

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss one of the most serious issues facing the United States: the staggering national debt of over \$19 trillion. This equates to \$59,409 for every person living in our country.

While the national debt has grown almost \$9 trillion since President Obama was sworn in, here in Congress, we must work together to debate solutions that will address our country's debt and get our fiscal house back in order. Every day, families in south Florida sit around the dinner table and make tough decisions on how they will spend their money. They stick to their budgets, and their government should be no different.

Last October, I was proud to support a 2-year bipartisan budget agreement that implemented new caps on discretionary spending for both fiscal years 2016 and 2017. Too often, enormous sums are wasted due to unpredictable budget cycles and government shutdown threats. With the adoption of this 2-year budget, Congress was able to reduce wasteful government spending by providing certainty to agencies as they plan for the future.

The budget also contains reforms to entitlement programs. It is important that we protect Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid—the invaluable safety net for those who need the help—while working to implement reforms to make these programs solvent for future generations.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to advance solutions that will rein in our national debt. It is our duty as elected officials to leave our children and grandchildren the same economic opportunities as previous generations had. That is my highest priority in Congress.

RECOGNIZING JOSEPH GEBARA

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Joseph Gebara as he retires from his post as president of the Miami-Dade County Council PTA/PTSA. Mr. Gebara has been integral to the organization's mission of unlocking the potential present in every child.

Mr. Gebara, who held his post since 2014, has always maintained an unwavering focus on his goals, and has used his position to effectively serve our community. For years he has been at the helm of a movement which seeks to engage with south Florida families and provide them with the tools necessary to empower their children and set them on a path towards success.

Mr. Gebara has been firmly rooted in the south Florida community, which is evident through his service as board member of The Children's Trust as well as chairman of the Miami-Dade Public Schools Title I District Advisory Council. In those roles, Mr. Gebara worked tirelessly to facilitate collaboration between educators and families as well as increasing inclusivity so that every voice was heard, respected, and taken into consideration.

I commend Mr. Joe Gebara for his service to the south Florida community, and congratulate him on a job well done. Mr. Speaker, I can personally attest to the fact that he is the most passionate advocate for children and families in our schools that I know.

HOMESTEAD VETERANS CLINIC

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my strong support for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in allocating funds to create a new VA medical clinic in Homestead, Florida. As it currently stands, the Homestead Veterans Affairs Community Based Outpatient Clinic rents a medical office that does not meet the needs of military members and veterans in our south Florida community. With the establishment of a new clinic, Homestead would be able to serve more than 10,000 military personnel, veterans, and eligible family members in Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties, which would be a substantial improvement from its current capabilities.

Though this new clinic would be a step forward, there is still significant work that must be done to help our veterans and servicemembers living in the Florida Keys. They do not have a local clinic and must travel up to 4 hours to reach the nearest VA facility. These brave men and women deserve more easily accessible options, and I will continue fighting for them.

Supporting our troops and veterans is essential to paying our profound debt of gratitude to the very people who have put their lives in danger to defend our freedoms. It is because of brave people like our veterans that America continues to have the strongest military in the world, and we must always honor them.

CREATING A BETTER NATION FOR MY NEW GRANDCHILD AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

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

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, 2 weeks ago, Norma and I became grandparents. Our daughter, Vanessa—with our son-in-law, Brian, present—delivered a healthy baby boy, full of life and full of possibilities. His name is Joaquin Cruz de la Rosa.

From the moment I first learned I would soon be a grandfather, I was excited to welcome our grandson into this great world. I am grateful that Joaquin was born in the greatest nation in the history of time, these United States of America, a country that strives to live the principles of hard work, persistence, and equality. He was born to a nation of native Americans and immigrants whose foundation and future relies on the grit and determination of millions of people who will persist so their family can achieve that American Dream.

We were elected to the House of Representatives to serve all of our con-

stituents and put our country first. Joaquin's arrival has encouraged me to reflect on what we do here. He has made me think about how Congress' words, actions, and obstructions are affecting the livelihood of all Americans.

I want Joaquin to live in a nation where his right to love whomever he chooses and to marry the person he falls in love with, regardless of gender, is respected. I am grateful that he was born healthy and in a safe, clean hospital full of skilled doctors, nurses, and technicians.

I am also grateful Vanessa and Joaquin Cruz received top notch health care, care that until recently was out of reach for many families. The Affordable Care Act has allowed countless pregnant women and newborn infants to see a doctor without risking bankruptcy. This sets them on the path of a healthy, productive life here in America. Now that 20 million more Americans have true access to health care, Congress must stop the efforts to repeal the healthcare law. Instead, we must come together to make sure we expand access, ensure the marketplace is working, and keep health care affordable for all Americans in this great country.

Every Member of Congress has a responsibility to the next generation and the one after that. We are responsible for their future. We face a short 12-week session in this 114th Congress.

What will we accomplish during this time? Will we vote on partisan bills that will go nowhere? Or will we face the challenges affecting our Nation and the world? Or will we, once and for all, think of the children and ensure future generations inherit a nation that remains the global leader, full of opportunities?

We hold the power to make things better for our kids and grandkids. For my grandson, and all grandchildren, I will fight for a future where a quality education doesn't put students and families into 6-figure debt. Every child deserves a world-class education that provides them with the knowledge and skills to achieve their dreams and uphold our place as a global leader in innovation.

For my grandson and grandchildren of his generation, I will continue to be a vocal advocate on the need to create a just and equal criminal and juvenile justice system that is worthy of our Nation. We spend \$12,000 to educate a child in America, but we are willing to spend more than \$150,000 to imprison that child for 1 year. And yet every year funding for education ends up on the chopping block.

How can we justify that?

My grandson was born into a great country, but sometimes, Mr. Speaker, this Congress does not live up to the potential that this Nation deserves. A child in the United States is less likely to die from a disease than from a gunshot. We are better than that, Mr. Speaker. It is our responsibility to address this reality.

We must work together for my grandson and all the children of his generation to make sure our parks are greener, our air is cleaner, to cure the sickness that is taking our climate, to make sure that a father or mother, no matter what their economic circumstances, does not have to worry that their child's bathwater is poisoned. This is our job.

It is our job to be leaders, and I will work with my colleagues every day to live up to what our grandchildren deserve. Far too often I hear elected officials spew the same line: "We are mortgaging our children's future." Our parents and grandparents invested in our Nation, and we have reaped those benefits. It is time that we do the same for future generations.

That is what has made us the greatest economy in the world: investing in our roads and bridges, investing in schools and hospitals, in forward-thinking legislation that will serve others for generations to come. Now more than ever, I understand just how important it is that we work together and create solutions so that our children will live a better life.

YOUTH PROMISE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEBSTER of Florida). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHIO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. YOHIO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to an incredibly important piece of legislation that will provide essential funding for programs which will go miles toward helping every young person in America who has maybe had a misstep reach their potential and achieve their American Dream.

As I travel my district, I am so impressed as I meet some of the most incredible young people in north central Florida. These young Americans have the capability of literally changing the world and the capability of bettering their communities and setting a positive example for the youth that will follow in their footsteps.

Unfortunately, too many will fall victim to the circumstances in which they were born. Too many will become familiar with the inside of a juvenile detention facility, as the image of the classroom fades from memory, and the all-too-often reality of life behind bars begins to materialize. I want to stress that if this happens to even just one child, that is one child too many.

We live in the greatest nation on Earth. We tell our children they can be whatever they want to be when they grow up, yet we know the reality for some is that as these very words are spoken, there is no truth to them. These are the youth who fall subject to the cradle-to-prison pipeline, and it is unacceptable.

These are the children in our communities, children who go to school with our own kids and, yes, in some cases even our own children. We have the

ability to change their reality. H.R. 2197, the Youth PROMISE Act, will do just that. The Youth PROMISE Act establishes a PROMISE Advisory Panel of State representatives as well as local PROMISE Coordinating Councils, which will develop and implement evidence-based locally controlled—not Washington-controlled—youth violence prevention and intervention practices and mentorship opportunities.

These practices will occur on a community level, working with families, working with schools, nonprofits, juvenile justice advocates, and law enforcement officers to intervene early in a child's life to prevent them from starting down a path that can easily define the remainder of their lives.

Last Congress, the Youth PROMISE Act garnered the bipartisan support of over 130 Members of this body in Congress, yet it sat in committee for nearly 2 years. This Congress, the Youth PROMISE Act has sat in the House Committee on Education and the Workforce for over 400 days without action.

Our youth cannot continue to wait. There are many issues that Congress deals with which Republicans, Democrats, and Independents cannot agree upon, but this is not one of them. If they have not already, I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this vital piece of legislation. I urge leadership in the House and the Senate to bring up this bill for a vote, a vote for our challenged youth so that they may continue the great posterity of this Nation.

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HONORING THE LIFE OF MARIA L. GUTIERREZ

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a good friend and community leader, Maria L. Gutierrez.

Maria led her life with purpose. She wanted to make a positive difference, and there is no doubt that she did that. She served as the general manager of Univision in Fresno, California, and led the television station to be one of the highest-ranking stations not only in the San Joaquin Valley, but in the Nation.

She was a strong advocate for immigration reform, equal rights for women, and worked hard to bring more water to the Valley. She cared, she had a big heart, and she was a role model for all who knew her.

We miss Maria dearly, especially that big smile that she always had on her face.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me and Maria's family and friends in paying tribute to her life. May she rest in peace.

IMMIGRANT HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize June as Immigrant Heritage Month.

We are a Nation of Native Americans and of immigrants past and immigrants present. That is America. For over 250 years, since the formation of the United States, immigrants have helped make our country what it is today. They add energy and value with each generation of Americans.

California's San Joaquin Valley, which I proudly represent, is home to people whose families come from all over the world. Their story is our story. It is one of achieving the American Dream, which is my family's story.

I am fortunate to represent and live in an area with some of the hardest working people you will ever meet in your life who have made lasting contributions to the San Joaquin Valley's agriculture economy, businesses, education, and healthcare systems. Their contributions have had positive impacts not only in California, but throughout the Nation.

Hispanic, Armenian, Italian, Portuguese, Sikh, and Hmong immigrants are among the many who have come from Asia, the Americas, Africa, and Europe to call America their home.

These immigrant families, for generations, have been and always will be a cornerstone of a place that we call the United States of America. They are living out the American Dream, and their children and grandchildren continue to add value and make a positive difference in our valley and the Nation.

Degrading immigrant communities is not an American value. Name-calling is not a virtue and never should be condoned. Insinuating that someone is not qualified based on their ethnicity and heritage is completely unacceptable, especially coming from someone who wants to be leader of the free world.

The sad reality is that some individuals are going to use hateful rhetoric to tear us apart. It is wrong. But we must always remember that the bonds we share as Americans are far, far stronger than whatever differences we may have.

Wrongly questioning a judge's objectivity because of his ethnic background is pure and simple racism. It is not the American way. We are better than that. And, Mr. Trump, you should apologize for your hurtful statements.

Instead of talking about a wall to keep people out, our next President must focus on efforts to pass comprehensive immigration reform so that we can fix our Nation's broken immigration system. As I said, we are a Nation of immigrants. And that is one of the reasons why the United States is the greatest Nation in the world, period.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues and all Americans to join in celebrating immigrant communities throughout our great Nation by recognizing June as Immigrant Heritage Month.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind Members to refrain from engaging in personalities toward