

a majority that has failed to do the business of the American people, even for something as fundamental as providing for the operations of government.

Mr. Speaker, we Democrats welcome the opportunity to sit down with our Republican colleagues and reach a compromise agreement to meet our responsibilities and address many of the pressing issues I have outlined earlier in this address.

My time is about up. Had we utilized the 90 days that we all voted—we on our side of the aisle, the Democrats voted—with our Republican friends, although 90 Republicans voted “no,” but we all voted “yes” to take 90 days to meet our responsibilities to the American people. It hasn’t been done. We have no confidence that giving 2 more weeks will make it happen.

Let’s get to work right now. Not on the tax bill. That could be passed at some point in time. I am against it. I will vote against it. I hope it fails. It is a bad bill. But let’s address these priorities. That is not what the intent of these 2 weeks are. It is to give 2 weeks so we can pass a bad tax bill that will hurt America, will hurt our children, and will hurt the middle class.

□ 1100

PEOPLE ARE PAYING ATTENTION

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, as I listened to the House Democratic whip lay out the case for the American public, I was struck by how stark the choices are and how much we are looking at failure at home and abroad.

We are watching the reckless action of Trump with his declaration that we are going to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem, further isolating America. We are alone in this instance. People who are in the Arab world, European allies, are deeply concerned that this will have a destabilizing effect.

We are watching the countdown here as we are kind of scrambling to keep government open, when, for heaven’s sake, these have been clear for months. Republicans occupy all the levels of power. Why can’t they simply act to be able to send clear signals so the appropriators can work and government operates.

We have watched the expiration of the Children’s Health Insurance Program, wildly popular with people across the political spectrum to be able to have this significant enhancement of health for children in this country, even more important because of the Republicans’ relentless assault on the Affordable Care Act and destabilizing insurance markets. Yet State after State, including my home State of Oregon, is facing the difficult task of sending out notices to families that they are no longer going to have access to this critical healthcare.

In the backdrop of all of this, we are watching a Republican tax program which would be the largest transfer of wealth in our Nation’s history paid for by mortgaging the future of our children and grandchildren a trillion and a half extra debt. When you put in the fact that we will have to pay interest on that, \$2.3 trillion to be able to give some of the largest corporations and the wealthiest Americans even more tax benefit, and we are neglecting fundamental responsibilities.

\$2.3 trillion tax benefits for some who don’t need it, and we still don’t have an infrastructure plan, which the President promised a trillion dollars of infrastructure spending to rebuild and renew America.

Well, I will tell you, there would be bipartisan support for any reasonable plan going forward. In fact, we have people in the American transportation industry who are saying: Raise our taxes.

The fuel tax has been raised in over half the States, including a number of red Republican States. There is a deal to be had when AAA and the American Trucking Associations say: Let’s provide the leadership, make the investment, put hundreds of thousands of Americans to work in ways that will enhance the environment, improve the economy, and give people a sense of pride that we can actually come together and get something done.

It is waiting there. Yet we are spending \$2.3 trillion to largely benefit the top 1 percent and the largest corporations, and we are ignoring needs like that.

The Treasury, we are told, has been doing studies that will prove that this will just pay for itself, and the Secretary of the Treasury has been asked: Show us the studies. What is the research? Where do you pick this number out of the air that is rejected by virtually every independent economist as well as past experience?

We see nothing.

The tax bill is constantly in flux. That is one of the prices that we pay, because they never followed regular order, they didn’t attempt to work on a bipartisan basis. There were no hearings held on this bill. As a member of the Ways and Means Committee, I was shocked. This bill changed sometimes hour by hour. They still don’t know what they have passed. They are talking about changing corporate tax rates, they are talking about dealing with some of the deductions that have been taken away, like for State and local taxes. It is in a state of flux.

What we do know is what was passed in the House is wildly unpopular. How do you take a tax cut that is unpopular by 75 percent of the population? It is because people are starting to look at it, and the closer they look, the more they are going to find it distasteful.

I am hopeful that we will be able someday to come to our senses, work together on things that will actually make a difference for the American public rather than make things worse.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o’clock and 5 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Steven E. Boes, Boys Town, Boys Town, Nebraska, offered the following prayer:

Today we remember the lives lost at Pearl Harbor and all the young men and women who serve today.

Lord God, in these troubled times of fires, floods, hurricanes, terror attacks, and mass shootings, help us to rely on Your strength to envision and build a stronger, more secure America.

Give us more visionaries like Father Edward Flanagan, who founded Boys Town on December 12, 100 years ago. Father Flanagan was an Irish immigrant who lived the American Dream and taught us all that even the most troubled child could grow up to be a useful citizen if given half the chance. He saw the best in the kids that others rejected as useless.

Help us, but especially each of our Representatives, to see the best in those who have different political or social views so that we can, together, build an America that enables and calls forth the best in its citizens.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day’s proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker’s approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker’s approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. DAVIDSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. DAVIDSON led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING REVEREND STEVEN E. BOES

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank and recognize Father Steven E. Boes, who joined us today to deliver the opening prayer.

Father Boes is the fifth executive director of Boys Town, which is in Nebraska's Second Congressional District and is celebrating its 100th birthday this month.

Father Boes was ordained as a priest in 1985 for the Archdiocese of Omaha and assumed his post at Boys Town in July 2005. He regularly attends sporting and school events at Boys Town High School and dines with kids in their family homes, and I have joined them.

Under his leadership, the number of children served through Boys Town's on-campus, family-style care and programs serving children in their homes and communities has doubled. The Family Home Program, started in 1974, has served 36,000 children to date.

Boys Town Foster Family Services program has cared for nearly 9,000 youth to date, and the In-Home Family Services program has helped approximately 102,600 youth without having to remove them from their homes. Boys Town also has emergency services that have served over 45,000 youth.

The man who started this all 100 years ago, Father Edward Flanagan, was truly a visionary for changing how America cared for families and children. He worked to close reformatories and juvenile facilities where children were abused, eventually opening Father Flanagan's Boys' Home, which became Boys Town. He has made a lifelong impact on thousands upon thousands who were given a rough start in life.

Boys Town now has nine locations across the country including Nevada; Louisiana; north Florida; central Florida; south Florida; Washington, D.C.; New England; Iowa; and Nebraska.

From Father Flanagan to Father Boes, many lives have been impacted.

I recognize Boys Town for 100 years of service to the community and America.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YOUNG of Iowa). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

RECOGNIZING EDDY ACEVEDO

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, today is a bittersweet day for our office because we bid farewell to my senior foreign policy adviser and subcommittee staff director, Eddy Acevedo—a native Miami boy and a proud Nicaraguan American.

For over a decade, Eddy and I have worked side by side to advance the issues critical to U.S. interests at home and around the globe. Eddy's depth of knowledge and his political acumen are only eclipsed by his passion and his kindness.

But don't let that fool you, Mr. Speaker. He is a bulldog when it comes to advancing our core ideals, like the respect for human rights and the promotion of democratic principles. That is why he is an ideal fit for his next role as deputy assistant administrator and chief legislative strategist with the USAID. I have no doubt that we will hear many great things from Eddy in the future.

Mr. Speaker, Eddy is more than just my most trusted adviser. He is my dear friend, and he will be very much missed. So our staff and our family wish him and his wife, Luly, all the best as they enter this next new, exciting chapter of their life together.

GOP TAX SCAM

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this holiday season the Republican majority has been working overtime on a tax plan that gives permanent tax cuts to wealthy families and corporations funded by raising taxes on middle class families.

As the Republican majority tries to disguise its tax plan as a beautifully wrapped gift, the American people need to know that there are negative healthcare effects hidden inside the plan.

By passing this tax plan, there would be automatic cuts to Medicare to the tune of \$25 billion a year. In addition, this plan could cause an extra 13 million people to become uninsured. The tax bill will explode our debt or will cut Medicare and Medicaid.

It has been more than 2 months since Congress should have reauthorized the Children's Health Insurance Program and federally qualified health centers. This is the first time in history that these programs have been held hostage to the legislative process.

Instead of racing to reauthorize these popular bipartisan programs, the Republican majority instead has neglected children across the country solely to provide tax cuts to corporations and wealthy individuals.

Mr. Speaker, this plan is not for the many, but it is only for the few.

RECOGNIZING JERUSALEM AS THE CAPITAL OF ISRAEL

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to President Donald Trump and Ambassador Nikki Haley—South Carolina's former Governor—for the announcement that the United States will recognize Jerusalem as the capital city of Israel and relocate the American Embassy to the holy city which protects all religions.

As President Trump said at the White House: "This long overdue recognition of reality is in the best interests of both the United States and the pursuit of peace between Israel and the Palestinians."

America's bond with Israel is unique, and its strength is the foundation for peace through stability for all of the Middle East providing for prosperity for all countries.

The President's announcement strengthens that alliance, and I appreciate his honoring another of his campaign commitments. Friends of Israel know they have a true friend in the White House, which was heartfelt when I met last month with Sheldon and Miriam Adelson at the Washington Convention Center.

President Trump's team is leading boldly. The President is clear: peace is never beyond the grasp of those willing to reach for it.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism, just as America had resolved December the 7th, 1941.

END HUNGER NOW: FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PRESCRIPTION PROGRAM

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

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, my dear friend and colleague from Maine, Representative PINGREE, hosted a panel discussion on the Fruit and Vegetable Prescription Program.

Experts from Wholesome Wave, the American Heart Association, and War on Poverty—Florida briefed congressional staff on how we can improve health outcomes for people living in poverty by increasing access to healthy, fresh produce. It is a simple concept with incredible results.

Currently, healthcare providers at 34 clinics across 10 States provide individuals and family members with prescriptions for fruits and vegetables and \$1 per day per family member to purchase these nutritious foods.

The program has significantly increased food security among its participants and has enabled these families to increase their vegetable consumption by an astounding 206 percent.