

While he was at NYU, he also played violin in the orchestra. Even at 100 years old, his talents are still impressive. At his recent birthday celebration, Mr. Tomka expertly played the clarinet, violin, piano, and sang for all of his family and friends.

I salute Mr. William John Tomka on his years of faithful service to our country and to the public school system. He exemplified qualities of a true American hero. I, on behalf of a grateful nation, admire his service and sacrifice.

30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DAVID A. STEIN
JEWISH COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the hard-working men and women of the David A. Stein Jewish Community Alliance on the celebration of their 30th anniversary of enriching the lives of those with a variety of needs.

The JCA is a pillar in our Jacksonville community. The Jewish Community Alliance is a nonprofit community center affiliated with the Jacksonville Jewish Federation, the United Way of Northeast Florida, and the Jewish Community Centers of North America. Its focus is to enhance the quality of life for families and individuals of all ages, religions, races, financial means, and physical and mental abilities.

To this end, the JCA has impacted tens of thousands of citizens in our community. Situated on the Ed Parker Jewish Community Campus, the JCA welcomes preschool-aged children to get a good start in life and embraces teens and adults to join classes on health, heritage, and a variety of subjects.

The JCA is a spirit of intergenerational sharing of values and ideas. The afterschool and school-closed day programs give peace of mind to working parents, both married and single. Seniors and adults with special needs are offered opportunities to reach their potential with dignity and tradition.

The JCA facility offers swimming, theater, and camp programs, fitness and exercise classes, sports teams, art, and academic classes to all members and welcomes all for membership. The JCA offers an array of creative and innovative classes, programs, and events to inspire and benefit its participants.

Mr. Speaker, I ask Members of the House to join me in acknowledging the 30th anniversary of the Jewish Community Alliance and its commitment to our community.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ECONOMIC REGENERATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, you may remember this around the holidays. It was a television commer-

cial that played quite frequently. It may still be on. But it shows a shelter for the poor and homeless around Christmas time, and men and women are entering from the cold wintry streets, and they are gathering under bright lights and sharing good cheer, and they are clearly benefitting from the holiday outpouring of charity and compassion and fellowship.

But then the commercial shifts and the environment changes. It is a dreary downtrodden affair at this point. The new year has begun and the shelter is left darker and less full than its former ambient light, and laughter has dimmed into somber tones. All the while, a man is sitting at the piano in this emptying place singing, "Don't You Forget About Me." The scene concludes with the adage: "The season of giving ends, but the need remains."

Mr. Speaker, as our economy begins to recharge, giving more and more hope with more and more Americans gaining jobs, it is important, though, to continue to reflect on this still early stage of the new year. After some important budget battles here and a major tax reform piece of legislation, it is important to reflect on the proper balance between responsibility and charity, as well as those who continue to be left behind or forgotten.

Americans are the most generous people in the world, and they also deeply value responsibility, and they know that a fulfilled life requires rewarding work. Unfortunately, unemployment and underemployment continue to hinder a faster economic recovery, causing much anxiety for persons and their families.

According to a new survey from CareerBuilder, nearly eight out of ten Americans say they are living paycheck to paycheck, and our improving economic indices should not obscure this difficult reality.

So to better help persons support themselves and one another in the full dignity of work, our next phase of economic regeneration must be an attempt to find the proper balance between right-sized government, responsibility to one another, and reasonable expectations that everyone can contribute something according to their means and their capacity. Everyone has something to give.

As this recognition and economic regeneration kindles a new policy discussion, several guideposts should be kept in mind, such as ensuring enhanced opportunity and the erasure of what I call entrepreneurial impediments, along with efforts to address and mend a deep societal sense of brokenness.

When persons are unemployed or underemployed, they can enter a downward spiral in their lives. Mr. Speaker, as we well know, Washington alone cannot create a humane economy that works for the many. Americans living together in community form the cornerstone of a vibrant market.

A fuller answer to unemployment, underemployment, and this widespread

lack of financial assets, along with the resulting loss of social capital, might be found in the idea that government and society should join in a movement for national solidarity, seeing work as a common endeavor for us all. After all, economics, in its essence, is not just a transaction; it is profoundly relational.

A rightful discussion about the profound meaning of work also requires the right words. The overreliance in this body, particularly, on depersonalizing economic language, I think, is one reason that Washington can seem so disconnected and aloof from real communities and real people.

At the end of the month, if a person can't pay their gas or a grocery bill, they are unlikely to care about GDP growth or arguments for the efficiency of globalized trade. In a similar way, recent news cycles are tracking the skyrocketing stock market valuations with some ups and downs of late. And this is all exceeding most expectations, particularly from the beginning of the year, but glowing green numbers and signals provide little reassurance to millions of Americans who are priced out of owning stock.

Ultimately, Mr. Speaker, a lack of work, as well as a lack of assurance in the security of government guardrails and earned benefits, can take a life-diminishing toll.

Mr. Speaker, I have many seniors who write to me and suggest to us in pretty clear terms that they aren't entitled to their own money. We throw the language around of entitlements, referring to programs where people set aside money into government savings programs or were given guarantee of healthcare. That is not an entitlement. That is something people worked for.

Many persons with difficult jobs deserving of both dignity and earned benefits sometimes are those who are forgotten. I approached my door recently, Mr. Speaker, here in D.C. at my office, and there was a large crowd of men who had gathered, and they were all in camouflaged T-shirts waiting outside.

□ 1745

All of us here experience a number of visitors from our home States. Sometimes, in my office, people have to stack up outside in the hallway, as we are trying to accommodate people.

But as I got closer, I noticed that the front of these T-shirts that these men had on read, "United Mine Workers." I thought, that is unusual to see Nebraskans wearing United Mine Workers T-shirts. But it turns out they were actually waiting for my neighbor, who is from the State of Kentucky. Nevertheless, I greeted these men, and we began a meaningful conversation about work and security and fairness.

These men had spent their lives in hard jobs. I am sure they toiled, very proudly, to make a reasonable living for their families, but they all now showed real signs of physical fatigue. They were in Washington making a

plea for their pensions, which are facing dramatic reductions. A similar situation does exist in Nebraska for another group of workers.

These people worked for a guarantee: that they would be provided for—when they could work no more. But, given a confluence of factors, their pensions face a dramatic shortfall, and, frankly, it is not fair.

I lived for several years as a younger man in the area where these gentlemen had come from, in a town that had lost half of its population in 20 years, in what is called the old industrial Rust Belt, where the post-World War II economic boom built a thriving, stable community, but now where globalized supply-side theory has had its most dramatic degenerating economic effect. I said to one of these men, “You know, I know where you come from,” and one of the men and I hugged.

Mr. Speaker, our country is in pain. Epic hurricanes and floods; escalating urban violence; an opioid epidemic among those self-medicating their own mental, physical, and financial anguish; combine this with a broken healthcare construct, and the lingering after-effects of a bitterly fought last electoral season have torn America's heart.

In a vibrantly healthy society, though, there should be space for what I call marketplace fluidity and creativity and innovation. A person who has an idea and the drive should be able to pursue it. The benefits accrue, of course, to this person as the inventor, but also the buyer of those services, the community, and those who gave the effort in the building of this product or service.

So a healthy economy is two things at once: it is individualistic and it is community-oriented at the same time. Innovation and competition can be disruptive, but they must be set within a fair set of rules.

When a system stacks to the wealthiest, or is outsourced by faceless corporations in the name of advancing quarterly profits, exploiting the poor elsewhere and damaging the environment elsewhere, where there is a lax legal foundation and, therefore, an indirect subsidy to the means of production, and the externality costs are borne by persons elsewhere in the forms of shorter lives and the effects of pollution, it sets in motion not only difficulties in other places, but here—a loss of jobs, lost community cohesion, and a breakdown of life's stability. Tie this to the loss of the formative institutions of family life, faith life, and civic life, and we drift. We drift without a national narrative. It makes it much more difficult to respond holistically in the midst of tragedy to our greater challenges and problems.

For a moment, I want to speak about a person who participated in one of my telephone townhalls. She told me she is an architect, her husband is an architect, and they were very interested in starting an architectural firm on their

own, but they can't. Why can't they? They have the education, they have the drive, they want to be innovative and disruptive, they want to do creative work with their own two hands and take the risk necessary to provide something new and novel in the marketplace.

They have a sick child. So by the time they go onto the individual insurance market and try to obtain insurance for themselves, knowing that they are going to have to pay the full deductibles and copays, that bill—and this was a little while back, I suspect it is higher now—the bill was going to be close to \$30,000. So before they even open their door, they have an upfront cost of \$30,000, just for a little bit of personal protection.

So what happens? They stay put. They are tethered to institutions that may not be as gratifying to them. Society loses from their inability to take that risk and provide that product out in the market, because they are tethered, they are handcuffed, to a benefit called healthcare that a large institution can provide, but the small entrepreneur can't. This makes no sense.

We have some specific ideas on this, and we are working to grow a bipartisan working group to make proper changes potentially in that individual insurance market, whereby people can pool together more easily, where there is a better type of major medical product out there that would be a lot less expensive, and, perhaps, using an idea that was embedded in the healthcare debate earlier this year, where the government provides a stabilizing reinsurance model so that the market can actually work within a certain bandwidth where the sickest person pays the same rate, but is protected from excess expense by a more direct government subsidy.

This makes sense. Think about the entrepreneurial potential that then would be released, creating opportunity, more jobs, better products. We are constraining ourselves for no reason here.

I hope that this chapter can unfold in the coming weeks, as some people of goodwill are trying to work through this, and there is significant interest, I feel, on both sides of the aisle. You just have to break through it.

Mr. Speaker, we are also, from my perspective, living in a paradoxical age where we are more and more dependent upon big business for information flow and consumer goods, and, at the same time, we are more and more skeptical of this model.

I was trained in an era where economic language was cast in terms of efficiency and optimization, economies of scale, production capacity, inputs, the free flow of capital and labor, and on and on, all the vocabulary of economic academic theory. These are analytical and mechanical terms necessary for understanding market function, but they lack a connection to any deeper purpose.

Ultimately, a properly functioning market is a connector of community, a delivery mechanism for material well-being, and an opportunity enhancer for individual initiative and rewarding work. These classical economic expressions lack a deeper understanding of the ultimate purpose of production.

I once asked a professor when I was young: Who does a normative analysis? Who asked the question, “What ought to be?” What institution is doing that?

He said: No one.

Mr. Speaker, you are a fairly young man. You know this as well. We are long past the age when working one's entire career in the same large corporation guaranteed security and well-being is finished. The current corporate construct is desperately driven and hopelessly fragmented by quarterly profit mandates.

Short-term decisions overrule long-term strategy. While this is occasionally brought to heel by scandal and malfeasance, most multinationals are no longer tethered to a face or a place, so they pitch us on TV and print with caring images, and kindly deem us worthy to help with their chosen causes, and then major cities with major airports become the hub, and the rest of us have to just buy it.

Now, lest I sound too critical, large businesses certainly retain a necessary space in producing certain types of goods and large-scale industrial products, and can provide exciting opportunity. That is all true and necessary.

But I also think we are on the front end of something, Mr. Speaker. There is a hunger for the next economic trend to reorient around the revitalization of Main Street, including local foods, sustainable energy production, smarter services, and smaller scale manufacturing, recreating that long lost sense of place in our communities.

Imagine a new urbanism of an economic ecosystem with friendly neighborhoods, nearby centers of smaller scale, microbusinesses, contextually appropriate architecture, and a burgeoning supply of easily accessible public space. We see this trend developing, and, frankly, it is very exciting.

Now, we had a bill recently in which we took an important vote here on tax reform, and I believe this is going to help. I believe that tax reform legislation will help rebalance a number of business inequities, particularly for small business where most jobs come from.

It is estimated that the average Nebraska family of four will receive more than a \$2,000 extra benefit in their pocket from the immediate impact of the tax bill and the relief that they will get. And then over time, due to increased wages, that will translate into about a \$4,000 benefit.

I think this is important because Americans need a break, especially working men and women trying to get a bit ahead and trying to provide for their family well. But for many, it is also harder and harder. As we said,

many Americans are living paycheck to paycheck. That is not fully a Tax Code problem. It is the harsh reality of social fragmentation, downward mobility, the rising cost of living, and skyrocketing income disparity driven by inequitable globalization and concentrations of economic power. These forces have not fundamentally benefited us fully, and they have left millions of people behind.

I think this tax reform measure is important because it particularly rebalances the perverse incentive to offshore.

In addition to putting more money in the pockets of hardworking Americans, it does support the revitalization of Main Street and the return of the "Made in America" label.

This legislation also provided a reasoned progress in an attempt to make the Tax Code simpler and fairer and to resolve this convoluted set of problems that overburdened people, families, and small businesses across the Nation. I think this is important because we are living in an age where we can't keep pushing the same policies over and over and expect them to fit into a 21st century architecture of well-being and successful living.

Moving forward, I believe the source and the strength of the American economy will be in this new urbanism of small business in which entrepreneurs from village to city add value through small-scale manufacturing, innovative new products, or brokering in repair services.

Now, we do anticipate a spike in the initial deficit from the tax bill, but we are already seeing a surge of revitalization and possibility of economic opportunity. Given this reorientation of the tax policy around the family, hopefully, with the entrepreneurial momentum, we will generate more jobs, earnings, and reverse this downward trend in small business formation. Less tax, more taxpayers, more revenue over time, that is the calculation.

□ 1800

As more opportunity appears, more persons should also be able to transition from important support mechanisms and systems into meaningful work.

Now, this tax reform attempts to be sensitive to the needs of all Americans as it begins to push for a modernized revenue construct that no longer enables the complex, lawyered-up, quarterly-driven multinationals to unjustly benefit from low taxes abroad while taking advantage of tax loopholes here. It rebalances the perverse incentives to offshore. At the same time, it uses the carrot of lower corporate rates to bring foreign profits back to America, and we are already seeing the effect.

So, on balance, this was a massive, historic, and necessary overhaul of our antiquated, harsh, and complicated tax system so that families cannot only get by, but maybe they can start getting ahead. And if we can combine this

with a small business ecosystem of revived entrepreneurial momentum—and a part of that is the next set of policies, hopefully, that will be empowering with a new type of healthcare product that is stable for persons who do want to enter into the formation of their own small business now but are not empowered to do so—this will only strengthen this entrepreneurial revitalization.

There is no way to calculate the held, pent-up benefit of unleashing this potential. Again, because we have tethered people to a benefit package based upon institutions that are able to afford it, we have drained ourselves, made ourselves weary from being able to unleash the fullness of the potential to create things with your own hands or your own intellect that are good for you, good for your family, and good for others. That is what we mean by a new small business ecosystem that has revived entrepreneurial momentum.

Mr. Speaker, in the Middle East, the Jordan River flows into both the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. There is a difference between the two bodies of seas. One of them is devoid of life. Water flows in but nothing flows out. It is dead.

Abundant life requires both giving and receiving, both charity and responsibility. An economy that is founded upon these strengths which we have discussed tonight, supported by a right-sized government and a dedicated, hardworking people, can only keep growing stronger. Then, maybe—maybe—we can say, don't you forget about me and that we will never forget about you.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent for all Members to have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this is February 14, Valentine's Day, and this is but one day, of course, in the month of February, which is Black History Month. I am honored to stand here tonight to present a resolution that will be filed, a Black History resolution.

But I am also honored to say that a good many of my colleagues are in support of Black History Month, and they deserve to have their words, their expressions made known, which is why I

have asked for this unanimous consent. My belief is that we will have many, many persons who are not here tonight, for legitimate reasons, who will want to make sure that they are made a part of the RECORD by and through their comments that they will submit in written word.

Mr. Speaker, I am here to talk about Black History because for many years, too many years, to be quite honest, the history of Africans in the Americas, the history of Black people in America, the history of African Americans, at one time known as Negroes, this history was deleted from the history books. It was said in one book that, because little contributions were made to world history, there would be little mention of Africans in history.

But, Mr. Speaker, we know now that this is not true, and because we know that it is not true, we seek to at least give some indication in the RECORD that African Americans have made a significant contribution in America. But also, the truth is that Africans have made a contribution to world history.

However, tonight, this resolution will focus on and it will recognize and celebrate Black History Month; and, in so doing, we would like to present the resolution that will be filed at a later time.

Mr. Speaker, "Whereas the theme for Black History Month 2018 is 'African Americans in Times of War'—something that we have not focused on to the extent that we should have, because African Americans have made significant contributions to our country during times of war—this theme "which commemorates the centennial of the end of the First World War in 1918, and explores the complex meanings and implications of this international struggle and its aftermath;

"Whereas this resolution will focus primarily on African Americans in the military, which is but one historically important aspect of this far-reaching exploration of African-American history;

"Whereas African Americans have fought for the United States throughout its history;

"Whereas despite racial segregation and discrimination, African Americans have played a significant role during times of war from the colonial period forward"—Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note, as an aside now, that it was not until 1948, by Presidential executive order, that President Truman desegregated the military.

Continuing: "Whereas Crispus Attucks was a fugitive slave working outside of Boston, Massachusetts, as a sailor, and during his time off, he worked as a rope maker near the wharf;

"Whereas in early 1770, competition for work and wages became stiff as British soldiers were contending for the same unskilled positions as the locals"—that would be Crispus Attucks and other locals;