

women and children. This comes exactly 1 year after the chemical weapons attack that resulted in President Donald Trump's launching of Tomahawk cruise missiles at the air base that launched the chemical weapons attack.

Assad's actions are a clear violation of international law and human rights, and the world must stand against this indiscriminate massacre.

I am grateful for the leadership of President Donald Trump, United Nations Ambassador Nikki Haley, and National Security Advisor John Bolton to address this threat to protect American families.

I stand with Ambassador Haley in calling for the United Nations to adopt a resolution that would condemn the continuing use of chemical weapons in Syria in the strongest terms and to establish a new body to determine responsibility for chemical attacks anywhere in the world.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

DON'T MESS WITH BALLARD HOUSE

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

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, "Don't mess with Texas" is a phrase we Texans use when challenged.

The folks in Katy, Texas, tweaked that phrase a little bit after Hurricane Harvey. They tweaked it to, "Don't mess with Ballard House."

In 2008, Cinco Charities opened temporary lodging for families coming to Katy for treatment of life-threatening conditions, a home away from home. Five years and 500 guests later, it became clear that Cinco Charities needed to have a permanent home.

Angels on Earth, Monty and Erin Ballard, raised the funds for 24 family suites. Before Harvey, it was clear we needed more rooms. Monty and Erin's foundation gave a \$2 million grant to double the size of Ballard House. Groundbreaking is tomorrow.

Harvey gave us a big hit, but we turned that 24 suites now into 48 suites for families. The message is clear: Don't mess with Ballard House.

RECOGNIZING MARK JOHNSON ON WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY

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

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mark Johnson, a fellow Texan, a former marine, a father and a grandfather.

On March 17 and 18, Mark completed a double Ironman race across the State of Texas.

A double Ironman is a 53.2-mile run, 4.8-mile swim, and 224-mile bike ride.

He began in Marble Falls in my district and ended in Lufkin, Texas.

When asked why he chose to attempt the event, he answered swiftly: "For Wendy, my amazing sister who has Down syndrome."

In addition to honoring his sister and raising awareness, Mark Johnson has pledged all monetary donations to the National Down Syndrome Society. This is the leading human rights organization for all individuals with Down syndrome and where he sits on the board of directors.

Today and every day, let us celebrate advocates like Mark, his sister, Wendy, and all individuals with Down syndrome and their families.

In God we trust.

RECOGNIZING ANTONIO PAGLIARO

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

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Antonio Pagliaro. Antonio recently lost his battle to cancer, leaving behind his wife, Nicole, their children, Alexis, Antonio, and Kylie, as well as his parents, Tony and Richetta, and his brothers, Peter and Michael Pagliaro.

As a graduate of the T.R. Proctor High School class of 1999, Antonio began his professional destiny and purpose in life to help people in need by serving in the emergency medical services industry. His passion was to provide critical help and comfort to those in need, especially in his hometown in the city of Utica, New York.

Antonio was a paramedic supervisor with Kunkel Ambulance for 15 years. He was also a 10-year volunteer with the Schuyler Volunteer Fire Department.

Antonio was a courageous public servant who served our community selflessly. He put his life on the line every single day for the betterment of all of us.

Along with being a dedicated public servant, Antonio was a passionate cook, number one dance dad, a gardener, and a parishioner of the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, and so much more.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing Antonio Pagliaro, a true hometown hero. Our community is lucky to have had such a selfless, loving person as Antonio, and we wish his family prayers and positive thoughts to the entire family from all of us and my colleagues.

CONGRESS, NOT THE PRESIDENT, HAS THE AUTHORITY TO DECLARE WAR

(Mr. MCCLINTOCK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, James Madison, the father of the American Constitution, said that its

most important provision was given to the Congress, and not the President, the authority to declare war.

This is central to the separation of powers. Congress can declare war, but cannot wage it; the President can wage war, but cannot declare it.

This bright line has been badly blurred over the years, but that doesn't change its clarity and importance. The Constitutional Convention was clear that the President's inherent authority as Commander in Chief was solely to repulse an attack against this country until the Congress could convene.

The Syrian crisis presents no such exception.

If it can be proven that the recent use of gas against the civilian population was initiated by the Assad regime, well, then supplying arms and material to the Syrian opposition, economic sanctions, and other non-military responses are appropriate, but any military action against Syria first requires a congressional declaration, period.

TAX REFORM TRUTH TELLERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. MIMI WALTERS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the topic of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, in February, Congressman PAUL MITCHELL of Michigan and I established the Tax Reform Truth Tellers series to combat the misinformation being spread about the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

Today I had the distinct honor of joining my colleagues from the great States of California and New York to talk about the benefits this historic tax reform bill is having on our communities and local economies.

When it comes to taxes, our two States have something in common: some of the highest State tax rates in the country.

My district in Orange County, California, is home to great people, beautiful weather, and a rich history, but it is also located in the highest taxed State in the Nation.

It is my duty to find ways to help my constituents build and achieve their American Dream, whether it is opening a small business, sending their children to college, or saving for retirement. Unfortunately, high taxes can prevent these dreams from becoming a reality.

While the State legislatures in Sacramento and Albany keep placing

crushing tax burdens on their residents, congressional Republicans take action to lower the Federal tax burden on hardworking Americans and job creators in our districts.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act did just that by lowering rates and restoring the ability of American companies to compete globally.

For too long, our Tax Code was broken. It imposed high tax rates on families, individuals, and small businesses; it was full of special interest loopholes; it contained a tax structure that encouraged companies to ship jobs overseas; and individuals, families, and job creators spent nearly 9 billion hours each year preparing their taxes, which cost the economy \$400 billion in lost productivity.

Last December, we addressed those issues and fixed our outdated Tax Code when we passed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. This legislation lowers rates for nearly every taxpayer, doubles the standard deduction for individual and joint filers, and maintains popular deductions that will help working families in cities like Irvine, Mission Viejo, and Tustin.

When the new withholding rates took effect in February, Orange County residents saw their take-home pay increase. Now, families and individuals are rightfully keeping more of their hard-earned paychecks.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act has also encouraged economic growth and job creation. Since the tax reform package was signed into law, our economy has experienced its most robust growth rate since 2005, consumer and manufacturing confidence are near record highs, and just last month, the U.S. economy experienced its strongest month of job growth in nearly 2 years.

Over 500 companies have given their employees new benefits, like pay raises, bonuses, and increased matching 401(k) contributions. In the last 3 months, 4 million American workers have received bonuses.

Furthermore, the National Association for Business Economics has increased its 2018 economic growth projections to nearly 3 percent. This positive economic news is a direct result of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

Mr. Speaker, the results of tax reform are exceeding our expectations, especially in my district. Some were concerned about the potential ramifications this bill would have on Orange County, but in the last few months, our community and local economy has flourished. Orange County residents are keeping more of their paychecks, allowing them to spend and invest their own money as they see fit; after all, it is their money, not the government's.

Local businesses are benefiting, allowing them to create jobs and provide higher wages for their employees. One example is the Walt Disney Company, Orange County's largest employer and the place where I held my first job as a senior in high school. With their sav-

ings under the new Tax Code, Disney gave each of its 125,000 employees a \$1,000 cash bonus. Disney also established a new higher education initiative that will cover tuition costs for hourly employees.

STERIS, a medical device company, has several facilities throughout the State of California, including one in Tustin. Following the enactment of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, STERIS gave its employees a \$1,000 bonus. Throughout the country, millions of Americans are benefiting from tax reform, and STERIS is an example of a company making those benefits a reality for my constituents in Tustin, California.

These Orange County companies reflect just a small sampling of the success the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is having across the Nation.

Today, my colleagues from California and New York will share their stories from their districts about how their communities and local economies are thriving due to the new tax law.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. KNIGHT), a United States Army veteran, a member of the House Armed Services Committee, and a representative of California's 25th District.

Mr. KNIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for the opportunity to speak about the impacts of the recently enacted tax law.

The reduction in the corporate tax rate enables U.S. companies to compete on a level playing field with foreign businesses without having to move their headquarters abroad.

Here in the U.S., in each of our districts, they can invest their savings back into their businesses. This is because the reform changes the equation for what will make them more profitable. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act now means that expanding factories and payrolls here in the U.S. make better business sense.

Northrop Grumman, which has a significant presence in my district, California's 25th, announced it would increase capital expenditures by 10 percent and provide a \$1,000 per year contribution for each of their employees' retirement accounts.

Millions of Americans have received increases in their paychecks. Check your check.

The Treasury Department estimated that 90 percent of Americans will now receive more take-home pay.

The reform reinforced positive trends we have experienced over the past few years. U.S. jobless claims have fallen to their lowest level since 1973.

Setting politics aside, this bill lifts burdens on U.S. businesses and taxpayers to allow everyone to invest more and save more.

We can all see the effects of these changes today, and we will continue to see them play out over the coming months and years.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Speaker RYAN, Chairman BRADY, and their staffs for their organizing an inclusive, coopera-

tive process in drafting this bill and driving it forward.

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO), my friend and a member of the Committee on Agriculture and the representative of California's 21st District.

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to talk about something that is so important.

We always talk about the different things we can do in Congress to help our constituents. Something I spend a lot of time on is water. It is very important to help my local community survive, it is obviously important for agriculture, but it is very important for those who live and breathe in the Central Valley. Delivering water to their homes is something that some of us outside of the area might not see threatened, but in the Central Valley, it is something we do see.

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But tax reform is something that has a real impact on people every single day. The Central Valley happens to be what I would say, and I think a lot of people would agree, some of the hardest working people in the United States.

When you drive throughout the Central Valley and you see people out in the fields working really hard in some of the warmest weather, some of the hottest weather, it has a real impact on people; and giving these people an opportunity to be able to keep more of their money is something I think is very important.

While I don't know if this coming week people will see a simplified system, because it hasn't taken effect yet, I know that people who work really hard throughout the Central Valley are already starting to see an increase in their paychecks. I have heard it myself as I have gone around the district talking to constituents; people stopping me in the grocery store bringing up the fact that they are already seeing things in their paychecks. I have even had employers tell me that their employees walked up to them and talked a little bit about the difference they are seeing.

The Central Valley is an area that needs this more than a lot of other areas. When you look at the median income, Central Valley, or at least the 21st Congressional District, is about \$40,000. So when you talk about doubling the standard deduction—before this tax plan went into place, about 83 percent of the people filed the standard deduction. Now, with doubling that standard deduction, you are going to see upwards of 90 to 95 percent of people filing the standard deduction.

What does that mean? That means, in the past, people only keep about \$12,000 of their first income tax-free. Now they are going to go forward and have the opportunity to earn \$24,000 without being taxed. So the first \$24,000 isn't going to be touched, and that is impressive.

Then, throughout the Central Valley, a lot of folks, with their children, having families, something that, myself, with three kids, something I am very proud of, we are doubling the child tax credit. We are going from \$1,000 to \$2,000. That is going to have an impact on about 64,000 people in the 21st Congressional District.

Twenty-five thousand constituents own small businesses. This new law will help them grow their businesses and help them be more successful. In fact, some economists say that this new law will help create about 111,000 jobs in the State of California.

This tax bill is going to have a positive impact throughout the 21st Congressional District. We are already starting to see it now, and we are going to see it going forward.

As this new bill takes effect, people throughout the 21st Congressional District will see an annual tax savings of about \$1,300, almost \$1,400. This is real relief for people; and no matter what anyone else goes out and says, this is not peanuts. This is not a small amount.

\$1,400 has a real impact on people being able to buy groceries; being able to save for their kids' education; being able to keep their families comfortable, if it is running the air conditioner or keeping the house comfortable. These are all things that have a real impact on people's everyday lives, so I am thrilled to be able to come here and talk a little bit about the positive impact that we are having throughout the 21st, and I am looking forward to seeing how much more we do.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, my friend from southern California, for the opportunity to be here and play a role in this.

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Ms. TENNEY), a member of the House Financial Services Committee and the Representative of New York's 22nd District.

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague from California and her hard work on this really important issue.

Taxes are, of course, extremely important in New York State as being one of the highest taxed States in the Nation, along with California, an undistinguished honor that we don't want to have.

But I rise today to actually recognize the thousands of hardworking families across the 22nd District of New York, and throughout upstate, who have felt the real impact of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

Before the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, our Tax Code was broken. It was riddled with loopholes that penalized success and hurt hardworking families and hardworking taxpayers. Our middle-income families were the ones who suffered as the economy and wages remained stagnant.

As I traveled from Sandy Creek to Vestal, Little Falls to Cortland, I

heard real stories from families, small-business owners, single parents, veterans, and seniors detailing the damage of our oppressive Tax Code. It held our small businesses back, crippled our family farms, and left our families feeling hopeless and overwhelmed.

That is why we stepped up to the plate, took our constituents' concerns and stories to Washington, and passed legislation that reflected the values of fairness and hard work. No longer is our economy stagnant. No longer will American businesses and families suffer under an unfair and oppressive Tax Code from Washington.

Here in New York, tax reform has provided once-in-a-generation relief from the failed status quo, a status quo that was created in part and mostly by Albany politicians whose seemingly only intent is to tax and spend, and I dare say, waste our hard-earned money.

Under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, the typical middle class family of four in New York's 22nd District, which I represent, will see a tax cut of \$2,439. Imagine what kind of money that could do for a family of four.

Now, families will have the opportunity and means to save for college, plan for the future, invest in their retirement, and provide their children with increased educational opportunities.

Families know how to spend their resources much better than the Federal Government. That is why we are putting real money back into the pockets of hardworking families, money they earned, and money they deserve to keep.

Throughout the debate on tax reform, I, along with my fellow colleagues from New York, fought an uphill battle to include provisions facing elimination that are vital to seniors, single parents, struggling families, and overly burdened job creators.

One of the key provisions that we New Yorkers fought tirelessly to include is the State and local tax deduction or, as you heard often, the SALT deduction. I would like to thank Chairman BRADY and everyone on the Ways and Means Committee for understanding the importance of this deduction and what it means to my constituents. As a result of our advocacy, nearly all of my constituents in the 22nd District will be able to continue to claim a SALT deduction.

It is also flexible, which means it can be used for property sales or income tax, and not just restricted to local tax.

In the 22nd District, 99 percent of itemizers deduct less than \$10,000 in property taxes. This provision will cover the overwhelming number of property owners who own homes of less than \$450,000 in value, which is a very nice home in my district, a little different than in the coastal areas and sometimes you will see in the southern tier of New York.

The reason the SALT deduction matters stems from Albany politicians who

have no regard for the taxpayers they represent. For example, all eight of the counties that I represent are in the top 36 highest property tax rates compared to home value nationwide per county.

This bill provides relief on the Federal level, while finally taking a step to encourage fiscal responsibility from Albany. I have always put the taxpayers I represent first, and it is long past time for politicians in Albany to do the same, and we are hoping that this bill will incentivize them to do that to help our taxpayers.

The benefits from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act do not stop there. Earlier this year, I heard from Frank Suits. Frank is the president and CEO of Suit-Kote Corporation, a family owned, multigenerational paving company in Cortland, New York. Frank wrote to me to share the impact tax reform has had on his business and nearly 800 employees.

First, in direct response to the new tax law, Suit-Kote announced plans to match the Federal tax cut and provide its employees with a 2 percent retroactive pay increase and has begun to accelerate 401(k) contributions for 2018 by 4 months to provide employees additional funds in their retirement accounts.

Our goal in passing the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was to deliver this type of relief to hardworking families like those employed by Suit-Kote, and it was an honor for me to actually go to Suit-Kote and meet with the employees and hear from them, firsthand, just how great their benefits were from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

We also heard that NBT Bank, a local bank in my region, with dozens of locations throughout the 22nd District, has used tax reform to invest in its employees. NBT decided to raise the starting hourly rate of pay from \$11 to \$15 an hour, without a mandate coming from the government, merely because of the benefits from tax reform. Employees earning \$50,000 or less will receive a permanent minimum increase of 5 percent this year.

Another great little business in my community, fairly new, started by a young guy, A&P Masters Images, LLC, in Utica, a small printing business, has hired another full-time graphic designer and is now weighing the options of putting on an addition to its building in the city of Utica.

Howard Potter, CEO of A&P Masters, said with everyone's increase in pay he can already see a morale boost coming from his employees. He said the end-of-the-year tax relief for businesses will help them afford to be more aggressive with investing in their growth, to build or buy, or hire more staff, and buy more equipment.

While these companies are based in the 22nd District, there are dozens of other companies with branches in my district that are reaping the benefits of tax reform. For example, CVS is increasing its wages for hourly employees from \$9 to \$11 an hour.

Home Depot, with a location right next to my New Hartford office, is giving employees a bonus of up to \$1,000, with the chairman and CEO of the company stating it was directly made possible by the tax reform bill.

Lowe's and Walmart are also giving back to their employees as a direct result of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. All three of these corporations have numerous locations across my district and employ hundreds of hardworking citizens throughout NY's 22nd.

Critics of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act have called this law and its benefits crumbs, or Armageddon, as you famously heard. They have also called this law a handout to the 1 percent. Time and again, they have been proven wrong.

Just this past weekend, our very own New York Post declared, and I am paraphrasing: GOP's tax cut isn't actually a gift to the rich. They come to that conclusion from an analysis done by the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center, who found that the top 20 percent of wage earners will pay 87 percent of all Federal income taxes in 2018, up from 84 percent last year. Additionally, the analysis found that most families earning under \$50,000 a year will pay almost no Federal income taxes at all, and many will see a refund.

Mr. Speaker, this does not sound like middle class Armageddon to me. These benefits certainly do not sound like crumbs. This is money that can be used to get ahead on car payments, to pay rent, to pay mortgages, so much more that everyday Americans struggle with in a tough economy.

Businesses like the ones I mentioned are proof that providing desperately needed relief from the Federal side for the failed tax-and-spend status quo that we see in New York is the most effective way to improve the lives of Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for her advocacy on this and for asking us to join.

One added note I would like to say is we found also from the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center that New York is going to be one of the gainers. We are actually going to see a growth in our economy and a growth in jobs, in spite of what Albany may or may not do; but we are really grateful for that, and I just want to say it is an honor to support the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and to advocate for the things in that bill that helped our district.

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. COLLINS), a fellow member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee and the Representative of the 27th District of New York.

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the impact of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and the impact that is having in New York's 27th Congressional District.

When Republicans in Congress and President Donald Trump started working on tax reform, Democrats imme-

diately began attacking the bill before it was even written. They deliberately spread lies to the American people, which caused chaos and confusion, in an effort to derail our progress.

The working families in western New York now know the truth because they have seen an increase in their paychecks. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is making our economy stronger and benefiting American families and businesses, both big and small.

The business community is responding and taking action by giving raises, bonuses, and other employee benefits as a direct result of tax reform. In western New York, thousands of workers are reaping the benefits.

M&T Bank, in Buffalo, increased the base wages for hourly employees, gave all employees 40 hours a year in paid time off to volunteer in their community, and significantly increased contributions to the M&T Foundation.

Pioneer Credit Recovery in Arcade, New York, gave a \$1,000 bonus to each of their 800 employees.

Evans Bank in Hamburg also gave \$1,000 bonuses to non-senior level employees and increased charitable donations.

Everett J. Prescott, Incorporated, gave \$1,000 bonuses to employees with more than a year of service and \$250 bonuses to employees with less than a year of service.

Financial Institutions of Warsaw gave employees a bonus of \$500.

LiDestri Food and Drink in Rochester gave all of their 1,200 employees in their five U.S. facilities an extra full paycheck.

Environmental Construction Group in Albion, New York, gave each of their 50 employees a \$500 bonus.

National chains that employ many of my constituents have also given bonuses: T.J.Maxx, Walmart, AT&T, Home Depot, Chipotle, Lowe's, Starbucks, U-Haul, FedEx, Apple, and the list goes on and on.

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The liberal left calls these pay increases and bonuses crumbs, but my constituents know tax reform is a significant win.

Because Republicans have reformed our complicated and outdated Tax Code, our children and grandchildren will be able to participate in a growing economy. The truth is tax reform is a positive step in making America great again.

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. DENHAM), my friend and colleague, and a member of the House Agriculture and Transportation and Infrastructure Committees, who represents the 10th District of California.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, our previous Tax Code was ineffective and outdated. For too long, Americans' history of entrepreneurs and aspiring job creators has been in jeopardy.

The United States now ranks 12th worldwide in business openings. For

the first time in 35 years, American business closures outnumbered business openings—the first time in 35 years. That means jobs were vanishing faster than they were being created.

For decades, our country's families have been burdened by countless hours of paperwork just putting taxes together, confusing tax rules that you needed an accountant or a lawyer to look at, and unsustainable rates that cut into everyday hardworking paychecks.

The Code also did little to encourage U.S. companies to invest right here. Instead, it was only successful in creating new loopholes, exemptions, and disincentives that pushed more profits and jobs overseas. The Tax Code just wasn't working. That is why I was proud to have supported and coauthored H.R. 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which tackled each of these separate issues in ways to support American families and U.S. job growth.

In the midst of all the rhetoric around here, the partisanship, the Washington spin outside of this building, it is important that we don't lose sight of who actually won in this. It is the people in my district. People in places all across the country. It is Americans who won by changing the Tax Code.

This bill will allow businesses to grow, to continue to give bonuses and raises. Small businesses will now have the flexibility to make new hires and investments, thanks to the new 20 percent deduction for qualified pass-through companies. It is a deduction to make sure we are hiring new people.

They will also be able to immediately write off the full cost of purchases of new and used equipment, making their goals to expand operations a reality. This gives them the opportunity to take the money that they are making, the profits that they are making to go out and buy new equipment, buy new supplies, and be able to hire more people and bring them into their company.

The bill is also good for agriculture. That is my district's biggest economic driver. It repealed the harmful estate tax and includes supportive export provisions that help our local farmers compete and sell their crops on the national market.

The bill is good for our communities. It creates a new pathway for investments to flow directly into lower income areas. These newly designated opportunity zones will receive the necessary capital infusion to jump-start their economies and support our local residents.

Most importantly, the bill is good for individuals and families. It cuts rates across the board and doubles the standard deduction. It also bolsters the value of the child tax credit.

Now, a lot of people have asked me: What is the standard deduction? Most people just take all of their information for the year and they give to it their accountant or they put it into the

system and try to understand the old Tax Code.

The standard deduction was something that most people in my district did before, but by doubling it, 94 percent of the people in my district will now utilize the standard deduction. This affects everybody.

Other commonsense provisions, like the earned income tax credit, adoption tax credit, charitable deductions, and retirement savings options are all preserved under the bill. That ensures that families can keep more of their own money.

Now, since this bill passed, being home in the district, I have been to the bank and talked to people. In the grocery store, people have come up to me and told me what a difference this has made in their paycheck—\$50 a week, \$100 a paycheck, \$200 a month. It is real money adding up to the people in my district.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have supported this bill for the expansion it is going to enable in our businesses, for the new jobs it is going to create, and for the people who are going to see it in their paychecks every paycheck.

I recently did a roundtable. We called in businesses and tax accountants and experts on the Tax Code, all together, not only to look at what this new bill has done, but specifically how we would see job growth in our community. Time and time again, I heard from businesses independently owned that talked about the expansion that they are going to see.

We will see a great expansion in growth across this country: seeing money that was invested overseas coming back and reinvested here, markets that we have lost that will now be coming back. Manufacturing, building things again, that is what this bill is all about, supporting American families and the pursuit of the American Dream.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have supported the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK), a fellow Californian and a member of the House Budget Committee, who represents the Fourth District of California.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to ask ourselves how legislation is actually doing once it has passed; and 4 months after tax reform, I think it is time to reflect on that.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from California for organizing this time tonight.

In my California district, the average family is paying \$1,900 less Federal income tax this coming year. That means 1,900 more dollars that they can spend to meet their own needs.

I want to urge everyone to visit a website called taxplancalculator.com. There, you can put your own tax numbers in and calculate how your family will fare under the new tax law this

year. Everyone I have directed to taxplancalculator.com has come back happily surprised.

But the real importance of tax reform is expanding our overall economy. That is the rising tide that lifts all boats.

One provision of the measure allowed companies to write off the full cost of equipment purchases when they make the purchase. But what does that mean in real life?

Well, Ken Steers is president of Freight Solution Providers, a local shipping company in my district that provides worldwide transportation logistics for businesses large and small. He tells me that since the tax reform took effect, his shipping orders for manufacturing equipment have gone through the roof and haven't let up.

Before the tax reform, our corporate tax rate was 35 percent, the highest in the industrialized world. We reduced it to 21 percent.

Aslam Malik is CEO of AMPAC Fine Chemicals in Sacramento and El Dorado Counties. They produce the active ingredient in several cancer and epilepsy drugs. He said they could outcompete their European competitors in terms of quality and technology and service, but many customers told him that even if their product was free, the American tax made AMPAC non-competitive. Well, I checked back with Aslam this week. They have already added \$2 million to their budget for expansion because, literally, a whole new world of business opportunities has opened up for them.

Now, the left says this is just tax relief for the rich. Obviously, they don't understand that this is precisely what produces higher pay, better jobs, greater opportunities, and stronger financial security for every American.

I attended the Oakhurst Rotary Club last week. They have a tradition of donating dollars to the club as they report good news in their own lives.

One Rotarian had been out of work for nearly 2 years. He was on the verge of despair. With tears in his eyes, he announced to the group that he had just landed his dream job with Pfizer pharmaceuticals and that he would now be able to keep his home and stay in the town that he loved. Relief was written all over his face.

To be sure, our economy still faces many threats—trade wars, bad monetary policy, runaway Federal spending—but, clearly, the tax reform is working. From what people are telling me, if it isn't yet morning again in America, it is at least a new dawn.

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, 90 percent of Americans will see an increase in take-home pay because of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. Under this new law, a typical middle-income family of four will see an average tax cut of over \$2,000. Those cuts will vary from State to State. In California, a family of four will see a cut of \$2,840, and in New York, \$3,129.

Individuals and families will take this money and put it toward their re-

tirements, mortgage payments, or college savings.

There are over 400 Chipotle locations in California. In fact, California has the most Chipotle restaurants in the country. Since the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act passed, Chipotle is providing hourly and salaried workers with bonuses up to \$1,000 or a stock grant. The company is also improving employee benefits and has announced plans to provide additional paid parental leave. These bonuses and increased benefits make a big difference in people's lives.

Chipotle also plans to spend \$50 million to renovate its stores. This means opportunities for construction companies and numerous small subcontractors, which will invigorate local economies, including my home of Orange County.

Tax reform is spurring the free market economy to provide opportunity and an increased standard of living for all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, according to a recent survey, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act has significantly improved the economic outlook for small businesses. The survey recorded historic highs in the small business confidence index, showing that support for tax reform is growing within the small business community.

In fact, small businesses have rallied around the new tax policy, with over half of the country's small-business owners viewing the law as having a positive effect on their business. Nearly half of small businesses expect to see immediate tax benefits this year. Small businesses are the leading job creators in our country and are the engines of economic growth.

Mr. Speaker, McDonald's is one of the largest employers in California, with over 1,000 locations. Following the enactment of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, McDonald's announced plans to contribute \$150 million to cover tuition costs, expanding its current Archways to Opportunity education program.

Nearly 400,000 employees are eligible for benefits that can be used toward college or trade school. McDonald's now offers \$2,500 per year in tuition benefits for crew members, and \$3,000 per year in tuition benefits for store managers.

Thousands of McDonald's employees will benefit from this enhanced program, and it is thanks to tax reform that companies like McDonald's are able to do more to empower their employees.

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

A RAID ON CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COMER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, a very tragic thing occurred for those of us