

and the farsighted, outward-looking, post-war, rules-based order that has brought unprecedented freedom and prosperity to America and its friends, allies, and partners.

Furthermore, traditional democratic values—the rule of law, freedom of press, an independent judiciary—are under unprecedented attack throughout much of the world.

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It is incumbent upon all of us to stand up and defend our way of life and our institutions. In Congress, we need to reestablish a strong, bipartisan governing center that will help restore order and stability to Washington and that will also help alleviate a lot of concerns throughout the country.

To be sure, there are a number of Members working towards that goal: the members of the Tuesday Group, Republican Main Street Partnership, the Blue Dogs, New Democrats, Problem Solvers Caucus, and there are others. Many of these Members understand that consensus and compromise are not capitulation or surrender but, instead, are essential to a functioning republic.

We need to pursue real fiscal reform, both on the mandatory side and the revenue side of the ledger. We need a Simpson-Bowles 2.0, with teeth; and reforms must be bipartisan to ensure they are both durable and sustainable, which we know won't happen on a partisan basis.

Additionally, we need to address other challenges, such as how to increase access to and affordability for our Nation's healthcare system, expanding educational opportunities for our children and our grandchildren, and making needed improvements to our infrastructure like so many around here are dedicated to, especially my friend Chairman SHUSTER.

The administration must realize that America has to honor its agreements if we ever hope to enter into new ones. We simply cannot walk away from American commitments, even ones we may have voted against or disagreed with, if we expect to continue to build new coalitions and enter into new agreements.

Instead, we should double down on the multilateral rules-based order, whatever the flaws, that America worked so hard to establish after World War II by defending the institutions, alliances, and partnerships we established or helped establish: NATO, European unity, and, yes, a global trade regime through which we have advanced America's economic, security, and strategic interests.

We should look at ways to open new markets and expand new opportunities that unleash the power and benefits of the American free enterprise system. All of us, Republicans and Democrats, need to work together to move America forward as friends and partners who share values, ideals, and common interests.

Whether confronting a revanchist, aggressive Russia; a terrorist, theo-

cratic Iranian regime; or China's mercantilist policies, success can only be achieved by finding strength in unity.

And while I may be leaving the Halls of Congress, I am not retreating from the battlefield. Some of you may regret that. I intend to continue aggressively advocating for people and the policies of the sensible center. I hope to provide an even larger voice in favor of responsible governance and hope to foster a strong center-right movement that embraces traditional conservative virtues of order, discipline, stability, measured statements, and incremental change—not the incendiary rhetoric, chaos, and dysfunction that we have, unfortunately, grown accustomed to in recent years. Although my time in Congress is drawing to a close, I know that our Nation's future is bright.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to all my friends and colleagues, again, some of whom are here today. I thank them all, my friends and colleagues not only here in the House, but also in the Senate, for their support, their guidance, their wisdom, and their friendship over the years. It is truly very meaningful to me, and I have been especially touched by some of the very nice things people have said and other tributes that have been paid to me.

My wife said, after she heard a few of them, she is kind of waiting to meet this guy that they are all talking about. But seriously, I can't thank you enough.

I also want to give a special thank-you to all my staff, both past and present, for everything that they have done dutifully to serve our constituents in Pennsylvania and to my legislative and policy priorities.

I should note, some of my staff are seated up in the gallery, past and present. I am not supposed to do that, but, hell, it is my last day, so I can do that.

I just want to again thank the staff for their dedication and work, both my Washington and my district staff, who do a lot of work not just for me, but all of our staffs. They do a lot, and sometimes they take a lot of grief, and we don't say thank you enough to them. But the bottom line is we could have never achieved as much as we did without their dedication and their commitment.

And above all, thank you to the people of Pennsylvania's 15th Congressional District for the trust they have shown in me time and again. I have always said I don't know how many constituents would allow their Member the amount of latitude they have given me to be somewhat of an independent voice here and say what I felt needed to be said. I really appreciated my constituents allowing me to do that. I recognize in some districts that might not be case, so to them I say thank you again. After my family, representing them and carrying their voice to Washington has been the honor and joy of a lifetime.

Mr. Speaker, I say thank you, and I yield back the balance of my time.

A TRIBUTE TO SEAN PATRICK MURPHY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ESTES of Kansas). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) for 30 minutes.

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, the House is often described as a family, but it is a lot bigger than 435 Members. Our extended family, of course, includes the staff of the House and the staff of each and every Member; the Capitol Police who do such an extraordinary job of protecting all of us; the maintenance crews that make sure the facilities function, are open to the public; and, frankly, all those others who make the House of Representatives a very special place.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to report what many of you already know, the loss of a member of that extended family, my longtime chief of staff, Sean Patrick Murphy.

Sean has been a professional associate and friend of mine for 19 years. He was my chief of staff for 11 years, and, frankly, we both believed he would be the last chief of staff I would ever have.

Sean Patrick Murphy left us, unexpectedly, in February. He had based his life on three things: his faith, his family, and his friends.

Those people who were privileged to know Sean know that he was a very devout Catholic, and his faith was not something that was casual to him. It was something that he lived each and every day and carried out in each and every relationship that he had.

Nothing was more important after his faith than his family. Sean Murphy was the consummate husband and father. He loved his family, and he lived a life of total dedication to them.

His wife, Johannah, and his sons, Patrick, Peter, and Charlie, were fixtures that we all heard about in our office each and every day, particularly the boys because there would always be a funny story about what they happened to be doing at any given moment. Sean worked hard so Johannah could stay home and actually homeschool those three children, so they were an extraordinarily close group.

And, finally, there were Sean's friends. No one had more, no one, frankly, held his friends longer, and no one treasured them more than Sean. Because of that, if you happened to attend his funeral, you saw over 2,000 family and friends show up to remember this extraordinary man.

As a person, Sean had all the wit, all the wisdom, all the decency of the Irish. He was a natural leader and a loyal colleague. People followed him because they trusted him. He was fair. He was decent. He was selfless. He always put others first.

And if you sent spent a day with Sean Murphy, you were going to laugh. He made people laugh partly by laughing at himself. In all the years that I

knew him and all the many capacities we dealt in together, I never had one other person come and complain to me about Sean—no constituent, no fellow staff member, no lobbyist, no member of another office. All of them thought they were his best friend.

Now, he was pretty good at that and would give you a pretty good opinion later about whether they were really a friend or not, but the point is everybody that knew him liked him, and everybody believed that he liked them back.

Sean's lifelong profession, and, really, it began when he was quite young, was his passion for politics. He took it first as a volunteer, and then it did become the manner in which he lived his life.

Now, his gentle nature hid an extraordinarily competitive personal spirit. Politics, I like to say, is an adult team sport, and Sean played it exceptionally well. He was astute in his judgment about people and about politics.

In all the many issues we discussed over many years, both in terms of dealing with political campaigns and dealing with the politics of the House, itself, both on the floor and in our Conference, I never got a piece of bad advice from Sean. But with Sean, politics always had a purpose, and that purpose was always to achieve some greater good, some more important goal.

He wasn't just good at winning; he was good at governing. He, frankly, never sold out. He had plenty of opportunities to go and make a lot more money than I could have ever paid him, but he worked for principle. He always put his country and his party and people above anything that might benefit himself. And he believed in the things that he worked for, and he worked to make a difference in this country each and every day.

Frankly, he cherished this institution above all else. He enjoyed not only the politics, but those rare moments of drama when great things happen on the floor of the House; and he made sure that any Member he worked for—and I wasn't the only one—had an opportunity to impact those events thanks to his good advice, thanks to the wonderful staff that he built and created, and thanks to his shrewd strategy.

All of us that knew him believed that he left us far too soon, but that is pretty presumptive, Mr. Speaker. Who are any of us to say something like that? God chooses the time that we come and the time that we go. How can you be bitter when your friend went to his bed, innocent and untroubled, and woke up in Heaven with our Lord and Savior?

But God does allow us to miss him, and miss him we all will. He will be missed as a husband and a father and a friend. He blessed all of us with his life. And for me, in particular, Mr. Speaker, I will miss him for all my days.

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

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CALIFORNIA'S WATER SUPPLY

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, we just heard a few moments ago a colleague of ours, Congressman CHARLIE DENT, who has served with great distinction and honor, a classmate of mine.

I simply want to say that he is a role model for all of us in terms of how to legislate in a thoughtful and deliberative fashion, and to reach across the aisle in a way that I think is conducive to getting things done. He certainly is a great example of how we should all reflect in terms of our work here every day.

We will miss him, and we wish him the best of luck in his next endeavors.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to talk about the challenges that we face in California as it relates to our water needs.

The San Joaquin Valley, that I have the honor and privilege to represent, is one of the largest agriculture regions in the entire country, and, therefore, the world. We grow half of the Nation's fruits and vegetables, 70 percent of the world's almonds, 50 percent of the world's pistachios, the number one dairy State in the Nation, and the number one citrus State in the Nation.

The list goes on and on and on, over 300 commodities that we have the ability to grow because of an incredible Mediterranean climate, and water, which is the crucible, because we like to say in the Valley that: Where water flows, food grows.

Clearly, the ability to have water reliability is so essential to ensuring that we can continue to maintain our agricultural production, which every night puts food on America's dinner table and, therefore, allows American consumers to have the healthiest, the best, nutritious quality of varieties of food and food products at the most economical cost to them and their families anywhere in the world.

We are so good at it, in producing food, not only in California, but around the country, American agriculture, that I think sometimes Americans take it for granted, because less than 3 percent of our Nation's population—as in California, less than 3 percent of our State's population—is directly involved in the production of food and fiber.

I sometimes feel that the majority of Americans believe that their food comes from a grocery store. Well, it doesn't. I mean, you get it at the grocery store, or you get it at your favorite restaurants, wherever that may be.

But before that food gets to the grocery store, or before it gets to those restaurants, it comes from farmers and ranchers and dairymen and -women across this great land of ours, and certainly California plays a key role.

We have had difficult, difficult drought periods in California. We had a 6-year prolonged drought that reminded us that the climate continues to change. What impacts we, as people, have on the change of that climate is debated. But clearly we know that we have an impact, and it continues to change.

Therefore, to be responsible, we have to plan to ensure that we have adequate water supplies to maintain our agricultural production, for it is the sustenance of life: water. Where water flows, food grows.

It is so important, obviously, throughout the country, but critical in maintaining our incredible cornucopia of agricultural production in California. You should understand that 99 percent of our agriculture in California is irrigated.

I have, for over 30 years, worked to strengthen the water reliability, not only in the San Joaquin Valley, but throughout California.

In a State like California, where we have so many resources and so many cutting-edge technologies, in terms of efficient irrigation methodologies, drip irrigation and conserving and trying to figure out ways in which we can recharge our aquifers, we are using all of the water tools in the water toolbox.

When I was in the California Legislature, I authored legislation to create the Kern County Water Bank. I led two successful water bond measures that provided more than \$2 billion to improve California's water system and provide for safe, reliable water drinking.

We have places in California, and other parts of the country, where our groundwater has gotten contaminated. Therefore, we need to make adjustments to make sure that every American—every Californian—has clean drinking water.

In Congress, I have secured approval for the Madera Irrigation District Water Bank, the San Luis Intertie, and the North Valley Regional Recycled Water Project, bringing hundreds and thousands of acre-feet to secure more water, a more reliable supply of water, for the San Joaquin Valley, but also for other parts of California, as well.

If we cannot solve the water problems in California, I really am very concerned about the future of our Nation and our planet. Again, we don't think about it, but food is a national security issue. It truly is. We take it for granted.

We not only have the ability throughout the country, and in California, to produce enough food for every American, but we produce more than we can consume and, therefore, we export many of our food products throughout the world.

But again, with the impacts of climate change, oceans rising, the planet that 2 years ago clicked 7 billion people, by the middle of the century will have 9 billion people.

Guess what happens when you add 2 billion more people to the planet? You