

victory. It is an honor and a blessing to represent such a great community.

□ 2015

**OFFICER NORBERT—HOUSTON
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the rain came down, the bayous and creeks rose, and the wind blew. It was as if it would never stop raining. It was Hurricane Harvey last September. After it was over, 55 inches of water had hammered the Houston area.

But in the rainy haze, Officer Norbert Ramon appeared. But Officer Ramon, a 55-year-old officer of the Houston Police Department, was sick. He had stage IV colon cancer. He was undergoing treatment, and doctors said that he had only a few years to live.

However, the 24-year veteran of the Houston Police Department jumped into the flooded aftermath of the hurricane despite his cancer. Officer Ramon sloshed through bacteria-filled waters, putting his own life at risk.

Over the course of 4 days, he rescued 1,500 Houstonians stranded in the flood. He said: "My main concern was to help the citizens. Nothing else was on my mind. I didn't worry about me or anything."

As the waters receded and the Texas Sun came out through the blue sky, Mr. Speaker, Officer Ramon headed back to the hospital, returning to his treatments. Despite a hard-fought battle, Officer Ramon lost his fight against a cancerous invader.

Taps sounded today, Mr. Speaker, as hundreds of peace officers and citizens of Houston honored the life of one of Houston's finest.

Officer Norbert Ramon stood Houston strong. Mr. Speaker, they don't make 'em like him anymore.

And that is just the way it is.

AUSTIN HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

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

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize the selfless work that the Austin Habitat for Humanity is doing in the 25th District of Texas that I proudly represent.

Over the past 30 years, they have built more than 425 homes, repaired another 280, and provided financial advice to over 10,000 Texans. Just last month, I had the opportunity to visit this organization and meet with the great folks who operate it. The work they do here is so important, and I was inspired by their spirits and selfless attitudes.

Hearing about the remarkable work they do day in and day out was extraordinary. They put God's love into action by bringing people together to build homes and communities and to

give hope to those who need it the most.

Those who work and volunteer for Habitat for Humanity are superb people. They are compassionate and kind, and, frankly, we need more Americans just like them.

Every single person deserves a decent and affordable place to live, and this organization is there to help those who are less fortunate. I encourage each and every person listening to get out there and do something for your local community. Together, we can really make this world a better place.

With that being said, God bless Texas, God bless Habitat for Humanity, and God bless the United States of America.

"In God We Trust."

**SUPPORT ACTIVE-DUTY PURPLE
HEART RECIPIENTS**

(Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act that just unanimously passed the House. I was proud to support it.

This bill recognizes the sacrificial service of the 7,000-plus servicemen and -women who received a Purple Heart after being wounded in battle and continue to serve on Active Duty. My bill, included in this passage, takes the rightful step to waive the funding fee on all VA home loans for Active-Duty Purple Heart recipients. With this bill, we will save servicemembers thousands of dollars and help their families achieve the dream of homeownership.

U.S. Marine Corps Major Byron Owen, who was wounded twice in Iraq and once in Afghanistan, explained it best when he shared his experiences with my office. He said: "I was medevaced out of Iraq in 2006 and had to undergo months of therapy to return to service. Why should I have to pay 20 grand to get a VA loan when someone with a noncombat-related disability gets to waive it? Some of my friends are amputees still serving in uniform. They're paying the funding fee. Does that seem right?"

Major Owen, I hear you—and, no, it is not right. That is why I am proud to have introduced this bill and voted with my colleagues to support Active-Duty Purple Heart recipients with the passage of H.R. 299.

**CONGRATULATING PENNSYLVANIA
CONGRESS OF THE FUTURE
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
ATTENDEES**

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize two high school honors students from Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional

District chosen to represent the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as delegates at the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders.

The following students were selected to attend the event, which will take place June 29 to July 1 in Lowell, Massachusetts: Jacob Hulse of Tidioute and Brett Kelly of Lewis Run. These outstanding students were required to achieve a 3.5 GPA to be nominated for this prestigious honors-only program by their teachers or the National Academy of Future Science and Technology Leaders.

The event aims to encourage and guide the top students in our country who wish to devote their lives to the sciences and technology. Chosen delegates represent all 50 States and Puerto Rico.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Jacob and Brett on this tremendous accomplishment, and I wish them the best of luck as they continue their career paths to be future leaders in the science and technology field.

**WHAT HAPPENED TO FAMILY
VALUES**

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. EVANS) is recognized for half of the remaining time until 10 p.m. as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for allowing me to lead this critical Special Order to speak about the lack of family values demonstrated by the Trump administration and the GOP, their choice to mismanage, and to offer a counternarrative to the wayward path they are leading us down.

Black people have no permanent friends or permanent enemies or permanent interests, as so eloquently stated by former Congressman William Lacy Clay, Sr.

Mr. Speaker, the President asked Black Americans: What do you have to lose?

The Congressional Black Caucus responded with a document that was hand-delivered to him that is titled, "We Have a Lot to Lose."

Over the course of the 2016 Presidential election, time and time again, then-candidate Donald Trump asked the Black community a larger question: "What do you have to lose?"

The inquiry presupposes that the experience of all African Americans is destitute and that we live in fear. In fact, President Trump declared some African Americans' communities are

worse than war zones, demonstrating a lack of understanding of both constituencies.

The election has come and gone, and the time for the campaign calls is over. Now President Trump represents all Americans and must govern this Nation for the good of all Americans, whether they are Black or White, rich or poor, conservative or liberal.

So as the conscience of the Congress, the voice of the 78 million Americans and 17 million African Americans, the Congressional Black Caucus is obligated to answer President Trump's questions.

The answer: The African Americans have a great deal to lose under the Trump administration, and we have already lost a lot.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank our chairman, Chairman RICHMOND, for allowing me this opportunity to conduct this Special Order.

Over the next hour, we will speak about some of the issues that have faced the Congressional Black Caucus and Black people in this Nation. I say that to you because of this document I have in my hand, "We Have a Lot to Lose." In this document that was presented to the President of the United States, it outlines those various issues.

What are we losing?

Based on last week's passage of the farm bill here in the House, we have lost benefits under the SNAP program. Thank God for the Senate, Mr. Speaker, because the Senate has passed a different version. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that that version will be the version that becomes the law of this land.

The Senate passed a version 20-1 out of committee, and they will bring that up for a vote because, Mr. Speaker, I believe that represents better the views and values of Members of this body. I do not believe the version that we passed in the farm bill represents this body.

I am disappointed that the GOP leadership had the unmitigated gall to bring this highly partisan and warped bill to the House floor for a second vote, posing as a farm bill. Nothing changed in the bill since the last time it came to the floor, so you have to wonder what was offered or said to those Members who voted "no" just a month ago to change their votes.

The partisan approach of the majority has produced a bill that will hurt thousands of people in the city of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Agriculture Committee, I submitted letters from the mayor of the city of Philadelphia. In that letter, the mayor of the city of Philadelphia laid out specifically the impact that that particular bill that came out of the House Agriculture Committee would have on the people of the city of Philadelphia. You are talking about affecting over 200,000 to 300,000 people in the city of Philadelphia.

In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1.8 million people can be af-

ected. In Montgomery County, in the county I represent, 50,000 people are affected.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is clear that that bill that passed this House by only two votes was misguided and was heading in the wrong direction.

It is also clear, Mr. Speaker, that people who are on SNAP do not fight to be on SNAP. They understand clearly about the challenges that they face.

Forty-two million Americans are on SNAP. No, Mr. Speaker, those people are not fearful of work. They understand if there is a great opportunity available for them, they would take advantage of the opportunity.

I think it is clear to me, Mr. Speaker, that, again, this administration and the GOP were lacking some sense of connection to what people's values are. As a result, you saw that vote that took place last week. It again sends us in the wrong direction. It raises serious questions about the lack of family values from a party that is always talking about family values; but now, all of a sudden, Mr. Speaker, it seems like family values have gone out the window. Under this version of the farm bill, people will go hungry in my city and around the Nation.

As the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities notes, the House bill breaks with the long history of bipartisan efforts to improve and reform SNAP. It is clear, Mr. Speaker, there were 23 hearings on the issue of SNAP, and not one single time in the 23 hearings did they suggest that there should be a different direction in terms of SNAP.

Mr. Speaker, Democrats are for work. We are very clear. Members of the Congressional Black Caucus understand the importance of work. We know what it means to work. But to me, Mr. Speaker, that was a wrong-headed policy in terms of the farm bill. It did not justify that action, and it should not have even gone anywhere.

But as usual, Mr. Speaker, some people don't realize the election is over. We need to work together—Democrat, Republican, conservative, liberal, whoever it may be—because hunger is a problem, Mr. Speaker. It is not a problem just in certain communities; it is a problem across this Nation.

In spite of the employment numbers and in spite of what is told to us about the economy, there are a lot of people who are hungry. There are a lot of people who are left out of the process. This is not something that we should take lightly.

□ 2030

This is something that we would recognize and something we should work together on.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say to you today that it is clear to me that the Republicans and the Trump administration have gone in the wrong direction. When you talk about the issue of families and what needs to take place, this is not about family values.

I stress to you, Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, millions of Americans

who receive SNAP are consumers and are important parts of the economy who our farmers and ranchers depend on as a part of our farm and food economy.

Mr. Speaker, I have consistently said that food is medicine. Food is medicine and food policy is foreign policy. It is not something we should take lightly.

So today, the Congressional Black Caucus is going to talk about the importance of values, and particularly family values, and how all of a sudden there is amnesia when it comes down to the question of values.

We are saying to you today, Mr. Speaker, we want to make sure that people understand that the 42 million people who are on SNAP across this Nation are of all colors, of all races. It can happen to any of us. It is not something that we should sit back and all of a sudden think that this couldn't happen to anyone. This could happen to our brothers and our sisters. And we are our brother's and sister's keeper. It is not something that we should just willy-nilly suddenly say to ourselves that we shouldn't worry about. Yet, the GOP not only failed them, they failed America last week.

In addition, healthcare is one of the most important issues for our country, as seen by the mass rejection of the efforts by the GOP to repeal the Affordable Care Act last year.

Think about this, Mr. Speaker. Healthcare. Everybody has the right to a healthy life, regardless of age, race, gender, or preexisting condition. Medical issues are personal matters. Whether it affects physical or mental health, it should not result in financial ruin. We all should know and recognize that it is clear that any of us can have a health episode. No one is above it. It is something that we should not take lightly.

Mr. Speaker, we as the Congressional Black Caucus know and understand. And that is why we have fought so hard for healthcare. We have stressed over and over again that this, too, can happen to you.

We understand that, with preexisting conditions and the challenges that we have in our community of high blood pressure, diabetes, and other types of diseases, this is something we should address. We should make sure that people know and can take advantage of a healthcare system that is open and available. We should not be bankrupting people, Mr. Speaker, on the issue of healthcare.

Mr. Speaker, when the President and the GOP talk about family values, they seem to forget that when it comes down to the question of healthcare, that is something that we all should be ensuring everybody has. That is not a Democrat or Republican issue. That is an American issue. That is something right up there that we all should recognize that healthcare should be available to everyone. When we look at it and think about it, this is something we have to work for.

There is no simple answer to dealing with the question of healthcare, but we do believe the Affordable Care Act is a great foundation. We believe that the Affordable Care Act basically laid a tone and a foundation for this entire country.

As we all know, we have healthcare here in this House, in the United States Senate, and the President of the United States has healthcare. And that is provided for by the taxpayers of this country.

So it is not something we should take lightly. It is something that we should all understand that health issues can affect us all. When you really think about it, in terms of getting a job, how can you do that if you are not healthy? How can you take care of your family if you are not healthy? How can you do anything if you are not healthy?

This is something we believe is a family value and this is something that we all have said over and over again. I believe healthcare is a fundamental right and not a privilege. No one should ever be afraid that taking care of their physical or mental health will cause financial hardship or be inaccessible to them for any reason.

I want to repeat that again, Mr. Speaker. I believe that healthcare is a fundamental right and not a privilege. No one should ever be afraid that taking care of their physical or mental health will cause financial hardship or be inaccessible to them for any reason at all. We need to think about that. We need to carefully think about exactly what that means.

When we talk about it in this day and age of family values, what is more important to a family than the health of the breadwinner, male or female? What is important to someone who is looking for an opportunity and they are prepared to go on that job?

It is very important, Mr. Speaker, that under the Affordable Care Act it allowed people to stay on their parent's healthcare until age 26. Also, the part about preexisting conditions. Don't take that lightly, Mr. Speaker. That is something that we all could be affected by.

It seems to me that over and over again in this House we seem to neglect to think about the conditions that we all face. Mr. Speaker, in healthcare, we have those moments where it can be with anyone and any condition they could be under. It is something that we should really understand and recognize. It is something that we shouldn't take lightly.

Healthcare is, to me, the most essential issue we face today. It is something that we all should be fighting for, no matter what party we come from, no matter what part of the country we come from. We should all understand what it means.

I will continue to be a voice for the voiceless to ensure adequate healthcare for all. That is something I believe is extremely essential, Mr. Speaker.

When I thought about giving these words, I basically said, again, we are going to speak about the lack of family values demonstrated by the Trump administration. The Trump administration and the GOP talk about family values a lot. How can you talk about family values when you want to eliminate the SNAP program? How can you talk about family values when you want to reduce people's healthcare?

You can't talk about family values when, in the very same breath, you are talking about destroying people's healthcare and access to food. There is something fundamentally wrong with that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I stress to you today that this is not a partisan issue. Feeding people and healthcare is not Democrat or Republican. It is not conservative or liberal. It is something that we all need to be concerned with. If we are talking about moving America forward, then we will move it forward when we bring others along. I stress this is something that we all should be concerned with.

Turning to more hypocrisy from the party of family values, the Trump administration's unilateral decision to separate migrant children from their parents at the Southern border is just the latest example of the majority party refusing to practice what it preaches.

Just think about it. Migrant children. Migrant children. Migrant children. Migrant children. I said that four times. I said that four times because I think it hasn't gotten through.

When you talk about separating children from their families, there is something wrong with that, Mr. Speaker. When you talk about using that for a political purpose and you talk about using them as an example of children and families, there is something wrong with that, Mr. Speaker. That is not the kind of America we want. We do not want an America where we are going to separate children and families. Children and families should be united. We should bring them together.

Mr. Speaker, when we hear the statement that Democrats want to basically just let anybody in the country, we know that is just for political rhetoric. Remember, I said earlier, going back to when we passed this book out that says we have a lot to lose, we said, Mr. Speaker, in the very beginning of this book, that the election is over.

I understand in 132 days there will be an election. Well, let the election speak for itself, Mr. Speaker. Let the results speak for themselves.

But there is no way you can talk about separating families. There is no way you can talk about separating children. There is no way that 2,300 to 2,500 children who are spread wherever they maybe, that is not the kind of America we want. That is not family values.

So if you talk about reducing SNAP and you talk about reducing healthcare and you talk about separating families,

there is something wrong with that, Mr. Speaker. There is something wrong when we are now at a point where we are separating families.

Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of Members who have gone to the various borders and seen for themselves firsthand what is taking place. This is not the kind of America we want.

For a party that professes to understand the importance of advancing policies that promote family values, we now have a preponderance of evidence to the contrary.

I just ticked them off: SNAP, healthcare, and now separating families. If you take those three areas, there is something wrong with the context of talking about family values.

It is clearly that whether it is an excessive punitive immigration policy, changes to the free lunch program eligibility, proposals to cut Supplemental Security Income, or the refusal to adopt comprehensive criminal justice reform, the Republican policy agenda deliberately targets families, especially those in underserved communities of color.

Mr. Speaker, we are, in my view, in a very challenging time. We are probably, in my lifetime, in the most challenging time I have ever seen. This requires a different kind of leadership. It requires a leadership that puts America first. And in order to put America first, that means we must work together. We must work together on a farm bill that is bipartisan and that doesn't reduce SNAP. We must work to ensure healthcare is available. And we must be clear, Mr. Speaker, that we have an opportunity to make these things happen.

So I stress to you with the things that I have just stressed, that clearly we have got a chance to do something about these things. These problems persist even in the wake of the administration's immigration policy reversal and the so-called executive order.

Several members of the CBC have expressed concerns about the Republicans' inability to devise a coherent reunification plan for the children and parents separated by the President's misguided policy.

An American crisis is happening right now in front of us. Children, from the toddlers at the border to Dreamers losing DACA to American-born children of immigrant parents, have become the victims of Trump's America.

Let me repeat that. An American crisis is happening right now in front of us. Children, from the toddlers at the border to Dreamers losing DACA to American-born children of immigrant parents, children have become victims in Trump's America. This is not what should be happening in America.

Mr. Speaker, yes, we have our challenges, but the fact of the matter is that we need to work together. So as a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, I stand here, Mr. Speaker, saying to you that the Congressional

Black Caucus is ready to work together to make a difference.

The practice of punishing parents who are trying to save their children's lives and punishing children for being brought to safety by their parents by separating them is fundamentally cruel and un-American. That should not be accepted, Mr. Speaker.

For this next hour, we, as members of the Congressional Black Caucus, are standing up to shine light on this situation.

We are determined to make sure, Mr. Speaker, that people understand that this should no longer be acceptable; we should not continue to pit this section against that section; and that we all understand, when it is all said and done, that we are in this together. Although, as Dr. King said, we may have come over on different boats, we are in the same boat now. That is called America—an America that is inclusive.

The Department of Homeland Security denied that they were breaking the sacred bond between parents and children until The New York Times reported that more than 700 children have been separated from their moms and their dads since October.

Family unity is recognized as a fundamental human right enshrined in international law. The Trump administration's proposed action to separate immigrant families flies in the face of this law. It must stop. It must stop, Mr. Speaker. The practice of separating children from parents as a deterrent to seeking asylum is inhumane and cruel. Seeking asylum is not illegal. In fact, it is written into U.S. immigration law to ensure that those with a credible fear of persecution that they can present their case.

□ 2045

The American Academy of Pediatrics opposed DHS's proposal that would separate mothers from their children arriving at the border, saying that, in a time of anxiety and stress, children need to be with their parents, family members, and caregivers.

I stand here tonight, on the 6-month anniversary of the tax bill. But before I speak on that, I have a colleague of mine from the great State of Texas. She has been in the forefront. I have watched her in the short period of time I have been here. When she speaks, there are many who listen to her.

She is relentless. I have watched her be relentless, driven, purposeful, and focused. She is the great lady from the State of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas, Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania. There is no one to whom he can take a back seat in terms of his freshman term for his engagement and involvement. He has made the most eloquent statements on the floor, which show his commitment to the people of this Nation and the people of his district.

Tonight is certainly an example of that, as we have come to the floor to, really, speak about children. I hope that my friends and my colleagues will fully appreciate the fact that, as we speak about children, we are speaking about everyone's children.

We are speaking about a young boy who was killed running away from law enforcement—not running toward, not creating a threat.

We are thinking about children who need a better education or children who need to have a supplemental nutrition program or children who need to be safe from human trafficking. We are talking about children.

Mr. Speaker, a week ago Monday and Sunday, I was in McAllen and Brownsville. I was in the detention centers with the tinsel, silver-like blankets. I was in the cage-like atmosphere where human beings were kept, human beings, of course, who had fled their country and had come across the border.

Some might make the point that they came across illegally, but they came across and presented themselves to officials. Heretofore, that action was not a criminal action.

I saw those individuals. I saw the most potent memory of what is wrong about what we are doing: mothers who were crying their hearts out for having not been able to see their children, with stories that would break your heart, stories where you were told to go into court, your children could not go with you, and you came back and your children were gone.

What father, what mother could even live with themselves, knowing their child had been snatched with no information and in a—how should I say it?—deceiving manner, not a manner where you could sit and explain to Jose or Maria or little Roger, whom I held in my hands, 9 months old, fleeing with his sister because his mother is deceased.

What do you think that sister feels? Her mother is deceased, and the 9-month-old that she was bringing, her mother's baby, is taken away from her. And Roger cannot speak. One-year-old Leah cannot speak. None of them can speak, and they have been taken away.

How dastardly, how insensitive our government appears to be. A Nation founded upon the values of humanity, freedom of religion and speech and due process. We all know the law provides anyone within our boundaries the right to due process.

But, no. We are, in fact, doing what Bishop Daniel E. Flores of the diocese of Brownsville said: We are acting, by separating immigrant parents and children as a deterrent, on a cruel and reprehensible policy.

Reverend Bishop Michael Curry said: For Christians, Jesus of Nazareth is a standard of conduct for your life. He tells us to love God and to love thy neighbor.

I would say almost every religion speaks about love, speaks about fam-

ily—not in the way that the United States Attorney General used and abused the New Testament, by citing Roman 13, to submit to rulers, to justify the child separation policy, before he was completely undermined and embarrassed by a fake executive order that was signed by the President of the United States.

I say that because that term has become part of our language. I have never used it before, but it was an appropriate description of an executive order that will last for only 20 days and will not have any answer for us going forward.

We don't have any legislation. Our legislation to solve this problem introduced by Mr. NADLER and the Judiciary Committee Democrats and all of us, welcoming anyone else who would like to sign, would get to the immediate concern of not having a separation of these children and, also, ending the zero-tolerance program, which has created this unjust situation.

Let me indicate to you that all of the medical professionals, including Alicia Lieberman with the Early Trauma Treatment Network at the University of California said: Decades of studies show early separations can cause permanent emotional damage. "Children are biologically programmed to grow best in the care of a parent figure."

Members who have visited have said they walked into rooms with 300 children, and they were absolutely silent. They were frightened. Toddlers.

Who among us who have had toddlers in their home, from our own children to those of us fortunate enough to have grandbabies, like mine—like Roy III and Ellison—have ever seem them sit still?

These children were in total fear and apprehension. This is what we are creating. This is not the America we love.

It is noted that the activity in the children's brains was much lower than expected. If you think of a brain as a light bulb, it is as though there was a dimmer that has reduced them from a 100-watt bulb to a 30-watt bulb.

This is what happens. Children who have been separated from their parents, in their first 2 years like little Roger, who is 9 months old, their IQ may go down.

So we are on the floor today, and I am glad to be with Chairman RICHMOND of the Congressional Black Caucus. We believe in speaking out on the issues that impact all of humanity. And this is the sin that we are in the midst of.

Do you realize that the only numbers that these children and parents are getting are the aid numbers? Someone says there is a number at Health and Human Services. None of us have seen it.

I am demanding a full inventory of every single child that we allege that we have who was separated and snatched from their family members, who are in foster care or some detention center, as well as the 10,000 unaccompanied children.

Mr. Speaker, do you realize that I have been here long enough that I was down on the border 4 years ago when the massive numbers of unaccompanied children came to the United States? Then, we put these boys and girls, as unaccompanied children, in this vast industry of foster care and centers. They are still there.

Can anyone who believes in a higher power want to accept that? Even as clean as these places may be, Mr. Speaker, do you know that these caretakers working in these nonprofits, that they cannot touch the children? They cannot hold the children. They cannot comfort a crying toddler. They are told not to touch these children.

Do you realize that we are in one of the worst, or largest, refugee crises in the world. That is why we are receiving these people. It is going up 67 percent all over the world because people are fleeing devastation and crises in their countries. That is what is happening in Honduras, with the largest number of murders in the world. El Salvador. Guatemala has a million people displaced.

Yet, our government would suggest that they cannot seek asylum for domestic violence or gangs or fleeing a place that has volcano ash that has displaced a million people in a small country? Where is our mercy?

That is why we are on the floor today. We are on the floor today because of, as I indicated, the horrible, horrific impact on children.

“Reuniting and Detaining Migrant Families Pose New Mental Health Risks,” says *The New York Times*.

I want to just add these points to your discussion that we have faced.

Some of these children, Mr. Speaker, are in foster care. We know that there are American children in foster care. We know that there are families who are trying to get back on their feet. They want their children. There is a love for those children. But they have had to be moved out.

The worst thing—I have had these calls to my office—is a mother’s parental rights to be extinguished unfairly when she was trying to get herself together, maybe economically, maybe trying to get off drugs. We feel the pain of that mother, that American mother.

How would you like to be a Guatemalan mother—this happened in 2012—who was arrested on immigration charges and lost custody of her son, who was then adopted by a Missouri couple over her objection. The judge who initially terminated the mother’s parental rights found that, should she be deported, the chance that she might try to return to get her child would render her an unfit parent.

I feel like I am in a nightmare. Your child is snatched away from you at the border. They go into foster care. Some good-intending people—I don’t want to condemn the adoptive parents, good-intending people.

I don’t know who gave them the authority that this was an available

child. These children are in foster care around the Nation. They are everywhere. We don’t know which way they are, to be honest with you.

They get in foster care and some—maybe I’ll say—well-intentioned foster care notifies someone and said: “We have a child for you to adopt.” And your rights are quashed.

I am feeling pain right now. I can’t even imagine it: I have fallen upon hard times. My State children’s protective services takes my child. I make a commitment to get my life back together, and my child is lost to me forever.

This is an amazing scenario that we are in. I want to read this last thing and then speak very quickly about our family values.

This is from an immigrant mother: My child was snatched from me and separated from me one day after I was arrested.

Again, I want to end the arrests, the zero tolerance. They are presenting themselves for asylum. They should have the right to go through the legal process. Then they should have the right to counsel, due process. And they should have the right to be able to be released.

Now, there will be a great deal of ire and humor for some on this point. That is because they don’t understand. We had a case management program that was 90-plus percent positive on the return of those individuals, those families, for their court date. This administration defunded it.

It was a case management program. They followed those families, put them on the electronic bracelet, and they returned. They did not escape. They did not remain in the United States without coming to court and getting a determination.

So this mother was separated. This is a court case, thank goodness, that was filed on June 22: “I have been able to speak to my child only three times and only for approximately 5 minutes each time since we were separated. My son isn’t able to give me much information about his circumstances because he is too young and too upset to understand what is happening.”

She doesn’t know where he is. He doesn’t know where she is.

“Every time we talk, he only wants to know when he will see me again, so it is hard for him to focus on anything else.”

Just like I said, we are diminishing his capacity. We are creating a situation of undermining his intellectual growth, his psychological growth, all of this.

“There have been a few times he said that he had a nosebleed. I told him to tell someone if he is feeling sick, but he is too scared to tell anyone.”

That is why you went into a room of toddlers and nobody was moving. Nobody was moving. No toddler was even moving.

“He says that he is scared to report any type of mistreatment or health

issue because the other children have told him that children who report things get sent to another place.”

I have legislation that I am introducing, and I hope my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats, will extend the temporary protected status for Salvadorans, Hondurans, and, as well, Guatemalans. We want to give them TPS on the basis of the volcano.

□ 2100

Why? Because this administration has ended it. It will end in 2019. These people are fleeing violence, and you will be sending those here who are working, contributing, and paying taxes—before we can try to regularize or find a way for them to access status—you will be sending them back to murderous countries in the largest crisis of refugee movement in the history of our time. You will be sending them back. Where is our mercy?

Then you want to add to that the fact that we have an administration and a Congress that is making changes to school free lunches. These are for our children already here.

Making eligibility proposed cuts to Supplemental Security Income, SSI, many children, that is their lifeline. If something happens to their parent, they have SSI.

The refusal to adopt comprehensive criminal justice reform, I am a steadfast supporter of good law enforcement. They are part of the legal and law and order structure, but they are also part of the human rights and civil rights structure of this Nation. It is important that we have the collegiality, the comity, the communications, and the friendship, actually, between police and community.

It is difficult when there are mothers who are African Americans who believe that their Black boys are more apt to be shot by law enforcement, as a young man was just shot a few days ago in Pennsylvania. This is not a condemnation of law enforcement. It is to work to make the system better and to save lives.

So we are interested in criminal justice reform. But, of course, that is not moving in the direction we would like. I would like it to be moving in a non-partisan manner to save lives.

The GOP chose to cut \$150 billion over a decade from various safety net programs: Medicare; cash assistance programs, like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; again, as I said, SSI; and healthcare.

Republicans are suing the government to eliminate the preexisting condition requirement for insurance carriers. I am almost speechless. I cannot believe that. I was here for the Affordable Care Act. We laid ourselves on the line to fight for all of those who came to us in hearings, pleading: I have asthma. I have acne. I am pregnant. I have diabetes. I have sickle cell. And I have not been able to get insurance.

Here we are taking away that lifeline that was a valuable asset to the healthcare of the American people.

The farm bill, cutting \$23 billion that resulted in 400,000 households losing SNAP—our children, here in the United States—the supplemental nutrition program, thousands of children losing reduced meals.

Do you know, right now, Mr. Speaker, out of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, my Houston parks department is serving three meals a day to children who would not eat but for this program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture—three meals a day to hungry children. There is hunger in America, but we are making it worse.

What about the \$1.9 trillion tax cut? Do you realize that I go around in my community and beyond and people ask me: “What happened with the tax cut?” They don’t have any impact from the tax cut. There is no increase in wages. Bonuses are not anything that anybody remembers because only a few people got them. This is the pay-more-for-less tax cut, massive tax cuts and a lot of money going to individuals who already have money. This is Robin Hood in reverse.

This bill is unprecedented and breathtaking in its audacity. It is making rich people richer. It is a scheme. And by taking insurance away from 24 million people, raising costs for the poor and middle class, these are questions of whether family values exist in this Nation.

As Judge Learned Hand observed: “If we are to keep our democracy, there must be one commandment: Thou shalt not ration justice.”

So I would ask that my colleagues join me, as I asked in the Women’s Caucus hearing just a few minutes ago, that we secure a count of every single child held in captivity. That means an immigrant child who was snatched away from their family or an unaccompanied child. There are thousands. Where are they?

I would also ask that Members be aware that these facilities are being brought into our districts with no notice to us as Members of Congress. These facilities are being paid for by Federal tax dollars, and the tax dollars of my constituents, in particular, in Houston, Texas. They have given no notice to local officials. We were not even aware that they were coming.

The site that is about to be seeking to be opened is in a concrete area. It is very difficult for any of us to see where these children would play and recreate. So we wonder: How we are going to treat children who are going to be thrown into these facilities with no access to what children need?

Then this ending of the temporary protected status, I ask my colleagues to join me on the legislation that I will be introducing for a 2-year extension, so that these individuals are not thrown into the devastation that will make them refugees, because they will be coming back, and they are now contributing citizens.

What do you do with a country that has a million people displaced, like in

Guatemala? What do you do when we say that we are supposed to have values, and not only are we treating parents who are deeply pained—poorly, reprehensibly, and inhumane—by snatching their children, or not seeking to reunite those children who came unaccompanied? When I say that, obviously, not reunite them into a bad situation, but document—they are just being held in these institutions, 10,000 of them. They are just being held.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for being particularly gracious and yielding.

I want to have paid tribute in my words to little Roger in Brownsville, Texas, and little Leah in Brownsville, Texas, a 9-month-old and a 1-year-old. Even if they go to foster care, that is not their relative or their parent. Which of their parents will have their parental rights extinguished against their will and, unfortunately, have one of our courts say it is a right decision? Which of these people will be denied due process, because we have words from this administration that say: I want no lawyers or courts. I want Border Patrol and ICE?

Those are not judges and juries. That is not a component of due process. Law enforcement has its role, and then the judiciary has its role, and the rights of these individuals warrant that.

Mr. Speaker, I close with Ephesians 4:30-32: “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.”

And Galatians 5:22-23: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”

There could be no law against being humane to these children.

I am grateful to the Congressman for his leadership in the Congressional Black Caucus. We are not only talking about domestic issues here in the United States, but we have extended ourselves to talk about the pain that is transpiring in these mothers and fathers right now, at 9:10 p.m. eastern time, in these detention centers, without their children.

Mr. Speaker, over the last many weeks, the country has been horrified by the sights and sounds of children being separated from their parents, and Americans aghast at the realization that families are being torn apart in their name.

When I visited the border and the federal detention facilities that housed parents and children quarantined from one another, what I witnessed was horrific and was echoed in heartbreaking audio recordings released by the press revealing children crying, aching for their parents, as all face a fate uncertain, and one inconsistent with the American ideal.

I will never forget the little children I met during my visit to the border.

One baby, 9-month-old Roger, had been taken from his 19-year-old sister after she was prosecuted for crossing the border illegally.

Their mother is dead, now their family is gone.

This crisis is not just an immigration matter, nor is it just a foreign policy matter. It is a humanitarian crisis, executed by an administration that purports to be the champion of “family values” but whose actions do not actually value families.

But the President’s attempt at attacking children and their caretakers is not one that only pertains to asylum seekers at the borders.

For the entirety of his term, the President and his administration have relentlessly targeted communities of color and the programs they have previously benefitted from.

This includes changes to school free lunch program eligibility, proposed cuts to Supplemental Security Income, the refusal to adopt comprehensive criminal justice reforms, one thing after another.

Just last week, the GOP chose to cut \$150 billion over a decade from various safety net programs which include Medicare and cash assistance programs like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and Supplemental Security Income.

And the House farm bill that Republicans passed, and which Democrats were unanimously in opposition to, will result in some 400,000 households losing SNAP benefits.

As well, thousands of children would also risk losing their enrollment in free and reduced-price school meal programs because of this.

The President and GOP have promised for years now to create a plan to improve health insurance for everybody.

But that promise has not been kept.

By passing a nearly \$1.9 trillion tax law and repealing the Affordable Care Act’s individual mandate, Republicans will increase health care premiums on children and families.

According to the CBO, 4 million more people will be without health insurance by 2019. By 2027, 13 million more people will be uninsured. Families’ premiums will also increase by nearly 10 percent on average per year over the next decade.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) has significantly improved the availability, affordability, and quality of health care for tens of millions of Americans, including millions who previously had no health insurance at all.

Americans are rightly frightened by Republican attempts to repeal the ACA without having in place a superior new plan that maintains comparable coverages and comparable consumer choices and protections.

It is beyond dispute that the “Pay More For Less” plan proposed by House Republicans a few months ago fails this test miserably.

The Republican “Pay More For Less Act” is a massive tax cut for the wealthy, paid for on the backs of America’s most vulnerable, the poor and working class households.

This “Robin Hood in reverse” bill is unprecedented and breathtaking in its audacity—no bill has ever tried to give so much to the rich while taking so much from the poor and working class.

This Republican scheme gives gigantic tax cuts to the rich, and pays for it by taking insurance away from 24 million people and raising costs for the poor and middle class.

It is despicable and shameful that those elected to serve their people would rather see their pockets full than their constituents healthy and well.

An Administration that cared about “family values” would not be working so hard to repeal a healthcare program that has insured

nine out of ten Americans and saved families with genetic diseases and pre-existing conditions thousands of dollars in debt.

In 1968, African Americans were about 5.4 times as likely as whites to be in prison or jail; compared to today, African Americans are 6.4 times as likely as whites to be incarcerated, which is especially troubling given that whites are also much more likely to be incarcerated now than they were in 1968.

It is clear the inequalities and disparities that ignited hundreds of American cities in the 1960s still exist and have not been eliminated over the last half-century.

As Judge Learned Hand observed, “If we are to keep our democracy, there must be one commandment: thou shalt not ration justice.”

Reforming the criminal justice system so that it is fairer and delivers equal justice to all persons is one of the great moral imperatives of our time.

For reform to be truly meaningful, we must look at every stage at which our citizens interact with the system—from policing in our communities and the first encounter with law enforcement, to the charging and manner of attaining a conviction, from the sentence imposed to reentry and collateral consequences.

The need for meaningful prison and sentencing reform cannot be overstated because being the world’s leader in incarceration is neither morally nor fiscally sustainable for the United States, or the federal government, the nation’s largest jailer.

For individuals who have paid their debt, the reentry process is paved with tremendous, and often insurmountable, obstacles resulting in recidivism rates as high as 75 percent in some areas.

More must be done to ensure that the emphasis on incarceration is matched with an equal emphasis on successful reentry so that the approximately 630,000 individuals who reenter society each year are prepared to be successful in civilian life.

This is why I have also strongly supported and cosponsored legislation that will allow those with a criminal conviction to have a fair chance to compete for jobs with federal agencies and contractors.

I have also been working for many years to stop the over-criminalization of our young people.

Today, more and more young children are being arrested, incarcerated, and detained in lengthy out-of-home placements.

Harsh and lengthy penalties handed down to young offenders increase their risk of becoming physically abused, emotionally traumatized, and reduce their chance of being successfully reintegrated back into their communities.

I have introduced and supported legislation to help reform how youth and juveniles are treated to reduce contact and recidivism within the juvenile and criminal justice system; to help protect them from a system that turns them into lifelong offenders.

Just as we need to minimize the conviction of innocent people, we must address the unnecessary loss of life that can result from police and civilian interactions.

Effective law enforcement requires the confidence of the community that the law will be enforced impartially and equally.

That confidence has been eroded substantially in recent years by numerous instances of excessive use of lethal force.

There is no higher priority than improving the peacefulness of these interactions and rebuilding the trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve and protect.

At what point will Republicans step away from the tyrant of their party and make changes that will actually benefit the communities they represent, to stop fighting the disenfranchised and instead fight FOR the disenfranchised?

Now more than ever, the Trump Administration and the GOP have shown how inhumane they are when it comes to dealing with marginalized individuals.

This has become crystal clear in the span of two weeks when the public was finally made aware of the policies in place at our Southern borders.

While the President purported to end the practice of separating families with his Executive Order signed on Wednesday, thousands of children have been torn apart from their families and sent to various pockets of the country, often under cover of night, without any indication to their parents as to their whereabouts, or a plan to reunite them.

In my home state of Texas, a migrant who was separated from his family committed suicide while in federal detention.

A mother who, while breastfeeding her young child when both were in federal detention, had her child ripped away from her arms.

This cannot be how we make America great again; this is how we make America hateful again.

The Trump Administration is utterly failing in its basic duty to treat all persons with dignity and compassion, and is making a mockery of our national values and reputation as a champion of human rights.

We are a great country with a long and noble tradition of providing sanctuary to the persecuted and oppressed.

We are also a nation of families, from all shapes and sizes.

From the 16-year-old girl and her single mom who desperately depend on the benefits SNAP provides.

To the 19-year-old girl who must now become the sole guardian for her baby brother, in a country she prays will offer her peace and refuge (and return her brother to her).

It is in that spirit that we should act.

It is for them that we must all stand together in the face of injustice.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a copy of an Op-Ed entitled “We Must Cease the Inhumane Practice of Separating Families Apprehended on the Border” in The Hill newspaper.

WE MUST CEASE THE INHUMANE PRACTICE OF SEPARATING FAMILIES APPREHENDED ON THE BORDER

[From The Hill, June 12, 2018]

(BY REP. SHEILA JACKSON LEE (D-Texas), OPINION CONTRIBUTOR)

Every day hundreds of persons, ranging from infants and toddlers to adolescents and adults, flee violence, oppression, and economic desperation from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, seeking safe harbor in the United States. They are not criminals or terrorists; they are refugees seeking asylum. While they hope to receive asylum, none of us expected that they would be treated as criminals or that their children would be forcibly separated from them. I cannot think of a situation more devastating than having the government forcibly separate a parent

from their child to a place unknown, for a fate uncertain, absent any form of communication. But shamefully that is exactly what is happening under this administration.

Reports indicate that as many as 700 children have been taken from adults claiming to be their parents since October 2017, including more than 100 children under the age of 4. This startling fact comes after Acting Assistant Secretary Steven Wagner of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) testified before the Senate in April 2018 that during a review of more than 7,600 unaccompanied immigrant children who had recently arrived and been placed with a sponsor, officials at the agency were unable to determine the precise whereabouts of 1,475 children.

This is unconscionable and unacceptable.

This administration’s practice of separating children from their parents inexplicably turns accompanied children into unaccompanied children, with all of the attendant risks and dangers, including human trafficking. In 2014, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations reported that “over a period of 4 months, HHS allegedly placed a number of UACs in the hands of a ring of human traffickers who forced them to work on egg farms in and around Marion, Ohio. The minor victims were forced to work six or seven days a week, twelve hours per day. The traffickers repeatedly threatened the victims and their families with physical harm, and even death, if they did not work or surrender their entire paychecks.”

What is even more reprehensible is to this day, the Trump administration maintains that the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) is not legally responsible for children after they are released from ORR care. This line of thinking allows such gross negligence to take place in the first place. As the Founder and Chair of the Congressional Children’s Caucus and as a parent and grandparent, this is unacceptable.

Studies have documented that when young children are traumatically removed from their parents, their physical and mental health and well-being suffers. The effects of these traumatic experiences—especially in children who have already faced serious adversity are unlikely to be short-lived, and can likely last a lifetime. This is exacerbated when the child in custody speaks a language that is not English or Spanish. Although the government has a legal obligation to provide reasonable language services to unaccompanied minors, many children arriving to the U.S. speak indigenous languages and have little or no translation assistance provided by the U.S. government.

The Trump administration’s “zero-tolerance” policy does not make our nation safer or more secure, nor is it a solution to the problem of illegal immigration and refugees seeking asylum. It is, however, monstrously cruel, inhumane, and shameful and makes a mockery of America’s reputation as the most welcoming and generous nation on earth.

United Nations Office spokesperson Ravina Shamdasani recently condemned the Trump administration’s treatment of unaccompanied minors coming to the United States saying that “the use of immigration detention and family separation as a deterrent runs counter to human rights standards and principles”.

The last time this nation had policies that promoted the forcible separation of children from newly arrived persons was slavery: a dark chapter in this nation’s history that we should not revisit. Today, the parents of these thousands of children will not be deterred from finding ways to reunite with their children, even reentering the United States under the threat of imprisonment. It

would be unconscionable to prosecute parents under these circumstances. There must be strong and aggressive congressional oversight of this administration's immigration enforcement.

The Trump administration's policy should cease and desist immediately. National Policy regarding immigration legislation should not create greater fear for families already traumatized by intolerable conditions in their home countries. U.S. immigration policy should not deter refugees from seeking asylum within our borders. We should welcome mothers carrying their babies to a safe haven and assure the safety of their children.

I will soon be introducing legislation prohibiting the separation of children from their families absent a health or safety risk. The legislation will also provide that these children the right to be represented by counsel and that translation services be available at all legal proceedings at all stages.

As we have seen with the recent volcanic activity and earthquakes in Guatemala, the United States should be seeking ways to help its neighbors in the Southern Hemisphere. The Trump administration is utterly failing in its basic duty to treat all persons with dignity and compassion. Rather, it is making a mockery of our national values and reputation as a champion of human rights.

This crisis is not just an immigration matter, nor is it just a foreign policy matter. It is a humanitarian crisis, executed by an administration that purports to be the champion of 'family values' but whose actions do not actually value families.

We are a great country with a long and noble tradition of providing sanctuary to the persecuted and oppressed. And it is in that spirit that we should act. We can do it; after all, we are Americans.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, can you tell me how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FITZPATRICK). The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 1¼ minutes remaining.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask one quick question then.

Ms. JACKSON LEE has visited some of these locations. Can she describe—because I haven't been there, or maybe for people who haven't—exactly what is going on in those centers.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, it is a painful experience, as I indicated. Toddlers don't speak. They are standing still, as has been evidenced by Members who have gone. I saw two little babies. Leah, a little older, fussy, playing on the floor, didn't want anyone to touch her. And Roger wanted someone to touch him. Mothers in cages, other mothers in a detention center in Los Fresno, nine of them from Honduras, each and every one had a child taken, and they were crying.

But the crux of this is that they don't know where the child is, and the child does not know where they are. These centers are being put up. One that already exists in my community has been charged with abusing children: throwing them down on the floor and giving them medication that they do not want; in essence, giving them medication to keep them quiet.

I know there are good people—everyone wants to talk about good people in their own State—but these are inhu-

mane conditions. The greatest pain that I can say that you would see is men and women who are on the verge of deportation, they don't know what is happening, but they don't have their children. They are going back without their children.

Then you also see these large warehouses with thousands of little kids from 10 to 17, but they have been there for a while. They are unaccompanied children, and we have no accounting of these children.

That is what we are seeing. That is, I think, a shame on this government, and we can do better. We have been a refuge for refugees. There is a way to orderly do this.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I want to end with that comment by the great gentlewoman from the State of Texas on Chairman RICHMOND's leadership of the Congressional Black Caucus. There is no better way to end than that comment.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans continue to profess that "family values" form the bedrock of their decision making. Yet, time and time again there is action being taken to the contrary. We have seen that the same "family values" that Republicans claim to have are not evident in the debates here on the floor, the legislation brought forth, and ultimately what is voted on in Congress.

Whether the topic is food nutrition for our children, Supplemental Security Income benefits for older Americans, or immigration policies, the average American family does not stand to benefit from many of the proposals considered by my Republican colleagues. Even when it comes down to the physical well-being of our citizens, Republicans have shown through their actions that they value profits more than lowering the cost of health care for millions of Americans. In fact, the recent corporate tax bill passed by the Republican party is have directly associated with a 15% spike in premiums at the expense of middle- and working-class Americans. The nonpartisan CBO also reported that another 3 million will be pushed off their coverage altogether.

I have even greater concerns as to how House Republicans are strengthening families while the GOP Farm Bill that passed last week will kick at least 2 million people off food stamps, and cut total food stamp benefits by more than \$23 billion. Meanwhile, Republicans refused to include limits on subsidies provided for crop insurance—one of the few federal programs without eligibility caps or payment limits. Moreover, Supplemental Security Income is truly a provider of last resort and is vital for those who depend on it, yet my colleagues continue to impose devastating cuts to a program that benefits our most vulnerable. On the immigration front, Republicans are unwilling to allow migrant families to remain together and are instead separating them at our southern border.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few examples of how what we do here impacts millions of families all across the country. I believe many of my colleagues will agree with me that strong families form the foundation of a strong

nation. Any decision on policy, whether economic or social, should be made to the overall benefit of the everyday American family. However, we must be extremely careful not to do so at the expense of millions of middle and lower class Americans who are already struggling to get by.

TAX REFORM BENEFITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) is recognized until 10 p.m. as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a number of my colleagues from Indiana and Ohio, the great Midwest, to celebrate the 6-month anniversary of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act being signed into law.

Our previous tax code was written more than 30 years ago and became broken, outdated, and overly complicated, and desperately needed to be reworked so Americans could receive much-needed relief. It was failing to support families with the resources they need in order to properly plan for their futures. Our tax code left those who were struggling to make ends meet behind.

But on December 22, 2017, that began to change when the President signed H.R. 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, into law. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act cut the individual tax rates for all individuals, allowing Americans to keep more of their hard-earned paychecks. It also slashed our corporate tax rate to ensure American businesses can remain competitive and compete on a global scale.

H.R. 1 also included provisions to support the most important engines of our economy: small businesses. By allowing businesses to fully write off the cost of new equipment in the first year, our updated and revamped tax code provides small businesses more money up front to quickly reinvest back into improving their operations, hiring new workers, and increasing pay and/or bonuses of current workers.

In 6 short months, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is already working for those who need it most, our country's hard-working middle class families and workers, allowing Americans across the country, and in Indiana, to keep more of their income.

For the typical family of four nationwide earning the median family income of \$73,000, with this new law, they will now receive a tax cut of \$2,059. In the Fifth District of Indiana—central Indiana, which I represent—the average