

In 1964, he and a nucleus of 35 families founded Stephen Wise Temple on a beautiful 18-acre mountain site situated between the city's two largest Jewish population centers: the West Side and San Fernando Valley.

□ 1015

It is a beautiful temple. When you are there for a service and hear the great singers and see the sunset out the windows, you know that you are in a very special place. This temple became one of the largest Jewish congregations in the entire world.

Uncle Shy, we miss you. We thank you, and we know that you have impacted tens of thousands of people so positively, and we will honor you, remember you for your legacy and your impact on generations to come.

RECOGNIZING OFELIA RUDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning in recognition of Ofelia Ruder, who will be celebrating her 90th birthday this May.

Ofelia Ruder is the executive director of the Cuban Hebrew Congregation, a religious organization in my congressional district that was dedicated to providing a home for Jews coming out of Cuba.

Like me and my family and so many others, Mr. Speaker, Ofelia Ruder was forced to flee Castro's brutal tyranny. In 1960, she arrived in the United States, this great land of opportunity, with her husband and two boys. Soon thereafter, sadly, she lost her husband to cancer and was faced with a challenge of raising her two small children by herself. They both eventually became dedicated civil servants working to improve our south Florida community.

Mr. Speaker, in the 50 years that Ofelia Ruder has served at the synagogue, she has touched the lives of so many and has been a beacon of hope for all those who know her. Her work has earned her many awards and recognitions for her contributions to our country, to the Cuban Hebrew Congregation, and to Israel. I am very thankful for Ofelia Ruder's service.

"Feliz cumpleaños," "happy birthday," Ofelia.

HONORING PALMETTO BAY NATIVE, MIKI EREZ

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Palmetto Bay resident Miki Erez, a constituent of my congressional district who recently competed in the 2018 Fitbit Miami Marathon and Half Marathon.

Miki was injured while serving in the Israeli Air Force during the 1973 Yom Kippur War, where he suffered multiple spinal injuries. Despite three spinal operations over an 18-month period, Miki never let his injuries slow him down.

Miki's experiences led him to create a revolutionary home training system

for wheelchair users called Wheelchair Fitness Solutions. This system, the first of its kind, was designed specifically for disabled individuals.

Miki also participates in a range of activities in south Florida, including wheelchair basketball and swimming, as well as contributing to the spinal cord injury community and veterans associations. Forty years later, his injuries have not prevented him from being an active and inspiring member of our south Florida community.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent people like Miki who inspire others each and every day.

Congratulations to Miki Erez.

PROVIDE TERMINALLY ILL PATIENTS WITH LIFESAVING TREATMENT

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to once again urge this House to put right-to-try legislation on the floor and to provide Americans with terminal illnesses potentially lifesaving treatment.

Matt Bellina, my constituent, a 31-year old Navy veteran, husband, father of three, and an ALS warrior who has been a partner in this fight, recently sent me the following message: "In ALS there is only one active phase III trial. The drug is NurOwn, and it looks incredibly promising, but I didn't meet the exclusion criteria, so I am unable to participate in this trial. It looks like the drug has a good shot of making it to market in quarter one of 2020. Unfortunately, there is a good chance that I will be dead by then."

"The right-to-try bill is the only viable option for me at this point. I am begging you and the rest of Congress to get this done. I want to be there to watch my three boys grow up."

Mr. Speaker, we must not delay this lifesaving legislation any longer. I urge House leadership to put this bill on the floor for a vote. Terminally ill patients across this country are depending on us.

RECOGNIZING OLYMPIANS FROM BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the exceptional athletes from Bucks County who will be representing our Nation in the 2018 Winter Olympics next month.

Jamie Greubel Poser, from Newtown, Pennsylvania, will represent the United States as a member of the bobsled team.

Ryan Gunderson, from Bensalem, Pennsylvania, will be joining the U.S. Olympic hockey team as a defender.

Brian O'Neill, from Yardley, Pennsylvania, will join the U.S. hockey team as a forward.

Jamie is a veteran of competition at this level, having won a bronze medal at both the 2017 World Championships—also held in South Korea—as well as the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics.

For Brian O'Neill, this will be his first experience as an Olympic competitor. A standout player at Germantown Academy and Yale University, Brian went on to play for the New Jersey Devils before eventually playing for the Kontinental Hockey League.

Ryan Gunderson, also a first-time Olympic competitor, led Holy Ghost Prep to its first Flyers Cup. He currently plays in the Swedish Hockey League.

Mr. Speaker, I wish Ryan, Jamie, and Brian great success. They will, no doubt, make Bucks County and our entire Nation proud.

DEFENSE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, as Members of Congress, we have an explicit constitutional responsibility to provide for the common defense. Yet some of my colleagues would rather use our military as a bargaining chip for political reasons.

For 3 days, our military was held hostage while the government shut down for an unrelated immigration issue. For 3 days, military families across the globe faced fear and uncertainty over whether they would be paid on time. Unfortunately, this is not the last time or the first time our military has been used as a political pawn. Year after year, defense spending is held hostage, causing our readiness to reach a dangerously low level.

In testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, Secretary Mattis stated: "No enemy in the field has done more to harm the readiness of our military than sequestration."

We are facing a host of threats from every direction; threats that jeopardize our safety, our freedom, and our way of life. North Korea is aggressively pursuing a nuclear arsenal that can target the United States and our allies. China's land reclamation has sparked international clashes. Russian opportunistic aggression is threatening our allies and could trigger a NATO alliance response. Violent extremists are threatening global stability as their evil ideology poisons minds and induces followers to kill innocent people. Iran continues to invoke instability by sponsoring terrorism around the globe.

We expect our military to be able to respond to each of these threats, yet years of budget cuts and continuing resolutions have degraded our military's capabilities and destroyed morale.

Here are the stunning and sobering facts:

Less than half of the Navy's aircraft can fly due to maintenance and spare parts delays.

Of the 58 Army combat brigade teams that our Nation depends on to deploy overseas to defend our freedoms, only five could be called upon to fight tonight.

Last year, two Navy destroyers were involved in collisions that tragically claimed the lives of 17 sailors. These ships will undergo repairs for years to come.

I saw this personally in September when I toured the USS *Fitzgerald* in a naval base in Japan. I stood in the room where seven sailors died when their ship collided with a commercial freighter, tearing a hole in the side of the ship and flooding their room where they were sleeping with water in less than 2 minutes, giving them too little time to escape. It was heart-wrenching to see, and it remains heartbreaking to think about the pain these families will endure for years to come.

Perhaps saddest of all is that these accidents were not due to an enemy attack. They were due to training lapses and poor leadership which was exacerbated by high demand for service, combined with a lack of funding for needed ships and a lack of training because of defense cuts.

Last year alone, 80 U.S. servicemembers were killed in readiness-related accidents, nearly four times the number that were killed in hostilities.

Our men and women in uniform deserve better. We owe it to them to provide them with all that they need as they stand ready to actively fight a resurgent Russia, an emergent China, an unstable North Korea, an unpredictable Iran, and widespread violent extremism.

We cannot expect our sons and daughters to volunteer for military service and thereby volunteer to be placed in harm's way without proper equipment and adequate training.

Mr. Speaker, we must end this deadly cycle of continuing resolutions. We must end sequestration and provide for the common defense. We must approve a long-term budget that provides desperately needed increases in funding for the military.

American military superiority is not a God-given right or a law of nature. It has been earned on the backs of a motivated volunteer force. It is our duty to ensure that force is well-equipped and well-trained. The current normal is unacceptable and irresponsible.

Mr. Speaker, I call on my colleagues to end this travesty and to stand with our military as they stand for freedom for us every day.

A DEVOLUTION IS TAKING PLACE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise and stand in the well of the Congress of the United States of America to address the question of the State of the Union.

What is the State of the Union?

Mr. Speaker, the State of the Union is one of devolution. We are devolving into the normalization of inequality; inequality in a way that allows us to pass a \$1.5 trillion giveaway that will

reward the rich for being rich and punish the poor for being poor.

We are devolving into hyperpartisan political events by the hijacking of a Supreme Court Justice when Justice Gorsuch was appointed to the Supreme Court.

We are evolving and devolving into the hijacking of justice itself because we now find that there are those who believe that there is a deep-state conspiracy within the Justice Department; that somehow there is this belief that the Justice Department should be assaulted and attacked; that it should be demeaned; that it should be discredited.

We are devolving into, Mr. Speaker, the normalization of disqualifying bigotry, as evidenced by some of the statements that have come from the Presidency; statements that would normalize language such as: there are some "fine people" among those who are bigots, racists, and persons perpetrating hate in Charlottesville, as evidenced by the notion that we can allow people to say ugly things about other countries and, in a sense, develop a race-based immigration policy.

Mr. Speaker, we are devolving into a society that recognizes a rising stock market as the acid test for everything when, in fact, it is only proof that some people are doing better while many others are not.

There is a devolution taking place, and I, Mr. Speaker, contend that there is a solution to this devolution. The solution is the impeachment of an unfit President.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

□ 1030

TONIGHT

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

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, tonight I will have the privilege of hearing the State of the Union Address that I have been waiting to hear since I first came to Congress 7 years ago.

Tonight our entire country will hear a confident message of undeniable good news for all Americans—not based on fantasy and hope, but on facts and undeniable success.

Tonight the President of the United States will come to the people's House and speak to a nation that is far better off today than we were just 1 year ago in every measurable way.

Now, this success did not come by accident. Over the past year, by working with a unified Congress, President Trump was able to begin implementing his agenda to Make America Great Again.

Let's revisit what he has done when it comes to accomplishments.

The signing of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act marked the first time our Tax Code was updated in over 31 years. It lowered tax rates for all taxpayers across the board, and it cut the corporate tax rate down from 35 percent to 21 percent which allows us to compete globally. It permanently repealed ObamaCare's individual mandate. It opened up ANWR for drilling and brand new energy exploration.

When it comes to deregulation, he signed 15 CRA bills into law in less than a year, imposed a groundbreaking rule on the Federal bureaucracy to kill two regulations for every new regulation written, and has rolled back more job-killing red tape than every President before him combined.

When it comes to the courts, by appointing conservatives like Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court and a historic number to the appellate courts, he is restoring constitutionalism and common sense to our judiciary system. These appointments will reverberate for generations to come.

Now, when it comes to the outcomes, the entire stock market is at an all-time high. Contrary to what some people will speak, this affects the pensions of all Americans. Female unemployment is at its lowest level since 2001. Black and Hispanic unemployment are at their lowest levels ever. For 13 different States, overall unemployment is at its lowest rate since we first began recording it.

New manufacturing orders are increasing at their fastest pace in 14 years. Quarterly GDP is exceeding expectations and is on track for a 3 percent annual growth rate for the first time in 13 years. Consumer confidence is at its highest level since 2000. Job market confidence is at its highest level ever, and because of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act alone, more than 3 million American workers—and counting—are receiving \$1,000 bonuses, or more, wage increases, and/or benefit increases. Now, in my own city that I live in, NexTier Bank gave over 250 of its associates a \$1,000 bonus. Those are hardly crumbs when it comes to hard-working American taxpayers.

Abroad, the Islamic State—once thought to be unstoppable—is now shattered. Military morale, recently at rock bottom, is now soaring. Our troops are currently receiving their largest pay raise in 8 years.

When it comes to liberty and conscience issues, we ended the war on religious liberty. We tore up the so-called HHS contraceptive mandate; no more nuns fighting for their survival in the Supreme Court; and we reinstated the Mexico City policy the first weekend in office.

When it comes to energy, we ended the war on coal, we stopped the EPA's so-called Clean Power Plan, we approved both the Keystone XL and Dakota pipelines, and we have plans in place to dramatically expand offshore drilling.