

stroke or other life-changing injuries. Often, it is a long road to recovery.

An active lifestyle can help lower blood pressure, boost levels of good cholesterol, improve blood flow, and more. Cardiovascular disease, including heart disease and stroke, remain the leading cause of death globally; but, by making healthy choices, including a balanced diet and regular exercise, individuals can lower their risk for cardiovascular disease by as much as 80 percent.

I hope that Heart Month 2019 inspires more Americans to take control of their cardiovascular health and to begin a healthy lifestyle journey.

CONGRATULATING THE PRESIDENT ON THE STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize President Trump's effort last night and to congratulate him on his State of the Union Address.

The President's message was indeed clear. America has unlimited potential; we just have to unlock it.

Under the 2 years of this administration, the economy has consistently added jobs at record rates while simultaneously growing wages.

According to a CBS poll last night, 76 percent of Americans approved of what they heard the President say. Even more telling, 72 percent said they approve of the President's ideas on immigration and our border. It shouldn't be a surprise, either, that most Americans agree we need increased border security and we need it now.

Since a physical barrier was constructed in San Diego, California, 23 years ago, illegal immigration has plummeted in that region by 92 percent. That is just one of many examples.

We have a limited window of time with our current 3-week agreement, and what with more caravan hordes amassing below our southern border, we need to take action.

NEED FOR COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ESPAILLAT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Madam Speaker, I am glad to see yet another member of our Congressional Hispanic Caucus presiding over the House this afternoon, as I had the distinct honor of doing yesterday.

Madam Speaker, I have the privilege of serving as the whip of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus during this, the 116th congressional session, which is

the most diverse in the history of this august body.

This Congress, we celebrate the largest class of Latino Members of Congress in the history of the United States of America.

We are proud of the diversity and the talent in our caucus. We boast about Members representing communities across our Nation, from as far as Guam to the Northern Mariana Islands; leaders from all walks of life—doctors, lawyers, labor organizers, teachers, clean-energy experts—leaders of all different Hispanic heritage, some born right here in the United States and others who came here with their families to pursue the American Dream from Mexico; from Puerto Rico; from Guatemala; from Cuba; some Portuguese; some Ecuadorian, as yourself, Madam Speaker; and, of course, from the Dominican Republic, as myself.

As the CHC's whip, I want to showcase this incredible diversity of talent, expertise, and culture. That is why we are organizing these monthly CHC special order hours. Each month, Members of our caucus will join me to discuss a set of issues affecting Hispanic communities across America.

The issue we are discussing tonight will come as no surprise to anyone: the need for comprehensive immigration reform.

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus has been working over the past few weeks to lay out our border immigration reform principles, and we have been working closely with House leadership as policies are put forward on this critical issue.

Tonight, you will hear from a number of colleagues in the CHC about why we believe we must fix our broken immigration system, but first, let me start with a brief history.

Let me start with the history of a young Guatemalan mom named Yeni Gonzalez. Madam Speaker, last night in this very Chamber, we heard from the President of the United States, and, once again, he painted immigrants as violent criminals, claiming that the only way to keep America safe is a useless, medieval wall along our southern border.

By all accounts, President Trump has made immigrants demons. He has demonized immigrants, especially undocumented immigrants, as a central theme of his presidency, and last night was, by no means, any exception.

As a former undocumented immigrant myself, I see it as my mission to counter the many lies coming from the White House pertaining to immigrants. One of the ways we can do that is to introduce the American people to immigrants and to tell them our compelling stories.

That is why I brought, as my guest, to the State of the Union this young Guatemalan mom, Yeni Gonzalez, one of the many people impacted by the Trump administration's hateful and heartless zero tolerance policy.

Yeni and her family, as I said earlier, are refugees from Guatemala. Yeni is

from a small agricultural town and grew fearful for her children's safety as violence continued to surge in her community and throughout Central America.

In the face of break-ins at her home and worried that violent gangs would try to recruit her 11-year-old son, Yeni did what any mom would do, what any reasonable mom would do; She chose to seek safety.

Yeni got herself and her children all the way through Mexico and up to Yuma, Arizona, where she was apprehended by Border Patrol.

She was not charged with a single crime. No one pressed any charges against her. Still, she was taken into custody and placed in an immigration detention facility where our own American government treated her in ways in which we condemn other governments across the world for treating others.

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The facility she was held in became known as the Icebox, and I want to tell the American people what that is, the Icebox. Because it is so brutal and so uncomfortably cold, many immigrants who were held there called it the Icebox.

According to Yeni, no one was given any food to eat for 2 straight days, not even her young children. A few days later, Yeni watched as her children were being released from detention, but she was forced to stay; and what is worse, no one would tell her where they were being sent to.

Imagine just for a moment, Madam Speaker, you fled your home, the only place you have ever known, because it is no longer safe to be there, with your children. You travel a long journey, nearly 1,000 miles, just to get your kids to a place that is safe. You arrive in this new place hoping to find some security, and what happens to you? You are locked up in a freezing cell called the Icebox, given no food to eat, and have your children sent off without you knowing where they really are. You left a violent place to give your children a better, safer life, and you have them taken away from you.

The horrors this woman was forced to suffer are beneath the values upon which this great Nation was founded. But despite the cruel policies of the current administration, the kindness and good will of the American people has not, for one moment, wavered.

Yeni was eventually released and able to touch base with a relative in North Carolina. She found out her children were sent to a facility in my own congressional district in Manhattan, in Harlem. And through the work and support of volunteers, complete strangers who never met her before, just trying to do the right things and right the wrongs of their government, Yeni was driven all the way across the country. It was a cross-country trip that she took to finally reunite with her children.

I was able to work with her attorneys and the foster care facility to finally

reunite Yeni and her children. It was a touching moment for everyone involved to see Yeni finally reunited with her family.

Those volunteers, they are the America that I have come to know and love. Those people who put their own needs aside to help a complete stranger whom they knew nothing about, only that she was in distress, represent the values that America stands for. As a father and as a former undocumented immigrant myself, I was proud to play even a small role in this incredible story.

You see, Madam Speaker, a woman seeking refuge for the safety of her children is not some violent criminal, as was portrayed here last night by the President of the United States. No matter what he said here last night, Yeni Gonzalez is not a violent criminal. And if you have ever seen a mother in distress for the safety of her children, you know that no wall, no matter how high, will stop her.

And now it is our duty to deal with the many immigration myths that were perpetrated on this floor last night as America watched.

Now, let me say to you that I want to begin a bit of immigration myth busting, and I hope that President Trump and his acolytes at FOX News are watching because they could use this important lesson.

We will start with my favorite, myth number one: immigrants are violent criminals—false. In fact, all immigrants, documented or undocumented, actually commit far less crime, lower rates of crime than any native-born Americans or any naturalized Americans like you and I, Madam Speaker.

As you can see, this chart, published by the Cato Institute, shows that undocumented criminals commit crimes at far less than half the rate of native-born U.S. citizens. Undocumented immigrants commit crimes at even lower rates.

Now, when you think about this, it makes perfect sense. So many immigrants come to the United States, in the first place, to flee strife in their own countries of origin. Why would anyone fleeing crime and violence just commit a crime in the new country that has harbored them?

I don't know of any immigrant, man or woman, who leaves their house to go to work seeking to get arrested, to then be deported. That is a myth, and it is irrational.

Myth number two: the number of undocumented immigrants is growing due to a porous southern border and people are flowing in—again, false.

Not only has the number of undocumented immigrants decreased over the past few years, but the way most undocumented immigrants arrive in the U.S. has completely changed from what it was just 15 years ago. The data shows that only half as many people arrive by crossing our border as those who legally enter the United States and overstay their visa, and the num-

ber of those crossing at the Mexican border continues to decrease.

Finally, myth number three: there is a crisis at our southern border—again, false.

As you can see right here in this chart, Madam Speaker, the data shows border crossings are at a historic low. Unlike what the President said here last night, unlike what he tweets on any given night, there is no crisis at the border. This has been fabricated. In fact, border crossings are at a historic low.

Only a third as many people were apprehended and turned away from the border in 2017 as there were in 2005. The only crisis at the border is the humanitarian crisis that the President, himself, has created.

So now that we have dispelled some of these myths, let's talk about what we need to do to actually fix our broken immigration system.

First and foremost, we must protect Dreamers. Dreamers are young people who came here at a very young age. They are doctors; they are homeowners and small business owners; they are police officers; they are members of our Armed Forces; they are teachers—and they deserve to stay here in our Nation.

Democrats have been talking about this for years, and President Obama did what he could in the face of Republican opposition to make sure that these young people have some stability and certainty. But President Trump cruelly chose to take that away, and the Federal courts had to step in and say: No, Mr. President, those young people deserve to stay here. Now he wants to use them as a bargaining chip, and we will not allow that to happen.

Next, we must protect recipients of temporary protected status, TPS. The countries TPS recipients came here from are still dealing with extraordinary crises, and we can't just send them back en masse. They deserve certainty, too.

Next, we have to address family separation and the need to improve family reunification. President Trump angrily refers to this as chain migration. We call it family unification, and we know that when a family is together, that family is stronger; and if that family is stronger, our Nation is stronger.

So we want to continue to work to ensure that families are kept together, but what he doesn't understand is that our immigration system has been made stronger by allowing individuals to have their families here with them once they are permanent residents.

If my colleagues on the other side of the aisle truly stand for family values, and family values has been touted by those folks on the other side of the aisle for decades, if they truly stand for family values, they should support the efforts to strengthen families and support family reunification policies.

Finally, any reforms we make must reduce the outrageous backlog in processing applications for legal status.

Over the past few years, we have seen waiting times grow and grow and grow.

Since 2014, the average processing time for cases has nearly doubled. In some cases, by the time someone comes up, they have aged out of their situation, and now they are no longer applicable, making them no longer eligible for permanent legal status.

This administration's backlog just adds more undocumented immigrants to our population and is the perfect example of how broken our system is.

Over the rest of this hour, some of my CHC colleagues will talk more about the specific issues we must address in comprehensive immigration reform. Many of us agree that, to do the right thing by the American people, we must start from the same set of facts and establish a shared set of values.

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

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

NEED FOR COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SABLAN. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend from the great State of New York and the great city of New York for inviting me to speak on the need for comprehensive immigration reform for our Nation as a whole and, specifically, about how the broken immigration system hurts people I represent in the Mariana Islands.

In 2013, the Senate passed a comprehensive immigration reform bill, with Republicans and Democrats voting together, that would have gone a long way to fixing immigration.

The bill gave people who came here illegally but are now contributing to the economic prosperity of all Americans a way to come out of the shadows, and it provided for substantial improvements in border security—just what the President says he wants.

The Republican-led House decided not to take the path the Senate had courageously shown us in 2013, but I hope that, in this 116th Congress, we can dust off that comprehensive immigration reform bill and breathe new life into it.

Because our immigration problems still need fixing, we have a solution, ready-made, that already passed the Senate with Republican and Democratic votes.

I worked with the Gang of Eight in the Senate who drafted that legislation. I was able to include a section that dealt with groups of people in the Mariana Islands who fell through the cracks when Congress extended U.S. immigration law to my islands in 2008.