

give me strength and guide me throughout fatherhood and in my career as an obstetrician.

She instilled in me the value of proper nutrition at an early age, which I was able to go on and explain in very commonsense terms to all my patients as an obstetrician. My mom emphasized the importance of a healthy breakfast and sitting down each night as a family for dinner, something my wife, Laina, and I prioritized as parents as well.

She taught me all these lessons while also working a full-time job as an office manager. Her dedication to her family and career didn't garner news headlines, but it made a significant impact and allowed me to grow up understanding the outcomes of hard work.

My wife, Laina, went to school to be a nurse at Butler County Community College and later worked in the neonatal intensive care unit, caring for premature babies. She made a huge impact on all those babies' lives, as well as their families and their development.

Now, as a mother of four and grandmother of two, I often tell people my wife has the most important job in America: raising our children.

I know there are millions of mothers around the globe who have and continue to provide the same energy, time, and dedication to their children, families, and communities. Too often, we don't take the time to share and celebrate these contributions, but we all know a woman who has made a significant impact on our lives.

As we celebrate Women's History Month, I challenge you to thank those women who have positively influenced your life, improved our communities, and contributed to the success of this great Nation.

RECOGNIZING LEADERSHIP OF DR. BOBBY MOSER

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize my friend and fellow western Kansas physician, Dr. Bobby Moser, for his leadership with the Kansas Heart and Stroke Collaborative, an initiative funded through CMS' Health Care Innovation Awards.

The effort started in 2014 with the University of Kansas Health System, Hays Medical Center, 10 critical-access hospitals, and the First Care Clinic to provide an innovative care delivery and payment model designed to improve heart health and stroke outcomes for rural Kansans.

When they first received this 3-year Federal grant, they were nothing shy of ambitious. In their proposal, they aimed to reduce healthcare costs by nearly \$14 million and reduce deaths from stroke and heart attack by 20 percent. The collaborative wanted to accomplish this using data in a meaningful way, enhancing bedside care, and building sustainable models for access and treatment.

They have indeed shown signs of good work, and they are expanding their efforts. This group has helped hospitals track and audit data to find ways to improve patient performance.

Dr. Moser recently reported that the clinical network of hospitals has improved medications and delivery time for getting clot-busting drugs to patients that literally save lives and prevent lifelong paralysis.

Since its inception, these physicians have grown to reach more counties and are able to help more patients. Now called Care Collaborative, they are exploring new payment systems for rural hospitals and focusing on expanding into new medical treatments, like palliative care.

With more than 50 critical-access hospitals in my district, the resources developed through this collaborative have been lifesaving and critical for our hospitals and, most importantly, rural patients.

ADVOCATING FOR FEDERAL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

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

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to advocate for the Federal nutrition programs that help our most vulnerable constituents and to highlight why these programs continue to need our unwavering protection and attention.

March 4 marked the beginning of National School Breakfast Week, which is designed to show parents, students, and school officials the benefits of fueling up for the day with a healthy school breakfast.

I am sure it comes as no surprise to many of you that learning improves when students are not hungry. It is awfully hard to concentrate when you don't have any fuel in your body.

Last week, I met with several anti-hunger organizations from my district, and they shared with me stories from the people they serve on how nutrition programs, food pantries, and school breakfast and lunch programs impact their lives.

Many of them wrote their thoughts on paper plates, and I would like to read a few of them to you.

Jay Keller from Jeremiah's Inn in Worcester said: "These food centers make a huge difference when it comes to preparing meals. Without them, I would not be able to make ends meet. Please keep them going. Many people may go hungry if they do not continue."

A parent from Catholic Charities in Worcester said: "SNAP and school lunches help my daughter and I eat. It helps us get by, and I work part-time. Very grateful for these programs."

Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, school breakfasts and lunches are the only opportunities a child has to receive a full meal. For example, a student from Memorial Elementary School in Winchendon said: "School lunch is important because it keeps me full until I go home." Another student from Pernet Family Health Services in

Worcester wrote: "If I don't eat, my head hurts."

While many nutrition program participants are children and persons with disabilities, their reach extends to veterans. A veteran from St. Anthony's Parish in Worcester wrote: "My food bank provides myself and fellow veterans with love and nutrients. Without you guys, it would be a long month. Thanks to our nuns who help us always."

When a family is worried about whether they can afford basic necessities, nutrition programs and the food security they provide goes a long way.

In 2018, a monthly average of 40.3 million people participated in the SNAP program. Despite the fact that this number has been steadily decreasing, the Trump administration has unveiled several baseless attacks on these nutrition programs.

On December 20, 2018, the Trump administration proposed a rule that will threaten the eligibility of SNAP participants who are considered able-bodied adults without dependents. In an effort to, ironically, "restore self-sufficiency through the dignity of work," their rule stigmatizes SNAP participants and limits a State's ability to waive 20-hour work requirements.

The able-bodied adult without dependents population is a complex group. Many of them are veterans returning from overseas and having a difficult time reintegrating into our community. Many of them are young adults who have aged out of the foster care system. Some are ex-felons who are products of mass incarceration. Some are workers who are not given 20 hours of work per week.

Mr. Speaker, 75 percent of SNAP participants do work, but often in jobs that are either unstable or don't pay enough to put food on the table. It is not that the able-bodied adult without dependents population is jobless by choice. Many are jobless because they lack privilege and are trying to get on their feet.

This proposed rule also specifically goes against the will of Congress by imposing restrictions that were specifically rejected for inclusion in the farm bill signed into law just last year.

As if that weren't enough, the Trump administration also announced its intention to propose changes to categorical eligibility. Categorical eligibility, or Cat-el, is criteria used to determine whether a family is automatically eligible for SNAP because they already qualify for certain other low-income programs. Cat-el is fine as it is because it eliminates redundancy and minimizes hurdles that low-income families must overcome just to keep up with their basic needs.

While the administration changes are forthcoming, I don't have much optimism about how they will turn out.

The current administration is trying to solve problems that don't exist, and they are creating problems that have clear solutions. That is why we must

continue to raise these issues to the forefront of our agenda.

There is no excuse. We have the resources. It is on all of us to prioritize basic hunger needs. Supporting school breakfast and lunch programs, and maintaining reasonable eligibility for nutrition assistance programs, are the least we can do to end hunger now.

We live in the richest country in the history of the world, and we have millions and millions of people who are hungry. We should all be ashamed of that.

Hunger and food insecurity are political conditions. We can solve these problems if we have the political will. I urge my colleagues to gather that political will.

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\$22 TRILLION DEBT AND DEBT CEILING REACHED

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

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, America recently blew through the \$22 trillion debt mark with no end in sight.

In January, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office warned Washington that America faces an unending stream of trillion-dollar-a-year deficits beginning in FY 2022 and culminating in a \$1.4 trillion deficit in FY 2028, the amount Congress spends each year on our discretionary budget that pays for the military, NASA, ATF, FBI, and almost every other Federal agency.

The cumulative effect of these deficits is a debt that explodes from \$22 trillion today to \$33 trillion in a decade.

As debt goes up, so does debt service. The CBO warns: "In CBO's projections, outlays for net interest increase from \$325 billion in 2018 to \$383 billion . . . in 2019, and more than double by 2029, to \$928 billion" a year, which is the rough equivalent of almost 50 NASA programs.

Compounding matters, this past weekend, on March 2, the Federal Government hit the debt ceiling, which means the Federal Government's operational costs are being paid for via extraordinary measures, such as borrowing from the Social Security and Medicare trust funds.

Washington's response to this financial firestorm is akin to that of Roman Emperor Nero, who fiddled as Rome burned.

Rather than be proactive and work to prevent a debilitating national insolvency and bankruptcy, Congress emulates an ostrich that buries its head in the sand and denies lurking danger.

In sum, America's sea of red ink and projected financial path is wholly and completely unsustainable.

America must learn from financially reckless nations like Greece and Venezuela, and from Puerto Rico, an American territory that defaulted on its \$70 billion debt.

Unfortunately, the vast majority of American voters are oblivious to America's lurking financial dangers, in large part because of minimal national media coverage.

American voters are too often seduced by debt-junkie politicians who promise free stuff to get elected, while knowing full well America can't pay for it. If American voters do not elect financially responsible officials to Washington, America will succumb to the same debilitating insolvency and bankruptcy that wreaks havoc in Greece and Puerto Rico, with one major difference; unlike Greece, which has been bailed out three times by the European community, and unlike Puerto Rico, which may yet be bailed out by American taxpayers, there is no one, no one who can or will bail out America.

Instead, America will be more like Venezuela, whose annual inflation rate now exceeds 2 million percent, where the International Monetary Fund reports there are: "Widespread shortages of essential goods, including food, exacting a tragic toll," where grocery stores have rows and rows of empty shelves and Venezuelans can't find food to feed their families.

Worse yet, Venezuela's bankruptcy has made it one of the most violent countries in the world, with a chilling 82 homicides per 100,000 population, roughly 20 times worse than America's homicide rate. Caracas, Venezuela's capital is the world's most violent city, with a war-zone-like 120 murders per 100,000 citizens.

Mr. Speaker, America must learn from the financially irresponsible mistakes of others. As the adage says, We can either learn from history, or we are doomed to repeat it.

American voters must wake up and stop being seduced by the wily ways of debt-junkie politicians who promise anything to get elected, who pretend to be Santa Claus, when, in fact, they are the Grinch that stole America's future.

Time is running out. The American people must start being good stewards of our Republic, and elect Washington officials who both understand the threat posed by defaults, and deficit, and debt, and have the backbone to fix it. America's future depends on it.

PROTECTING ATLANTIC COASTAL ECONOMIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. VAN DREW) for 5 minutes.

Mr. VAN DREW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because I am profoundly concerned with the possible permitting of seismic airgun blasting off the Atlantic Coast, from Jacksonville, Florida, to Cape May, New Jersey, to Portland, Maine. This is an extremely serious issue.

Late last year, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, also known as NOAA, issued five Incidental

Harassment Authorizations which advanced permit applications for seismic airgun blasting in the Atlantic Ocean. This action essentially sets the stage for the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to approve these permits at any day now.

Seismic airgun blasting is not only the first step toward offshore oil and gas exploration and development, but it is harmful to marine mammal life and to marine life in general, and it encroaches on vital military operations.

At a time when we are attempting to limit the dangers of climate change, such as extreme weather events like Superstorm Sandy, it is unthinkable to further harm the environment and endanger our coastal economy in South Jersey and along the coast, which is largely based on fishing and based on tourism.

Our public policy goal is to create a cleaner and healthier environment, an environment that we can pass on to our children and on to our grandchildren so that they may enjoy it.

I am proud that broad arrays of organizations in New Jersey have supported my legislation. These organizations include the Chambers of Commerce of Cape May County, Ocean City, Vineland, Greater Wildwood, Greater Atlantic City, the Garden State Seafood Association, the Recreational Fishing Alliance, the Jersey Shore Partnership, Clean Ocean Action, Surfers Environmental Alliance, the American Littoral Society, Oceana, and the New Jersey chapters of the Sierra Club, the League of Conservation Voters, Audubon Society, and Environment America.

Mr. Speaker, it was a pleasure to have worked with Congressman RUTHERFORD of Florida on H.R. 1149. I am also grateful that several of our elite colleagues joined us on important efforts, including JOE CUNNINGHAM of South Carolina, CHRIS SMITH of New Jersey, DONNA SHALALA of Florida, and BRIAN MAST of Florida, as well.

Our bipartisan bill, the Atlantic Coastal Economies Protection Act, would prevent the five seismic airgun blasting permits that are now under consideration from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management from being issued. It would stop them.

I urge my colleagues to protect our precious coastline and to protect the livelihoods of those that depend upon it by supporting H.R. 1149. It is a bipartisan bill. It is the Atlantic Coastal Economies Protection Act.

Mr. Speaker, I include three letters of support for the RECORD.

[From the Greater Atlantic City Chamber]
RESOLUTION OPPOSING BOEM 2019-2024 OUTER CONTINENTAL SHELF OIL AND GAS LEASING PROGRAM

Whereas, on January 8, 2018, the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) announced in the Federal Register notice the release of their Draft Proposed Program (DPP) for the 2019-2024 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program. BOEM is requesting public comment on the