

I want to make very clear, these actions are not about taking aid away from areas that are struggling with high unemployment. There are clear exceptions for those areas. Instead, this is about prompting more States and more citizens to experience the successes that have been experienced by Maine and by Arkansas.

We all know that every one of us does better, every single one of us does better, when we are pushed, when we are moved past our comfort level. Growth requires effort. That is true in athletics; that is true in academics; that is true in raising children; and that is true in all other areas of life as well. Denying millions of able-bodied SNAP recipients that push, that growth, also denies them a chance at a better future.

In States where work requirements have been reinstated, a clearer path out of poverty has reemerged. We have to do that elsewhere. We have to do that everywhere.

I close today, Mr. Speaker, by saying that work has dignity; work is opportunity; and work is an American value.

CELEBRATING VAISAKHI

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HARDER of California). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join the Sikh community in celebrating Vaisakhi.

On April 14, Sikhs around the world, including thousands and thousands in California's San Joaquin Valley, will celebrate the Vaisakhi festival. This week, we welcome members of the Congressional Sikh Caucus to the Hill to participate in those celebrations.

The festival marks the new year and the beginning of the spring season for the global Sikh community.

The date of the Vaisakhi festival has tremendous significance in Sikhism. The festival commemorates the year 1699, when Sikhism emerged as a collective faith in what is now modern-day India.

It also celebrates both the birthday of the 10th Sikh guru, Guru Gobind Singh, and the foundation of the Khalsa Panth, the Sikh brotherhood.

Sikhs across the globe celebrate this day with enthusiasm and joy. I know they do in the rich San Joaquin Valley that is home to so many who are farmers, businesspeople, and community leaders. I have the honor to represent them and to celebrate with them.

This festival models what all cultures strive for: strong communities coming together to celebrate progress, renew its dedication to helping one another, and peace.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to please join me in celebrating this special tradition in the Sikh community.

WOMEN TRAILBLAZERS

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, every March, we come together to honor trailblazing women who have come be-

fore us, who have made a difference throughout the history of our country and throughout the world, and those who continue to pave the way for the next generation, those who have broken the glass ceiling, and those who are role models.

□ 1030

The unsung heroines of these courageous pioneering women continue to always make a difference.

The role model for me, and one who I must say made the incredible difference, was our mother, Lena Cordoza Costa, a daughter of immigrants, born before the Depression, raised during it, having to quit school as a freshman in high school to help raise her seven siblings because her father had been injured in an agricultural accident.

She went on with our father to be—as Tom Brokaw noted—perhaps America's greatest generation, striving with the values of hard work, of teaching us to treat others as we would want to be treated ourselves, and values of common sense.

As a young boy, learning that, Jim, you know, the truth is the truth, and that you should always never forget those who are less fortunate.

After our father passed away, my mother in her mid-70s quietly decided to go back to school and to get her GED. She didn't need to. She was a successful business person; she was an artist, a voracious reader, and a competitive bridge player.

And when she got her GED, she told my sister and me. We said, Mom, why didn't you tell us?

She says, Well, I wasn't sure I would do well.

Our mother did—everything that she did, she did well, and continued to serve as a role model.

Later on, the high school in which she had to quit as a freshman, at a 100th anniversary of that high school, asked her to come—with myself—and they presented her her high school diploma.

She was so proud of that high school diploma. And today, it sits on my desk. And I show students that you can be whatever you want to be if you have the proper role model and encouragement.

It is women who are guiding our Nation towards a more equal future—like our mother—who make a difference.

Today, I am proud to be a Member of the most diverse Congress in the United States' history, with over 102 women in this body, women serving the people's House.

We honor their sacrifice, their brilliance, and the strength of their service for our Nation.

JOE BIDEN: DECADES OF BEING WRONG

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

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, former Vice President Joe Biden has been in the

news a lot lately, along with a predictable narrative from the Washington know-it-all chorus and their mainstream media partners that he has a distinguished record and reputation as an expert on foreign policy.

How very "Washington" it is to assume that with his long Washington resume, especially his chairmanship of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, that Joe Biden is a foreign policy genius.

Nice guy that he is, let's look at the facts.

Because America's national security depends on America's wise choice of our next President, I want to quote the great Charles Krauthammer, who more accurately described Mr. Biden's record back in 2012.

The Vice President over the last 30 years holds the American record for being wrong on the most issues in Foreign Affairs ever. And the list starts with the nuclear freeze in the early eighties against Thatcher and Reagan, which is one of the follies of the era. He supported it.

He was against aid to the Nicaraguan Contras, which in the end brought democracy and ended the Sandinista rule at the time.

He was against Reagan's expansion of the defense budget, which bankrupted the Soviet Union and led to the end of the Soviet Empire.

He was against Reagan on strategic defenses, which is the big advantage that we have now in missile defense.

And look at where he was on Iraq. He opposed the first Iraq war, the Gulf war that liberated Kuwait, that everyone agrees was a good thing.

He supported the second Iraq war, which he, not I, say was a terrible mistake. And then when the surge happened, he opposed the surge in Iraq which rescued a losing war and ended in our leaving with our heads held high and some promise of the future.

He seems to be the Herbert Hoover of American foreign policy. And for him to be the spokesman for the Obama Administration on these affairs, I think is quite ironic.

It is not just conservative commentators who can see through the illusion of Vice President Biden's foreign policy judgment.

Robert Gates, former CIA director and Defense Secretary for George W. Bush and Barack Obama, had this to say about Biden in his book, "Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War":

"I think he has been wrong on nearly every major foreign policy and national security issue over the past four decades."

I rarely, if ever, agree with Barack Obama, and I am glad to see our country is now back on the road to a strong foreign policy. But I will give President Obama credit for wisely disregarding Vice President Biden's counsel on, arguably, the greatest achievement of Obama's presidency: his authorization in 2011 of the raid by America's SEAL Teams that killed Osama Bin Laden.

As Vice President Biden, himself, recalled to a group of Democrats in 2016, President Obama asked for a final recommendation from his national security team, and he asked, Joe, what do you think?

His answer was, Mr. President, my suggestion is, don't go.

Many agree that President Obama picked Biden as his Vice President in 2008 to quell concerns about his youth and lack of experience in Foreign Affairs, but in retrospect, it has now become clear that the most useful role he played was for Mr. Obama to take whatever he recommended and advised and conclude that it was probably the wrong approach.

Mr. Biden now believes that he is the right man to lead our Nation as President. America will choose a President in 2020, and I hope that Republicans and Democrats will conclude, as our 44th President and countless others have, that the opposite might just be true.

HEALTHCARE FOR ALL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this moment to go down a very tough, and for many families, humiliating journey down memory lane.

Memories full of sick mothers and fathers, sick children, and maybe even those who lost their life because they could not get affordable healthcare.

Apparently, this administration doesn't understand; for those of us who were here before the Affordable Care Act, the years and years of work, the thousands of pages of testimony, the many different committees—even my committee, the Committee on the Judiciary—we heard the pain and cries of those who did not have health insurance.

Maybe he doesn't know—the administration—the story of the 8-year-old girl whose family actually took her to the office of the insurance company—she had leukemia—to beg for coverage. And they denied her, and she died.

Maybe they did not hear the story of the mother whose son had hepatitis because he had not been able to overcome his drug addiction, even though he was a lawyer, and his only basis of healthcare was the emergency room in a city hospital;

Or maybe the doctor who drove to another city hundreds of miles away to get his intern son, put him in the backseat of his car and drive him all the way back so that he could be inside the jurisdiction in which his healthcare covered.

Maybe the administration and the President do not know about junk insurance policies, that when you get to the hospital, as they look over you in the emergency room and say, There is no room at the inn for you because your insurance doesn't cover hospitalization.

Or the tap on the door of your hospital room while you are in the bed, and although you are still ill, you are evicted because your insurance has capped.

All of that was eliminated with the Affordable Care Act.

What a disaster for this administration to proudly and arrogantly stand up to take a stand to destroy the Affordable Care Act in my State, in Texas v. Azar, and how sad it is that State officials from the moment they got elected in my State, Republicans, every day have been fighting to destroy the Affordable Care Act.

And my own county health department is begging for relief; begging for the expanded Medicaid; begging to serve the many thousands upon thousands that are in need who are working poor, but my State refused to accept the expanded Medicaid. And now, with great hubris, pompousness, this Government—it is supposed to be for the people, of which we are—has decided to take a stand to destroy the Affordable Care Act.

Rather than do what we are attempting to do as Democrats and protecting preexisting conditions and to expand and improve on healthcare, we are looking to lower health insurance premiums, strengthen protections for people with pre-existing conditions, stop insurance companies from selling junk health insurance plans, and reverse the administration's healthcare, sabotaging needlessly driven-up premiums and uninsured rates and empower States to innovate and invest in enrolling more people.

Outreach. I have been engaged in outreach and education, and the families are excited when they are eligible for insurance.

All of the people that I mentioned, and some who died, had preexisting conditions. Over 50 percent of the American people—maybe upwards of 65 percent—have preexisting conditions.

In 2012, there were 45 million uninsured persons, but the Affordable Care Act was making its way so much so that we have reduced the amount of uninsured persons, as the numbers show in 2018, down to about 28 million, and we were making steady progress.

What kind of caring attitude do you have?

Where is your humanity, that you would take insurance away from sick children, families, and the elderly, and that you would allow their prescription drugs to shoot through the roof, which is what will happen when you destroy and implode the Affordable Care Act.

It is not an overnight success. 50 years America was trying to work on a system that would work, beyond the Medicare system, and Medicaid.

We are supporting—many of us—a way to provide healthcare for all, like Medicare for all. I am supporting this legislation, but what is happening in the administration is nothing but an implosion of a lifeline for the American people.

We need to stop that now.

CONGRATULATING WHEELING PARK HIGH SCHOOL SPEECH AND DEBATE TEAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Wheeling Park High School Speech and Debate Team, which has won the West Virginia State championship for 40 years in a row.

Think about that.

Their uninterrupted string of victories began when Jimmy Carter was President, and now has extended through the administrations of Presidents Reagan, Bush 41, Clinton, Bush 43, President Obama, and now President Trump.

Their winning streak is longer than most of my staff has been alive. Their 40-year record may very well be the longest in the country's history.

Their students are part of a dynasty. Some even have a personal family legacy because they are following the footsteps of their parents, who also won when they competed in the high school competition at Park.

Look, Generation Z suffers from a lot of negative stereotypes, but the team members on the Wheeling Park Speech and Debate Team are examples of a great new generation and what they can do.

These students are dedicated. They work year-round and compete in competitions to hone their skills. They are able to convey emotions and sway an audience while passionately arguing today's most pressing topics.

We couldn't be prouder of these students. There is no doubt in my mind, they have a bright future ahead of them, and that has everything to do with their work ethic and dedication.

I would also like to congratulate and thank their coaches, Bill Cornforth, Kayla Nelson, Isabella Droginske and Brigitte Mazure, as well as the team's founding coach, Fran Schoolcraft, who led them through their first 25 victories.

Congratulations on their first 40, and here's to the road to 41.

□ 1045

CONGRATULATING AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF CRITICAL-CARE NURSES

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses.

My wife, Mary, was a critical-care nurse for over 45 years and served as the past president of AACN. Her time as a critical-care nurse taught me how difficult it is to have a career in nursing.

It requires working long hours, weekends, and caring for people during the most challenging times of the patients' lives. And while sometimes nurses get to see happy endings, other times, they share in the emotions of families making very difficult decisions.

That is why it is important to honor the American Association of Critical-