

to turn into points for the Tigers, establishing more dominance in the game.

The Clemson offense scored an incredible 44 points over Alabama's 16; 31 of those points were unanswered, to the shock of many in the college football world, but not a shock to the Tiger nation. We know what this Dabo Swinney-coached team was capable of.

At the end of the night, Clemson's near-perfect game was too much for Alabama. The performance was truly remarkable to see, as the whole Nation stopped to watch the two top programs in college football duke it out and leave their hearts on the field.

The Clemson senior class is one to be remembered; four straight ACC championships, two national championships, and 55 wins over the last 4 years.

Madam Speaker, to say I am a proud alumnus and former walk-on Clemson football player would be an understatement.

Above all else, one of the things I am most impressed with is Coach Dabo Swinney's leadership and character. He is truly a bright light in the realm of college football. Like Dabo has said many times: "Let the light that shines in you be brighter than the light that shines on you."

Of course, Dabo cares about playing amazing football. He has proven this over and over again in a fantastic 10 years as the head coach. He is now one of two active college football coaches with a national championship under the belt, right along with Alabama's Nick Saban.

But I know Dabo cares about something more, something bigger and more important than football. He cares about the hearts and souls of his players. He cares about their character, their leadership skills, and their aspirations well after they leave the field.

He cares about the types of men these players will become as friends, brothers, sons, future husbands, and fathers. He invests in them to train them as both elite athletes and elite people.

There is only one reason for this type of compassion. He strives to mirror Jesus Christ's unconditional love for us every day as a leader, a coach, a husband, a father, and a friend. And as he said after the game: "Only God can do this." How true this is in all areas of our lives.

Coach Swinney never misses an opportunity to speak the truth on the platform God has given him to proclaim the amazing, Christlike love that is bestowed upon all of us. You can tell he always wants to be that type of example.

I believe this is what makes Clemson so special, a leader who prays with his staff and his players; a leader who shows Christlike love to everyone that he meets; a leader who prioritizes character over everything else; a leader who cares about you as a person, not just a football player. We can learn a lot from Dabo.

Thanks, Coach, for being the man that you are.

Hats off to Alabama who always has a storied and successful program. The competition on Monday night captured the entire Nation's attention through that battle between two amazing football programs. It was a great game, and Coach Nick Saban and his Alabama team are remarkable. This team was remarkable.

But, hey, in a college sporting event, somebody has got to lose, and I am glad my Clemson Tigers were able to win on Monday night.

Clemson's success wasn't built overnight. This was built by years of focus, work, and grind, paid for with blood, sweat, and tears on the field, in the weight room, in the film room, and everywhere in between. Nothing great ever comes easy.

So, Madam Speaker, as a former player, a proud Clemson graduate, a lifetime Tiger, I am filled with pride to see where this Clemson program is today, how it has elevated the university and the entire State.

People in this Chamber and on Capitol Hill, Members of Congress, Capitol Hill police, the staff, they may not know my name, but they know who the Clemson fan is amongst them.

Many of my Alabama colleagues, like Mo Brooks, were texting me during the game. I can't reveal what those texts said, but I appreciate the time.

Clemson is a special place with proud alumni all over the world. There is something in the hills where the Blue Ridge yawns its greatness, and the football team showed this greatness Monday night.

I am immensely proud of Coach Swinney, the players, and the administration, and I will always be all in.

Go Tigers, the college football national champions. Congratulations once again.

AMTRAK CLOSURE IN RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA

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

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I rise today because nearly 500 Amtrak workers in Riverside are being forced to uproot their lives or lose everything they worked so hard for, a good, stable union job that pays them well and gives them benefits.

This nightmare scenario is born out of a sudden decision by Amtrak to shutter its call center in Riverside in what amounts to a union-busting maneuver to outsource jobs and replace these employees with contractors for lower pay.

Today, I want the Amtrak CEO to hear, not from me, but from Theresa Kolaras, an Amtrak employee in Riverside, and U.S. Army veteran, who will be losing her job on January 18 if Amtrak moves forward with this call center closure. And here is what Theresa had to say:

Growing up, it was my dream to serve my country. That's why I joined the JROTC pro-

gram in high school. And after 9/11, I enlisted with the U.S. Army with hopes of making a difference and happy to have a career. My job wasn't glamorous. I was a Unit Support Specialist, MOS 92 Yankee. But I was proud to be serving during a difficult time for our country.

Unfortunately, just as my platoon was readying to deploy, I suffered successive fractures in my foot that wouldn't heal. I was honorably discharged due to the injury and, just like that, my dreams were cut short. At the time, nothing saddened me more than having to watch my friends deploy without me.

Saddled with my foot that wouldn't heal, I now had to figure out what to do with my life. Jobs were hard to find due to having to choose ones that kept me off my feet so much. I found many odd jobs here and there and, within a few years, I finally started a family and continued my education.

In 2014, I was ecstatic to find out I was hired with Amtrak, as I come from a railroad family, and was proud to continue that tradition. Being able to work at our call center in Riverside was a blessing for my family and me.

Amtrak's reputation for its passengers and its employees gave me hope for a brighter future. Living in California is nearly impossible, with its high cost of living, especially being a single mother of two boys.

I was able to take care of my kids on the great benefits and wages at Amtrak. My boys love the train and enjoy our many trips we were able to take.

Now, on November 14, I got a sudden awakening as I got notice that Amtrak would be closing our call center in Riverside.

Amtrak reassured us employees our jobs were secure. As months went by, Amtrak started closing stations, putting employees out of work, and many of us in Riverside started to worry about our jobs.

Now that feeling of worry is a reality, and we're left wondering why Amtrak has been so dishonest.

Amtrak sent out a letter to us stating that they are not laying us off, but we are able to go to its Philadelphia call center.

Now, I count myself among the great majority that just can't pick up on short notice and leave. I have small children and share custody, and I can't legally move my kids out of state.

I honestly have no idea where my children and I will go. We have a month to figure out where to live, as I can't pay rent without a job, along with this injury that I still deal with every day.

I am one of the many employees who are at a hardship, and a few days away from closing we still don't have any real answers or hope that we will at least have a severance package.

Amtrak has been quiet, and I am still in disbelief that this was once a company that was known for its employee and customer loyalty. Many of us loved our jobs because we were proud of the railroad, proud to wear the name, and proud to help our customers plan their trips.

Now, at work these last few days, I see people with despair in their faces and loss of hope in their eyes.

I still have hope that Amtrak will wake up and realize that the direction they are going is hurting its customers and its employees, which are their biggest fans. This decision is both ethically and morally wrong.

I would like to thank Theresa for allowing me to read her powerful statement to Amtrak's CEO.

As of today, 39 of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle, and I, as well as Senator FEINSTEIN and Senator HARRIS,

have joined the Amtrak workers in this fight. We will do everything we can do to fight this closure until the bitter end.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S IMMIGRATION LETTER TO CONGRESS

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

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, on January 4, 2019, President Trump sent Congress a letter about America's border crisis. That letter states, in part: "It is the sovereign right of every nation to establish an immigration program in its national interest, lawfully admitting those who have followed the rules, while denying entry to those who break the rules or fail to meet the requirements established in law.

"A nation that fails to control its borders cannot fulfill its most basic obligations to its citizens, physical safety, economic security, essential public services, and the uniform protection of our laws. . . . The southern border is a very dangerous place; in fact, Border Patrol agents routinely encounter some of the most dangerous criminals, cartels, and traffickers anywhere in the world.

"Effective border security must dramatically reduce the entry of illegal immigrants, criminals, and drugs; it must keep out terrorists, public safety threats, and those otherwise inadmissible under U.S. law; and it must ensure that those who do enter without legal permission can be promptly and safely returned home. . . . current funding levels, resources, and authorities are woefully inadequate to meet the scope of the problem. We are no longer in a status quo situation at the southern border, but in a crisis situation. Status quo funding is not enough.

"In fiscal year 2018, 17,000 adults at the border with existing criminal records were arrested by Customs and Border Protection and border agents.

"In FY 2017 and FY 2018, ICE officers arrested approximately 235,000 aliens on various criminal charges or convictions within the interior of the United States, including roughly 100,000 for assault, 30,000 for sex crimes, and 4,000 for homicides."

For emphasis, over the past 2 years, illegal aliens have averaged 50,000 physical assaults, 15,000 sex crimes, and 2,000 killings per year, all in America.

Returning to President Trump's letter: "300 Americans are killed every week from heroin, 90 percent of which floods across our southern border."

Stated differently, our porous southern border and illegal aliens contribute to the deaths of another 15,000 Americans per year from just one drug, heroin. According to the Centers for Disease Control, there are another 55,000 dead Americans from overdoses from other poisonous drugs, many of which, like heroin, steal across our porous southern border.

President Trump continues in his letter:

"Illegal immigration is not progressive. By every measure it is unfair, unjust, uncompassionate, and cruel. Many people are killed. It hurts both those who make the journey and so many communities bearing the cost in lives, safety, and dollars. . . . Absolutely critical to border security and national security is a wall or a physical barrier that prevents entry in the first place. Members of both parties—including then-Senators Obama and Clinton, current Senator SCHUMER, and many other Members of the House and Senate—all voted for a hard physical barrier. Walls work. That's why rich, powerful, and successful people build them around their homes. All Americans deserve the same protection. In Israel, it is 99 percent effective."

Madam Speaker, open borders advocates forced Washington to either shut down the government or do nothing, nothing to prevent the deaths of thousands of Americans each year that result from our porous southern border and illegal alien criminal activity. This is a bad choice.

To the contrary, we should both end the government shutdown and secure our borders by building a wall and changing our immigration laws to protect the lives of American men, women, and children.

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD President Trump's letter to Congress.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, January 4, 2019.

DEAR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS: Congratulations to Speaker Nancy Pelosi, and her entire team, on her election to be Speaker of the House. I look forward to working together on our shared priorities for the American People, including rebuilding our infrastructure, reforming unfair trade deals, and reducing the price of prescription drugs. Our recent bipartisan success on numerous legislative accomplishments such as Criminal Justice Reform, opioid legislation, and the Farm Bill, underscores the extraordinary achievements that are possible when we rise above party politics to advance the good of the Nation as a whole.

As we begin this new Congress, our first task should be to reopen the Government and to deliver on our highest duty as elected officials: the security of the Nation and its borders.

It is the sovereign right of every nation to establish an immigration program in its national interest—lawfully admitting those who have followed the rules, while denying entry to those who break the rules or fail to meet the requirements established in law.

A nation that fails to control its borders cannot fulfill its most basic obligations to its citizens—physical safety, economic security, essential public services, and the uniform protection of our laws.

I was grateful for the opportunity to meet with Congressional leadership at the White House this Wednesday to discuss the border security crisis, and the need for a government funding bill that secures the border and keeps Americans safe.

During the meeting, there was debate over the nature and extent of this crisis and its impact on Americans. It had been my hope that Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen would have the opportunity to de-

liver a presentation discussing the facts about the depth and severity of the humanitarian crisis and the security crisis that is now unfolding at the Southern Border.

However, some of those present did not want to hear the presentation at the time, and so I have instead decided to make the presentation available to all Members of Congress. I encourage you to review it carefully, to share it with your staff, and to discuss it with other lawmakers. In crafting a Homeland Security bill, it is essential that we make decisions based upon the facts on the ground—not ideology and rhetoric—and that we listen to the law enforcement personnel on the front lines. The Southern Border is a very dangerous place—in fact, Border Patrol agents routinely encounter some of the most dangerous criminals, cartels, and traffickers anywhere in the world.

Effective border security must dramatically reduce the entry of illegal immigrants, criminals, and drugs; it must keep out terrorists, public safety threats, and those otherwise inadmissible under U.S. law; and it must ensure that those who do enter without legal permission can be promptly and safely returned home.

As the enclosed presentation makes clear, current funding levels, resources, and authorities are woefully inadequate to meet the scope of the problem. We are no longer in a status quo situation at the Southern Border but in a crisis situation. Status quo funding is not enough.

In fiscal year (FY) 2018, 17,000 adults at the border with existing criminal records were arrested by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and border agents.

In FY2017 and FY2018, ICE officers arrested approximately 235,000 aliens on various criminal charges or convictions within the interior of the United States—including roughly 100,000 for assault, 30,000 for sex crimes, and 4,000 for homicides.

We are now averaging 60,000 illegal and inadmissible aliens a month on our Southern Border.

Last month alone, more than 20,000 minors were smuggled into the United States.

The immigration court backlog is nearly 800,000 cases.

There has been a 2,000 percent increase in asylum claims over the last five years, with the largest growth coming from Central America—while around 9 in 10 claims from Central American migrants are ultimately rejected by the immigration courts, the applicant has long since been released into the interior of the United States.

In FY2017, roughly 135,000 illegal and inadmissible family units arrived from Central America. Of those, less than 2 percent have been successfully removed from the country due to a shortage of resources and glaring loopholes in our federal laws.

So far in FY2019, we have seen a 280 percent increase in family units from FY2018.

300 Americans are killed every week from heroin—90 percent of which floods across our Southern Border.

Illegal immigration is a humanitarian crisis: 1 in 3 migrant women is sexually assaulted on the journey northward to the U.S. border; 50 illegal migrants a day are referred for emergency medical care; and CBP rescues 4,300 people a year who are in danger and distress.

Illegal immigration is NOT progressive—by every measure, it is unfair, unjust, uncompassionate, and cruel. Many people are killed. It hurts both those who make the journey and so many communities bearing the cost in lives, safety, and dollars.

Senator Chuck Schumer once said: "Illegal immigration is wrong, plain and simple. Until the American people are convinced that we will stop future flows of illegal immigration, we will make no progress on dealing with the millions of illegal immigrants