

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

who are here now, and on rationalizing our system of legal immigration. That's plain and simple and unavoidable."

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.

We must also close the legal gaps in America's defenses. Loopholes in federal law that prevent removals provide a magnet for illegal entry, and a lucrative business model for vicious coyotes, while overwhelming the U.S. immigration system. The worst loopholes incentivize the smuggling of minors. Under these legal loopholes, if an illegal minor, or those traveling with a minor, merely set foot on United States soil, they cannot be successfully returned home. This explains the profound increases in the arrival of minors travelling both alone and with adults on the dangerous journey to our border.

To protect these children from abuse, and stop this illegal flow, we must close these loopholes. This is an urgent humanitarian necessity. Children are terribly used by criminals and coyotes to gain access to our country—they are the biggest victims of all.

The most pressing legal changes are as follows:

Terminate the Flores Settlement Agreement—which is preventing families from being held together through removal; and

Amend the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA), to allow for the safe and humane return of illegally-smuggled minors back to their families in their home countries.

Americans have endured decades of broken promises on illegal immigration. Now, is the time for both parties to rise above the partisan discord, to set aside political convenience, and to put the national interest first. Now is the time—this is the moment—to finally secure the border and create the lawful and safe immigration system Americans, and those wanting to become Americans, deserve.

Sincerely,

DONALD J. TRUMP.

□ 1030

TRUMP'S GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. CLARKE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss the impact of Donald Trump's government shutdown.

Today marks the 19th day that the United States has been in a partial government shutdown. How did we get here?

Let's be clear: This government shutdown is not about a border wall.

Our country is in the midst of a government shutdown because a man who has fashioned himself after a banana republic dictator, a con man engaging in the proverbial bait and switch, has decided to pickpocket the American people for an immoral border wall policy that the American people do not support.

This billionaire bully is intentionally imposing pain, anguish, and anxiety on 800,000 Federal workers, including over 14,000 New Yorkers, holding them and their families hostage in order to extort billions of dollars from the American taxpayer to satisfy a broken promise to his supporters that Mexico would pay for his wall. Meanwhile, real lives are at stake and hang in the balance.

On Friday, our Federal workers will face a clear uncertainty without a paycheck. Families are struggling to pay for their basic needs, their mortgages and rent, groceries, life-sustaining medications, and more due to this cruel, vindictive, and senseless shutdown.

Due to this absurd, mean-spirited government shutdown, many hard-working Americans will not receive their tax refunds in a timely manner, because the Department of the Treasury and IRS are closed.

Due to this irrational government shutdown, many families that rely on SNAP will struggle to put food on their tables.

Due to this malicious government shutdown, Federal contractors and their employees may never recover from the loss of their investments in doing the business of service to our Nation, their employees facing an economic crisis that could lead to unemployment, all because Donald Trump is running for reelection and he has no regard for the very people that he swore to protect and defend.

Our national parks and monuments are consumed by trash.

Our Transportation Safety Administration is stretched, with personnel on the job unable to afford their meals or the cost of travel to our Nation's airports to report for duty.

This reckless shutdown has placed us all in harm's way by impeding the mission of the EPA, lacking the requisite personnel to complete critical activities that protect the public health and environment.

Due to this pointless government shutdown, thousands of hardworking Americans all over this country residing in government-funded or subsidized properties risk eviction from their homes.

On our first day in the 116th Congress, House Democrats immediately got to work by introducing and passing a complete funding package to reopen the government for the people. House Democrats passed legislation that honors our responsibility to keep Americans safe while securing our borders.

Let's be clear: Democrats want sensible border security. Democrats want commonsense immigration reform.

So why is the United States in a government shutdown?

We can all recall that, while on the campaign trail, the current occupant of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue promised the American people that a border wall is the solution for border security and that Mexico would pay for the wall.

However, the American people can see the immorality of this and did not like his policy of family separation at the border, and the Mexican President said, no, he would not pay for the wall.

Now, to feed his obsession to keep his ill-advised campaign promise, he is threatening to keep the government shut down for years.

Agent 45 is happy to keep hard-working Federal workers from being paid for years over an ineffective, immoral, and expensive border wall.

Trump's government shutdown keeps 420,000 Federal employees, including FBI agents, Customs and Border Protection agents, and Forest Service firefighters, working without pay.

Trump's government shutdown caused 400,000 Federal employees from the Department of Transportation, the Department of Commerce, and NASA to be furloughed, plunging their families into complete uncertainty.

Instead of funding a \$5 billion wall, let's talk about how we can invest in real priorities for the people.

With \$30.5 million, case management for immigrant families could expand to 25,000 families annually.

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

RECOGNIZING TREVOR LAWRENCE

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

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Madam Speaker, on any given morning, except for Sundays, the Chick-fil-A in my hometown of Cartersville, Georgia, is buzzing with activity. In the past few years, among its host of customers, a young man could often be found at a corner table, watching videos of high school football games on his laptop.

That young man, Trevor Lawrence, was the quarterback for the Cartersville High School football team who led the Purple Hurricanes to two State championships and, along the way, broke Georgia State high school records for passing yards and touchdowns.

Today, that young man, who often retreated to Chick-fil-A to prepare for Friday night football, has been catapulted from a hometown star to a national football phenomenon.

Monday night, the Nation witnessed this young man, who just a year ago was playing high school football at Weinman Stadium in Cartersville, Georgia, lead the Clemson Tigers to a national championship.

The strength of Trevor Lawrence isn't just his playing ability, although he is truly talented; neither is it his size, strength, or his athleticism. Trevor's strength is his faith and strong character, which has been shaped by his family and a community that still promotes the values of integrity, community service, patriotism, and good morals.