

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 (TVPRRA), 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.

Quick to give God the glory and praise to his teammates, Trevor's humility speaks louder than his long list of athletic accomplishments. In a recent interview, Trevor said: "Football is important to me, obviously, but it is not . . . the biggest thing in my life. I would say my faith is."

From billboards along Joe Frank Harris Parkway, to the marquis outside the Cartersville Chick-fil-A, our community is expressing pride in their hometown football star, not only for what he has accomplished, but more so for who he is.

On behalf of the people of Georgia's 11th Congressional District, I congratulate Trevor Lawrence on his exceptional performance in the NCAA National Championship game, and I commend his parents for instilling in him a strong set of values and the encouragement and motivation to work hard to achieve success.

I applaud the Cartersville High School coach, Joey King, for recognizing Trevor's potential and helping to develop this champion of the gridiron.

I also congratulate the Clemson Tigers and head coach Dabo Swinney on an exceptional season and a well-earned national championship.

STANDING IN SOLIDARITY WITH AMERICA'S TEACHERS

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

Mr. GALLEGO. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of millions of our Nation's teachers who fight for our children's future every single day.

Last year, tens of thousands of educators from Arizona helped lead the Nation, walking out of their classrooms to protest cuts to schools and funding. They told me about outdated textbooks, overcrowded classrooms, and school supplies so limited that kids were taking tests with crayons.

They succeeded in securing much-needed pay raises for teachers. But the Arizona Legislature refused to provide sufficient money for support staff, classroom supplies, and other resources they need to effectively do their jobs. So, today, Arizona teachers and I are wearing red, because the fight to ensure that every child receives a quality education is not over.

Our students deserve better. They deserve fully funded schools with state-of-the-art classrooms to ensure our kids have the skills they need to succeed in a quickly changing world. They deserve the challenges and opportunities that come from taking advanced placement classes that promote academic achievement and extracurricular activities to stimulate creativity and a passion for lifelong learning. They deserve teachers, aides, administrative staff, and bus drivers who are paid a fair and living wage.

Instead, the State continues to short-change our children by asking educators to do more with less.

Madam Speaker, I know firsthand the importance of properly funding the public school system. I am a product of it. I would not have the honor to stand here today and advocate for teachers on the floor of the House of Representatives if it wasn't for the help and advice and mentorship of one of my own high school teachers, Mr. Gustafson—or Mr. G, as I called him—of Evergreen Park Community High School. He is just one example of the many passionate, selfless educators who inspire students every day.

That is why I stand today, tomorrow, and every day in solidarity with America's teachers demanding more resources for educators and the young people that they have dedicated their lives to.

Our Nation's future depends on it.

RECOGNIZING THE RUBIN FAMILY

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a family and a school community in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, that is working to keep the legacy alive for a young person taken too soon.

In 1998, Jason Rubin, then a 13-year-old student at Cecelia Snyder Middle School in Bensalem, tragically succumbed to a bacterial infection. Jason was a popular kid who loved sports and played on the school's basketball team.

Shortly after Jason's passing, his parents, Richard and Gail, set up a memorial fund in his honor. The fund assists our community in various capacities, including through scholarships for Bensalem High School students.

This year, the family wanted to do something different and special. Realizing Cecelia Snyder's scoreboard was outdated, the Rubin family dedicated a new scoreboard in memory of Jason D. Rubin, a fitting tribute for their basketball-loving son. A dedication ceremony with the Rubin family present was held last week.

Madam Speaker, we applaud the service of the Rubin family and members of the Cecelia Snyder school and their community, and we are all so proud to see Jason memorialized in such a meaningful way.

HONORING GRACE GODSHALK

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and memory of a woman who lived a life defined by service, faith, and compassion.

Grace Godshalk passed away on December 15 at the age of 81. Born in Queens, New York, Grace moved to Bucks County in 1965, settling in Lower Makefield Township. Grace soon became a beloved member of our community and began devoting her time and her energy to local causes.

Later, in 1977, Grace became the first woman elected to the Lower Makefield Township Board of Supervisors. She served honorably for 30 years, retiring

in 2008, and, during her tenure, developed a reputation as a staunch supporter of open space initiatives, actively involved in the preservation of the Five Mile Woods Nature Preserve and the Patterson Farm.

Grace never lost her strength or her composure.

After her son, Bill, passed away in the terror attacks of 9/11, Grace played a pivotal role in the dedication of the Garden of Reflection to memorialize 9/11 victims.

Madam Speaker, our entire community sends our love to her daughter, Jane, and to her grandchildren. Grace is now reunited with her husband, James, and her legacy in our community will endure forever.

RECOGNIZING JAY SMITH

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a native of Bucks County, Pennsylvania, and a community that has rallied around him in support.

Jay Smith graduated from Central Bucks West and was diagnosed with ALS in 2014. This month, a jazz concert, dubbed "Jazz for Jay," will be held to help Jay and his family pay for medical expenses.

Jay is a writer and an inventor, a husband to Melissa, and a father to Loghan and Peyton. Despite his declining health, he currently serves on the board of directors of a foundation, Every 90 Minutes, which serves to promote research for a cure for ALS.

While he currently lives in Texas, his ties to Bucks County run deep, and our community is proud to support him in this fight.

Madam Speaker, here in Congress, we must all do our part to ensure that our medical research community has the resources needed to fight and find a cure for ALS.

I would also like to thank those participating in the Jazz for Jay ceremony and activities, and the Smith family for their advocacy.

□ 1045

SEAWALL CONSTRUCTION ON EAST SHORE OF STATEN ISLAND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ROSE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROSE of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to announce my introduction of a bill authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to grant an easement of Federal lands for the construction of a seawall on the east shore of Staten Island.

This is the first bill I am introducing, because, since Hurricane Sandy, which absolutely devastated my district, New York City, and the region as a whole, residents in my district have lived in fear of devastating flooding. They live in fear of another superstorm. They live in fear of heavy flooding. And they live in fear of the rising cost of flood insurance.

That fear is real for my constituents. But the question isn't whether the storm will hit again; it is when.