

Energy has been our past, and energy is our future. It is important the United States is already leading the world in reducing greenhouse emissions through innovation and technological development. If my colleagues across the aisle were interested in working with Republicans to address climate change, then they would not ignore the fact that the United States has already had the largest absolute decline of carbon emissions among all the countries since the year 2000.

We did not need an international agreement to do it. Forcing America to reenter the Paris Agreement is not the answer for climate concerns. It is re-starting a tried-and-failed approach which only leads to less jobs, a weaker economy, and a less safe America.

The answer to the climate debate is not a \$93 trillion socialist restructuring of our country. It is innovation, and it is supporting new technology like taking rare-earth minerals and distilled water from previously used coal ash. It is supporting carbon capture moving forward. It is recognizing that, in the dead of winter when the renewable energy grids fall short, we can rely on coal to get us through the next polar vortex.

America cannot afford to reenter the Paris Agreement. We cannot afford to lose jobs. We cannot afford to lose security. We cannot afford the security risks. We cannot afford to weaken our economy. And we cannot afford to say “no” to innovation.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, might I inquire how much time is remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I will now close.

Mr. Speaker, it has been fascinating serving on the House Natural Resources Committee, where we have talked about efforts to stop pipelines from being built under the auspices of this is protecting our environment.

Mr. Speaker, study after study has shown that, when you stop pipelines, it doesn't stop the utilization of oil and gas. What it does is it puts that on barges, on trains, and on trucks—less safe means of transportation. The safest thing you can do is put energy in a pipeline. If you care about the environment, that is what you should do.

Mr. Speaker, we had a hearing recently in the Natural Resources Committee where we had a career Department of the Interior official. We talked to him and asked him: What happens when you try and stop the supply of energy? Does that reduce the demand for oil and gas?

Do you know what the response was? This person has served in at least the Clinton administration, all of these different Republican and Democratic administrations. He said: No. As a matter of fact, we have researched this extensively. What it does is it causes us to import more energy.

Mr. Speaker, I remind you of some of the top nations we would import from:

Venezuela, Middle Eastern countries, and Nigeria. We are giving them billions of dollars.

To put it in perspective on how much this is, Mr. Speaker, in 2011, 58 percent of our Nation's trade deficit was attributable to our importing energy.

Mr. Speaker, I want to be clear. I am going to reiterate what my friend from Georgia said.

I have children. I care about the environment. I taught outdoor education classes for years, and I care about the environment.

□ 1545

I care about the environment. I know that facts can be pesky little things, but we have to introduce more science and data into these decisions to make sure that we are making informed, deliberate decisions that result in a better global environment, not simply coming in and squeezing the United States to the benefit of China where they end up releasing greater emissions into our global environment.

That is a flawed strategy. It is what this bill, H.R. 9, would do. I urge, once again, rejection of this flawed approach.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ISSUES OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, let me take a quick moment and sort of get adjusted here.

We are going to spend a couple of minutes walking through some things that I think are exciting, hopeful, and worth getting our heads around.

Every week, I try to come to this microphone when we are here to talk about what I believe makes the future really bright for all of us, everyone from my 3-year-old—or 3½-year-old, as she corrects me—little girl to someone who is moving into their retirement years.

Once again, what is the greatest fragility in our society? This is one that is hard for us to get our heads around or even talk about. It is our demographics.

Whether we like it or not, baby boomers are retiring, and we have 74 million baby boomers. The last baby boomer will hit 65 in about 8½ years.

In 8½ years, two workers, one retiree. In 8½ years, 50 percent of our spending from this body, less interest, will be to those 65 and up.

It is demographics. It is not Republican or Democrat. It is demographics.

At the same time, we have a substantial collapse, fall, in our birthrates. As you know, our birthrates now are well below the replacement rates.

What do you do as a society? What do you do as a government? What do we do as a body here that is making public policy to make the future bright?

We keep coming to the floor and talking about that we believe there are, functionally, five elements. It is the adoption of technology. It is the adoption of economic policies that maximize economic growth through tax policy that creates investment in new technology for productivity; immigration policy that maximizes new Americans having talents that help us grow the economy; regulatory policy that uses technology and information to regulate instead of bureaucratic filing in file cabinets, functionally; incentives to stay in the workforce and incentives to enter the workforce.

As we have seen recently, millennial females are moving into the workforce. We still have a problem with millennial males.

How about someone who is older? Can we do certain incentives in Social Security, Medicare, and other earned benefits to encourage staying in the workforce or even creating a second career? We are going to have to redesign a bit of those incentives that are in the current earned benefits.

Can you create some incentives on Social Security, saying, “If you will continue to work, we are going to do these things?” Because that labor force participation is so important.

We have worked through these. Now we try to come in and show what we see working in our society. Then, I want to talk a little bit about one of these things, and that is the adoption of technology.

This week, the majority, the Democrats, will have a resolution on the floor about the Paris climate accords. I want to walk a bit through how technology, pro-growth technology, is the solution. I am going to show you some of the really optimistic things happening out there.

Let's start swapping a couple of these boards. First, I apologize for the first slide. The scale is a little off, but it is basically to make a simple point.

I am blessed to be on the Ways and Means Committee. We had the debate in December 2017. Over here, I was hearing how the world was coming to an end, how revenues were going to collapse. It turns out that now we at least have a good, comparable dataset. What is the term? “*Ceteris paribus*,” where you can equal to equal.

In 2017, before there was tax reform, the first 6 months, and now we have the 2019 first 6 months. Guess what? Revenues are up, even though we are already in the tax reform environment.

I was waved off by some much more sensitive staffers. We had a list of quotes from the majority, things they said, their predictions, what their economists said. I am not going to read them.

But do understand, think about some of the crazy things we heard about what tax reform was going to do to the revenues of the country, what it was going to do to the economy, what it was going to do to employment, what it was going to do to labor force participation.

They were all wrong. It is working. Take a look at our economic growth. Take a look at unemployment.

If I had come to you a couple of years ago before tax reform and said our society is going to have more jobs than we have available workers, what would you have said?

But it is reality. It is happening. We are seeing data within what they call the U-6, the underlying parts of the unemployment statistics of our brothers and sisters who have handicaps, who have been long-term unemployed, who have other life difficulties, moving into the labor force.

There should be joy in this body and also joy for the fact that all the predictions were wrong, that revenues are—or “receipts” is the proper term. Receipts are up. These 6 months with tax reform compared to the 6 months where we didn't have tax reform, we are taking in more money.

Will we ever get an apology from all those who predicted doom and gloom? Of course not. But could we just have a little bit of joy that they were wrong, that the math is good, that good things are happening in this society?

We need to do more of it because, without the growth, there is no way we will keep our promises on Social Security and Medicare and so many other things. We must have economic growth.

This slide right here I am going to leave here for just a second, this slide here, 2017. We don't use, really, the 2018 fiscal year because the first 6 months had part of it within tax reform, without tax reform. But then the gray you see up here is the 2019 first 6 months. That is what that is.

I know I get teased a lot about the slides, but at some point, if you are talking about math—and substantially, for all of us who are Members here, we work in a math-free zone. It is a sin of both parties because we often try to make public policy by our feelings instead of by our facts.

When we do public policy by feelings, I will make the argument that we hurt people because we intended good stuff, but we just got our facts wrong. Could you imagine if we did more like this where we looked at the real math and the real facts?

This is a month-to-month comparison. It shows you some months it has been a little more, some months it has been a little less. But, overall, \$10 billion over 2017. The first 6 months, when you compare them, it is working. It is working.

When you start to look at the revenues that are coming in, in what we call FICA taxes—Social Security, unemployment, Medicare—good things are happening.

You saw it 10 days ago when the Social Security actuaries put out their report. You saw things like Social Security disability go from being incredibly fragile, within just a couple of years of running out of money, to gaining 20 years of actuarial life. Some of

that was public policy. Some of that is the fact that people are working.

You see other parts of the program gaining a year's worth of life. That is a big deal when you consider the types of numbers we are talking about. It is working. The growth is providing us, as a body, an opportunity to do positive things for our community, for our country, for our States. Instead, we just seem to banter around here, doing crazy.

Let's walk around a couple of other things. Do you remember the predictions? This was the long-term, freaky-smart economists, particularly on the left but even some of ours on the right, who were predicting before tax reform that the baseline economic growth on the horizon was about 1.9, 1.8. That is where we were going to grow. Also, the math that, over the 10 years, if you wanted to pay for tax reform, we only needed a 0.4 percent growth.

Well, guess what? If you look at this chart and realize, since tax reform, what has happened in the GDP expansion, we are blowing through those numbers.

Now, it is too early to ever make a prediction like, well, the additional productivity, the additional number of folks working, the less demand on social entitlements because there is work, the number of Americans who now have healthcare because they are working and all these good things that are happening in our society.

But the fact of the matter is, if you look at this chart and look at the growth in the size of our economy—and this is a big economy, so when it grows 3 percent, it is a tremendous amount of economic expansion—we are seeing numbers that, once again, these really smart economists were telling us we could not hit.

Where is the joy around here? Whether you are on the left or the right, if you care about people, if you claim you truly love and care about people, the fact is that so many of them have work now and their wages are going up, particularly for our brothers and sisters who are—sorry to use the geeky term—at the lowest quartiles.

Do you remember the discussions only a couple of years ago that, if someone hadn't finished high school, they were destined to spend their lives on the edge of poverty?

What have we seen in the last dozen months? That that is the quartile having the fastest movement in their wages.

There should be joy that something is breaking out, that something is happening out there when you see another 400,000 manufacturing jobs coming back to the United States.

Remember “manufacturing is dead”? Except it isn't. We did tax policy that encouraged investment in plants and equipment to raise productivity.

Why is that so important? When someone gets a wage increase, when you pay an American more money,

what is the classic economic formula? It is inflation plus an improvement in productivity. Wages go up according to inflation and productivity.

What happens when American businesses, particularly in the manufacturing side, across the country are buying new plants and equipment because of the incentives in tax reform? All of a sudden, we are starting to see it is working. Spiking of productivity is happening.

We have a labor shortage. Wages are going up. Shouldn't there be joy that the brothers and sisters out there who were being written off by the really smart economists just a couple of years ago are back and good things are happening?

To be a little bit gratuitous, I know these are hard to read, but if you just look at the trend lines on the employment chart and think about some of the other different quartiles, when we geek out on the Joint Economic Committee, and those of our brothers and sisters who are Hispanic or African American or females or other quartiles, where we try to break down and see what is happening in employment statistics, we are hitting numbers that we have never hit before in our society. Something is working.

□ 1600

How much happy talk have you heard around here? In many ways, is it just the nature of this institution is just the rage-based politics that we bathe in today? There are good things happening. We should be working on public policy to make more of this happen and more of this so this continues, so we are a society of opportunity.

So this one is just sort of looking at—I want to double-check myself. This one I put up just because it was a fascinating breakout, and this was actually more from last December and then looking at what is happening.

We had actually been having something called a labor force participation issue. It is sort of a geeky way of saying, for a society to grow, you often need two components.

You need capital stock. You need money that people can borrow to invest and to plant in equipment. Well, it turns out the predictions that were happening about tax reform, that capital stock was going to dry up, that everyone was going to go out and spend the money and this and that, it turns out savings, we have plenty of capital. Savings rates went up.

The second part was labor supply, and that one we have; we have a real issue. What do you do to encourage Americans who are not in the labor pool to enter it?

Then last December, we had this unusual thing. All of a sudden, the numbers within what we call millennials, millennial females started entering the labor force, and all of a sudden, we went over the 60—what? We had 62 or, I think, 62.3 percent labor force participation—I am doing it from memory—a

number that lots of those smart economists just a couple years ago told us we were not going to see again for another 30 years. It has happened.

Maybe it is time we as a body have an honest conversation that a lot of the economists who have been advising us are wrong, and the spirit of entrepreneurship, of capitalism, those things are actually working in our society and providing real benefits.

Look, as a guy coming to the microphone with lots of charts, but the math is the math. Even though we work in a math-free zone on occasion, there are really good numbers in this.

So I want to actually sort of touch on something else as we look at our pillars of the future of economic growth in our society.

You have heard discussions of the Green New Deal or environmental protection as almost a Malthusian concept that the economy must shrink to meet these numbers. We want to argue that is absolutely wrong.

The basic math set: Why has the United States done so phenomenally well in removing ACO₂, a man-made CO₂, from the environment? It is because of our migration to natural gas. We have gotten dramatically more clean, efficient in our energy production in the last decade, decade and a half because of natural gas.

Well, in that case we should produce more natural gas, right? It is working. But there are actually other disruptions of technology, and we are just going to throw a couple of them up just for the thought experiment, to understand.

If this were, once again, a couple years ago, the concept of pulling CO₂ out of the air was almost considered absurd—except for the fact it is happening. It is actually in Canada, but there is actually a facility that is going to be going online to almost, say, what you would call an industrial scale that will pull CO₂ out of the air incredibly efficiently.

It is a crazy concept, just crazy, except it works. The technology is out there.

How many of us, as we are debating meeting the Paris accord numbers, are saying here are actually things we can do to get us to the Paris accord commitments, which we are going to come really close. If we would adopt certain technologies, we get there.

I am going to ask you to reverse some of those slides so we actually talk about the nuclear power first. No, that is carbon capture. Yes.

Sorry. We were running late, so we ran up here with the boards.

This is just a quick thought experiment for folks to understand for clean power generation, and this is a couple years old. I think this slide is based on 2015 numbers.

Do you see the yellow side? That is all the solar that was new generation capacity in the entire country in 2015.

The other side, the multicolored over here, was the amount of absolutely

clean nuclear power generation that went off-line. So even though 2015 was a remarkable year of new, clean solar generation, we actually didn't really gain that much because clean nuclear power generation went off-line.

So this is the occasion of it is great to be joyful about one, but you need to make sure you have your math understanding what is going on.

Now, for us in Arizona, there is often this debate, the discussion of uranium. I don't want to geek out too much, but over the last 15 years or so, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and world energy markets on the nuclear side, there was high-grade uranium, almost weapons-grade, that was being stepped down to go into reactors. Most of that now has been used up.

So, actually, that slide. This is carbon capture. So what would happen to you if I came to you today and said it looks like our national labs have actually had a technology breakthrough that is stunning?

So, instead of us who are not too far from the Grand Canyon where we do the drilling to pull uranium out of the ground, which is always controversial because you worry about water supplies, but we need the uranium for all sorts of things in our society, what happens if there is never another land uranium mine again? Because we worked out the technology to pull uranium out of seawater. It has happened. It has happened.

Where is the joy around this place that technology is breaking through and providing us this sort of clean energy future in things that were just sort of academic fantasies just a few years ago and the technology is breaking through? This is wonderful. It is exciting, and there should be joy on all sides.

So let's actually go to this next one, and I am sorry for bouncing you back and forth.

Outside Houston is an experimental natural gas generation facility. It doesn't have a smokestack. It basically actually uses the CO₂ to spin the turbines. No smokestack. They capture every bit of the CO₂, and they are actually apparently going to go from, I think it is—forgive me if I got my math wrong—30 megawatts to 300. They are going to go to an industrial- or utility-grade scale.

But the fact of the matter is they are generating power without a smokestack, and they capture every bit of the CO₂ and can sell it, convert it into other products. We have the technology. It is up and running right now. They worked it out.

This should be joyful. If you want to actually have a bright powered future that provides the energy for the economy so the economy grows so we can keep our financial commitments but we want to protect the environment, we need to be talking about how we are going to bring more of this type of technology into our communities instead of sort of the Malthusian cra-

ziness of things that are in things like the Green New Deal, where we are going shut down this, shut down that, shut down this. There is a progrowth way to get there.

Those of us on the Ways and Means Committee even a year ago, Republicans and Democrats, we actually passed some more tax credit incentives for when you produce the CO₂, where do you put it? Well, you actually can get a little bit of credit if you put it in plastic or cement or put it in the curb that is being put into your neighborhood or actually put it into the ground to do recovery to bring up more hydrocarbons.

It is actually just really exciting, and the technology is working. We need to be talking about technology and its future and the disruption it is bringing and the bright, cleaner future environment it brings with it.

I brought this slide up because it is part of the thought experiment on this theme. Who here is concerned about plastic in the ocean? I mean, look, the Speaker is a good guy. He understands. I was a big scuba diver before I got this job. Now there is never time.

Ninety percent of the plastic in the ocean comes from 10 rivers, 8 of them in Southeast Asia, 2 in Africa. It is not the straw that you are going to not be allowed to use here in D.C. It is not the plastics in the United States. It is that 10 rivers bring 90 percent of the plastic in the ocean.

If we actually cared about plastic in the ocean, wouldn't we actually take our foreign aid, our environmental aid, our technology aid and say: "We know where the plastic in the ocean is coming from. Let's go help those 10 rivers, 8 of them in Asia, 2 in Africa. Let's help them get cleaner?"

That is Republican, Democrat, we want clean oceans. If you care about the plastic issue, doing crazy things like: "Well, I am going to actually affirm that I am a good person and I care by banning straws in my community even though it will have absolutely zero effect of making the oceans cleaner"—because, in the United States, our plastic substantially does not end up in the ocean. Let's stop the theater and do things that actually provide solutions.

This one just drives me insane because I care a lot about it. And it could be from the Foreign Affairs Committee to Natural Resources to Energy and Commerce, they should all say: "Hey, what do we do to help other countries not pump plastic into our oceans from those 10 rivers?" And if you did that, instantly, you just stopped 90 percent of the plastic waste going into the ocean.

That is a solution, but that is actually using—what is that crazy thing? Oh, yes—math to do public policy instead of feelings. But instead, around here, we get rewarded for doing theatrics.

Now, the next board we are going to put up is the great thought experiment, and this one actually is the ultimate disruption that I think may even happen in my lifetime, and I may lack some of the elegance or eloquence—excuse me—on how to describe it.

You all remember your high school or college botany biology class. You know, a plant cell from a couple million years ago, it has a certain issue of it wants to grow and it grabs an oxygen cell when it meant to grab a carbon molecule. Sorry. And then it spends lots of energy purging that one because “I don’t want the oxygen molecule; I want the carbon molecule to grow.”

Okay, I don’t mean to geek out, but it is a big deal. It is an inherent inefficiency in our plants that is a couple million years old.

It turns out, United States Government and a couple of university labs may have broken the code on the Holy Grail of plant biology, and with a tweak in the genetic code, a 40 percent improvement in growth.

Do the thought experiment with me. What happens tomorrow if, on the same piece of land you are growing soybeans or corn or cotton or grass in your yard, you have a 40 percent improvement in efficiency? How much less water are you using? How much

less fertilizer are you using? How much less fuel? How much less land?

It also means, mathematically, you also feed the world for the next couple hundred years.

World agriculture, if you wanted to do part of the thought experiment, world agriculture produces 2.2 times the amount of greenhouse gasses as every car on Earth. Think about that. So world agriculture, the math is you produce about 2.2 times more greenhouse gasses than every car on Earth. The adoption of this genetic change in our agriculture around the world would be as if you removed every single car off the face of the Earth. That is a disruption.

Now, it is going to also have implications on what agricultural land is worth. I mean, it will have a huge disruption across the world. But if you truly claim you care about the environment, and someone like me who does taxes and financial and economic growth as their specialty here in Congress reads articles like this and sees the disruption in the future for the environment, why isn’t this the discussion here?

If this is real, and we all know in seed stock, you can roll it out in just a few years. What would happen if in just a few years, it would be like you re-

moved every single car off the face of the Earth? That is what something like this equals.

We should be joyful here. We live in a time where technology is moving so fast it is presenting us solutions, and we need to stop the debates around this place that sound like we are all still in the 1990s.

The solutions are all around us, they are rolling out of our labs, they are rolling out of actually people’s garages. Smart people all around us and around the world are producing the solutions. We need to embrace and move those forward, or we can do what we are doing here so far this year, and that is engage in the political theater of rage and completely avoid the optimism of the solutions that are at our doorstep.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 4 o’clock and 16 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, May 1, 2019, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the first quarter of 2019, pursuant to Public Law 95–384, are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO GERMANY AND BELGIUM, EXPENDED BETWEEN FEB. 15 AND FEB. 19, 2019

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Nancy Pelosi	2/15	2/17	Germany		1,216.73		(3)				1,216.73
Hon. Eliot Engel	2/15	2/17	Germany		1,216.73		(3)				1,216.73
Hon. Adam Schiff	2/15	2/17	Germany		1,216.73		(3)				1,216.73
Hon. Gregory Meeks	2/15	2/17	Germany		1,216.73		(3)				1,216.73
Hon. Stephen Lynch	2/15	2/17	Germany		1,216.73		(3)				1,216.73
Hon. Jackie Speier	2/15	2/17	Germany		1,216.73		(3)				1,216.73
Hon. William Keating	2/15	2/17	Germany		1,216.73		(3)				1,216.73
Hon. Gerry Connolly	2/15	2/17	Germany		1,216.73		(3)				1,216.73
Hon. Filemon Vela	2/15	2/17	Germany		1,216.73		(3)				1,216.73
Brian Monahan	2/15	2/17	Germany		1,216.73		(3)				1,216.73
Paul Irving	2/15	2/17	Germany		1,216.73		(3)				1,216.73
Wyndee Parker	2/15	2/17	Germany		1,216.73		(3)				1,216.73
Kate Knudson Wolters	2/15	2/17	Germany		1,216.73		(3)				1,216.73
Emily Berret	2/15	2/17	Germany		1,216.73		(3)				1,216.73
Henry Connelly	2/15	2/17	Germany		1,216.73		(3)				1,216.73
Jason Steinbaum	2/15	2/17	Germany		1,216.73		(3)				1,216.73
Tim Bergreen	2/15	2/17	Germany		1,216.73		(3)				1,216.73
Daniel Silverberg	2/15	2/18	Germany		1,313.73		2,018.83				3,332.56
Hon. Nancy Pelosi	2/17	2/19	Belgium		792.95		(3)				792.95
Hon. Eliot Engel	2/17	2/19	Belgium		792.95		(3)				792.95
Hon. Adam Schiff	2/17	2/19	Belgium		792.95		(3)				792.95
Hon. Gregory Meeks	2/17	2/19	Belgium		792.95		(3)				792.95
Hon. Stephen Lynch	2/17	2/19	Belgium		792.95		(3)				792.95
Hon. Jackie Speier	2/17	2/19	Belgium		792.95		(3)				792.95
Hon. William Keating	2/17	2/19	Belgium		792.95		(3)				792.95
Hon. Katie Hill	2/17	2/19	Belgium		792.95		(3)				792.95
Dr. Brian Monahan	2/17	2/19	Belgium		792.95		(3)				792.95
Paul Irving	2/17	2/19	Belgium		792.95		(3)				792.95
Wyndee Parker	2/17	2/19	Belgium		792.95		(3)				792.95
Emily Berret	2/17	2/19	Belgium		792.95		(3)				792.95
Henry Connelly	2/17	2/19	Belgium		792.95		(3)				792.95
Jason Steinbaum	2/17	2/19	Belgium		792.95		(3)				792.95
Tim Bergreen	2/17	2/19	Belgium		792.95		(3)				792.95
Committee total					33,892.39		2,018.83				35,911.22

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
³ Military air transportation.