

Mr. Speaker, 45 years ago this summer, the Watergate scandal, which had preoccupied the nation for two years, culminated with the resignation of President Richard Nixon and touched off a period of activism and reform on Capitol Hill.

In the years that followed, Congress worked to ensure transparency and prevent the abuse of executive power—informed not only by the work of two special prosecutors, but also by the good investigative work of multiple House and Senate committees.

The Watergate investigations exposed an array of abuses of power by a craven President and his associates, including campaign finance violations, and the use of executive branch agencies to harass or undermine domestic political opponents. Consequently, an informed Congress enacted landmark legislation to curb such abuses and to close those loopholes.

In response to illegal corporate campaign contributions, Congress created the Federal Elections Commission, required disclosure, and placed limits on how much candidates could raise and spend. When Congress discovered that private information held by the IRS and other agencies had been used for political purposes, Congress passed the Privacy Act, restricting government use of Americans' private data.

The Watergate era bears more than a passing resemblance to the tumult of the past three years, and today, as in the 1970s, Congress has a responsibility to act to fortify our democracy and our institutions—in the present circumstance to counter pernicious foreign efforts to influence the U.S. political process. At the same time, and given the narrowness of the Special Counsel's mandate, it is also incumbent on Congress to continue to conduct rigorous oversight, without obstruction by the President, and pursue unexamined investigative threads to complete the fact finding work necessary to develop new laws and refine existing ones.

Even in redacted form, the Mueller report has illuminated serious gaps in laws intended to protect our nation's electoral and political process. The investigation, moreover, exposed weaknesses in the way our government tracks and responds to foreign influence efforts. Like other Committees, the House Intelligence Committee is undertaking a close review of the report to develop necessary legislative reforms to protect our nation moving forward. But, to fully assess the legislative implications and design laws that effectively counter the sophisticated threats we face, it is imperative that Congress—including our Committee—receive the full, unredacted report, as well as crucial underlying evidence.

The report also makes clear that the Special Counsel's mandate did not extend to broader foreign influence activities. The Intelligence Committee, therefore, is undertaking an investigation, and related oversight work, focused on efforts by Russia and other foreign actors to influence our political process before, during, and since the 2016 election. A core component is to understand how Russia and other foreign powers use financial levers to further their geopolitical goals, and whether, and to what extent, financial entanglements exist and may have been used to influence or compromise Americans, including President Trump, his family, and associates.

Working with the Financial Services Committee, the Intelligence Committee has re-

quested information from financial institutions—information that will be vital to fully identify the scope of this threat, the financial means and methods foreign adversaries use, and the counterintelligence vulnerabilities of U.S. officials and institutions. A comprehensive examination of this information is essential to understand the complete threat landscape and devise effective legislative changes, policy reforms, and appropriations priorities.

The Committee's ongoing investigation and oversight—alongside other committees' investigations—will inform a wide-range of legislation and appropriations decisions, including to:

Require financial transparency so that politicians can never again hide significant financial vulnerabilities from the American people; so that the American people are fully aware of any conflicts of interest that arise from financial entanglements of individuals responsible for our foreign policy; and so that foreign powers cannot use American corporations to secretly funnel donations or engage in money laundering;

Strengthen legal authorities and capabilities for our intelligence and law enforcement agencies to better track illicit financial flows, including through shell companies, real estate and other means; to better identify counterintelligence risks; and to expose interference by foreign actors;

Deter presidential abuses of power, by instituting constraints on the corrupt misuse of the presidency, such as legislation I've introduced to rein in the abuse of the pardon power;

Toughen foreign agent registration to prohibit tactics used by our adversaries' unofficial surrogates, close gaps in the Foreign Agents Registration Act, and ensure that law enforcement has the resources to investigate and prosecute bad actors;

Ensure that campaign finance laws prohibit a campaign from taking help from foreign actors and require reporting to law enforcement of nefarious outreach from foreign powers;

Regulate presidential transitions and inaugurations to prevent foreign powers from exercising undue influence, including by contributing criminal or other proceeds to inauguration committees, and by requiring that presidential transitions coordinate exchanges with foreign leaders through the Department of State;

Counter covert "active measures" campaigns by enhancing cybersecurity to combat hacking and taking steps to prevent social media companies from serving as vectors for foreign propaganda and disinformation; and

Reform the security clearances process to help prevent compromised individuals from receiving access to our nation's most sensitive secrets.

For nearly two hundred fifty years, the durability of our republic has rested on our capacity to adapt to changing times and circumstances—and to learn from our mistakes. In this effort, Congress has played the leading role and must do so here, as well. We are prepared to do the difficult work required, but we need all of the information we seek to ensure we get it right.

RECOGNIZING THE MISSION OF TUESDAY'S CHILDREN

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

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an organization that works with children who have had their lives forever impacted by terrorism or traumatic loss.

Whether it was a child who lost someone in 9/11 or a child who lost a parent serving in the military, Tuesday's Children has served over 20,000 children since 2001 through trauma and grief support, youth mentoring, mental health services, youth leadership development, and so much more.

Today is its annual Take Our Children to Work Day, a program that offers the opportunity for youth to see, up close and personal, what it is like to serve in Congress.

Spending the day with me today are Spencer Hawn and Christopher Goodwin. They will be joining me at meetings and seeing what it is like behind the scenes of Capitol Hill.

The work done by Tuesday's Children and other organizations in support of the children of our fallen is critical. As a Nation, we mourn the loss of lives lost to terrorists or traumatic events, but sometimes we forget the children of those who were tragically lost.

I salute Tuesday's Children and its mission to give back to our wonderful youth.

RECOGNIZING JACQUELINE AND VICTORIA SCHNEIDER

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize two outstanding citizens from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, who are making our community extremely proud.

Jacqueline and Victoria Schneider, twin sisters from Holland, Pennsylvania, will be graduating from Neumann University in Delaware County this weekend.

Throughout their time in college, Jacqueline and Victoria have been defined by their drive, their dedication, and their work ethic. Both women are standout students and athletes, competing on the Neumann Knights softball team.

Notably, Jacqueline and Victoria are dual valedictorians for the Neumann University class of 2019. This is the first time in the 54-year history of the school that two students will be receiving the valedictorian medal, and both will have the opportunity to address their peers at graduation.

I congratulate Jacqueline, who is pursuing a career in law enforcement, and Victoria, who is pursuing a career in education, on this outstanding achievement.

I would also like to recognize their parents, Gerry and Karen Schneider, for raising such amazing children and future leaders of our community.

RECOGNIZING EDUCATOR JOSH ISAACSOHN

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, this week is Teacher Appreciation

Week, and I rise to recognize an educator in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, who is teaching his students the value of good citizenship.

Josh Isaacsohn, a fifth grade teacher at the Gayman Elementary School in Doylestown, was recently recognized by the Central Bucks school board for his work in the classroom.

For the past 3 years, during each month of the school year, Josh has sent notes and drawings from his students to parents of members of our military who, in turn, would add them to care packages.

Mr. Speaker, the men and women in our military deserve our full support and gratitude, and I thank Josh for teaching our community's kids about respecting and honoring our true American heroes.

I would also like to thank Dr. John Kopicki, superintendent of the Central Bucks School District, and Glenn Schloeffel, president of the Bucks County school board, for all of their work as well. We thank them for their leadership in our community.

RECOGNIZING ARTISTS OF YARDLEY

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a nonprofit organization in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, that was recently named Pennsbury School District's 2018-2019 Nonprofit Partner of the Year.

Artists of Yardley, founded in 2004, is an organization dedicated to enhancing creativity in our community through immersion in the arts.

Located at the Janney House on Paterson Farm in Yardley, Artists of Yardley boasts over 250 members and offers classes, workshops, and summer camps for young people in Bucks County. These opportunities, taught by professional art instructors, seek to amplify the artistic talents and education of our community's youth.

Notably, for the past 3 years, Artists of Yardley has organized an art competition for Pennsbury School District students at its headquarters.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud Artists of Yardley for all of its amazing work with our community and for inspiring Bucks County students to pursue their dreams.

I would also like to particularly thank Artists of Yardley's president, Alison Smith, and vice president, Jim Bongartz, for all of their work and service to our community.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 27 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro

tempore (Mr. Cox of California) at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Richard B. Kunst, St. James Catholic Church, Duluth, Minnesota, offered the following prayer:

Heavenly Father, we pray blessings upon the proceedings of this Chamber this day. May the Members of Congress and all government officials see their authority to govern as a sharing of Your authority, O Heavenly Lord.

And to this end, may the deliberations of today and always support the right of every citizen of the United States to have life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. And may our Nation's motto, "In God We Trust," be more than simple words on our currency but, rather, the true spirit in which our great Nation is governed.

We ask that You continue to be present to this great Nation and to answer our prayers by Your great love.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Virginia (Ms. WEXTON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. WEXTON led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING REVEREND RICHARD B. KUNST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. STAUBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my friend, Father Richard Kunst, an ordained Catholic priest for the Diocese of Duluth in northern Minnesota.

Before ordination, Father Kunst was a Senate staffer for United States Senator Rod Grams out of Minnesota. He earned his B.A. in political science from Saint Mary's University in Winona, Minnesota, and a master of divinity from Saint John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota.

Father Kunst has had several parish assignments in northeastern Minnesota, including parishes in Brainerd, Cromwell, Floodwood, Meadowlands, and three different assignments in Duluth. He was the vocations director for

the Duluth diocese for 12 years and has been the bishop's representative for the diocesan newspaper, The Northern Cross, since 2005. Father Kunst has also been the auditor of the diocesan tribunal since 2000.

As a hobby, Father Kunst collects artifacts associated with the history of the Vatican and the popes and has one of the largest private collections in the world.

I consider Father Kunst to be a great friend to my wife and me, and I am grateful that he can be here today to open this wonderful Chamber up with a prayer.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

AMERICANS DESERVE QUALITY HEALTHCARE INSURANCE THAT IS ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE

(Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, before the Affordable Care Act, Americans suffering with cancer, Alzheimer's, diabetes, and Parkinson's disease could be denied health insurance coverage due to a preexisting condition, a genetic predisposition millions of Americans are born into. But insurance companies can't do that anymore because it is against the law because of the Affordable Care Act.

The Trump administration wants to take away that protection and has asked a Texas Court of Appeals to fully repeal the Affordable Care Act and preexisting conditions protections.

This week, the House will vote to approve the Protecting Americans with Preexisting Conditions Act. In my western New York community alone, nearly 300,000 people need the protection for preexisting conditions that the Affordable Care Act provides.

Americans deserve quality healthcare insurance that is accessible and affordable.

RECOGNIZING CAPITOL WORSHIP

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Capitol Worship, which is a mission that is near and dear to my heart.

For the past 8 years, Pastor Dan Cummins and his wife, JoAnn Cummins, have ministered the Members of Congress, staff, and the Capitol Police. They share the love and Gospel of Jesus Christ through weekly prayer services and Bible studies.