

I thank my friend, the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER), for the time.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague from North Carolina, Representative ROUZER, to share.

And while he is coming, I just want to thank the gentleman from Texas for sharing that. That is just heart-breaking that 500,000 Texans were killed at the hands of illegal aliens. But we can fix that.

So I thank Representative ROUZER for being here. What does the gentleman have to say tonight about this?

Mr. ROUZER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentlewoman from Missouri for leading this Special Order and her great leadership in so many respects and, particularly, in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, there is absolutely no question about it. Our Nation is in the midst of a humanitarian and national security crisis at our southern border, one that is growing by the day, and its impact is far-reaching.

Unfortunately, many of these illegal aliens are very dangerous individuals with criminal records, members of gangs, and others coming for nefarious purposes who are exploiting the loopholes and current immigration laws. This has led to an increase in human trafficking and a lethal spike in drug trafficking that is striking rural and urban communities, alike, all across this great land.

During the past 2 years, ICE officers made 266,000 arrests of aliens with criminal records, including those charged or convicted of 100,000 assaults and nearly 30,000 sex crimes.

Data shows that 31 percent of women and nearly 17 percent of men are sexually assaulted en route to the border. The situation is so bad that nearly 70 percent of migrants are victims of some form of violence during their travel.

Now, let's talk about the drugs.

Heroin and fentanyl are hitting rural and urban America in epidemic proportions. Just this past year, there was a 73 percent increase of fentanyl and 22 percent increase in heroin brought across the southern border. In fact, approximately 90 percent of the heroin brought into this country is smuggled across.

According to the Center for Disease Control, in 2017 alone, more than 70,000 lives were lost due to drug overdoses. They published this just this past December 18, more than 70,000 lives.

The drugs coming in across the border are destroying lives, separating families, and robbing this country of great talent that is so badly needed. Almost every business owner I talked to tells me what a hard time they have trying to find workers because, in so many cases, they can't pass a drug test.

My home State of North Carolina also suffers greatly from the prevalence of human trafficking. In so many cases, this, too, starts at the southern border.

Here is the bottom line: Criminal organizations and others are utilizing illegal immigration as a way to make billions in profit and cause harm to countless victims in the process. A barrier in the right places makes a lot of common sense. The President is asking for a little more than 230-some square miles of steel barrier out of almost 2,000 miles of border. This shouldn't even be a debate. Give me a break.

Mr. Speaker, this is a crisis that requires bipartisan action. I applaud President Trump and his commitment to securing the border, and I am proud to stand with him until it is done.

I urge our Democratic colleagues to come to the table. This is a negotiation. This is a process. Come to the table and let's work it out, and let's do what is right for the American people.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the conversation that we have had tonight, sharing with the American people the facts and the stories of some people in our district about why this is so important.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

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

FINANCIAL CHALLENGES FAMILIES ARE EXPERIENCING BECAUSE OF THE GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. Porter) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to describe the enduring financial challenges that families are experiencing because of the President's government shutdown.

I know how terrifying it is when your livelihood is suddenly taken away. I grew up during the 1980s farm crisis and watched as my neighborhood bank closed. Everyone in my town felt a real sense of panic and of loss.

Farmers were being foreclosed on and losing farms that had been in their family for generations. There were sui-

cides and the kind of social pain and personal pain that comes with economic hardship. While the town eventually recovered, the people and the community were changed forever.

I understand how devastating a financial crisis can be, and I understand how one missed paycheck can spiral. I know this from my own childhood during the farm crisis and from the nearly two decades I have spent studying families on the brink of bankruptcy.

Federal workers are now questioning whether working for the Federal Government is a stable paycheck. They are wondering if their family, if their kids can count on this administration. Families are wondering how long they can afford to wait for the shutdown to end, and they are having hard discussions at the dinner table about whether to leave the Federal workforce in search for a new job.

Tomorrow, 800,000 Federal workers and their families will miss paychecks, plunging employees into uncertainty. About 42,000 of those Federal workers are in my home State of California. More than 5,000 of these unpaid workers live in my district, and many of them are hurting.

With each missed paycheck comes missed payments on bills and missed payments on loans. Families will be hit with late fees and interest, often in the double or even triple digits.

Despite having no paycheck, Federal workers still have urgent expenses—prescription drugs, gas, childcare, groceries—and those who are still required to report for work incur costs to get to and from their workplaces.

This past spring, the Federal Reserve found that 40 percent of Americans don't have the cash to pay for an unexpected \$400 expense without having to sell a belonging or borrowing money. Those families also don't have the cash to go without paychecks.

Families may feel forced to consider taking out a payday loan to get quick cash to meet their expenses. In the past 2 years, more than 10 percent of Americans have gone to a payday lender, even though the interest rates are incredibly high and the national average is almost 400 percent interest. In California, the average rate is 460 percent.

□ 1800

In Virginia, where even a larger percentage of Federal workers live, the average payday loan is over 600 percent.

For workers living paycheck to paycheck, the shutdown and its missed paychecks can easily spiral into bankruptcy. Even if we provide Federal workers with backpay, which we should, it will not make those hurt by this shutdown whole.

When the government reopens, it won't be able to help Federal workers who incur late fees or hits on credit reports during the shutdown. It won't pay interest on new loans taken out by Federal workers.

One of my constituents in California's 45th Congressional District, Aubrey, told me that her family has filed paperwork to borrow against their 401(k) retirement. Borrowing against that 401(k) will come with large tax penalties, but she is part of a single-income household living on a Federal Government wage. She and her wife and their kids rely on a steady paycheck, and they are understandably concerned about the impact that the shutdown will have on their family.

Another constituent in my district, Melinda, told me that she has been working for a government agency for over 30 years. She is debating taking out a loan. She is researching whether she can file for unemployment. She loves her job and wants to go to work but is prohibited from doing so. She just paid the tuition for one of her kids to go to college, and she does not have the means to live without a paycheck.

This shutdown is a disaster for Federal workers who aren't getting paid, and it is a disaster for working families who deserve to get the tax refunds they are owed.

Right now, families are denied tax refunds because of the government shutdown. Yesterday, my colleagues, Democrats, voted to reopen the Treasury Department, the IRS, and the Small Business Administration, and we were joined by several Republicans, but this administration won't even consider opening up the Treasury.

Now this administration has said the IRS will service tax refunds even with the government shutdown, but before this announcement, the IRS was operating with a barebones staff. Only one out of every eight employees was in that office, and that has made it so much harder for Americans to prepare their tax returns.

As we start filing for tax returns, American people need certainty from their government, not the chaos of a shutdown. And since this is the first year that the Republican tax law raised taxes for Orange County families, it is even more important that taxpayers get the refunds and the tax help that they deserve.

As a professor of bankruptcy law, I also know that many families who struggle with overwhelming debt, often from unexpected medical bills, wait until this time of year to file for bankruptcy. That is because they have to use their own tax refunds to pay their attorney or filing fees.

If the IRS does not get these families the refunds they are owed, they won't be able to get help in bankruptcy from their overwhelming debts or catch up on loan payments. And without the money to file for bankruptcy, families can lose parts of their paychecks to wage garnishment, squeezing families in this country even tighter.

It is past time that we reopen the government. This is day 20 of the shutdown. This administration is recklessly hurting Federal families and workers who are counting on basic government

services, including getting their own hard-earned money back from the IRS, and even backpay for these workers will not erase the harm of this shutdown.

Those families will still have \$30 late fees on credit card payments. They will still have to pay interest on their mortgages that could run into hundreds of dollars. If they are 2 weeks late in paying their credit card bills or mortgage payments, they can be hit with negative credit reporting, which can drop their credit scores, and those negative reports stay on their records for up to 7 years.

Simply reopening the government won't make these families whole, but it is a necessary start. That is why I am sending letters to the leading banks and credit card companies asking them to offer relief to families. These letters ask the banks and credit card companies to waive fees, to pause debt repayment timelines, to freeze eviction and foreclosure proceedings until 2 weeks after our Federal workers receive their next paycheck. They should also freeze the reporting of negative information to credit reporting agencies during this difficult time.

Many of our country's credit unions have already offered their customers such relief. For example, Orange County's Credit Union is providing furloughed workers 2 weeks of pay, up to \$5,000, at 0 percent interest for 60 days, and they are offering these furloughed workers 90-day waivers on payments for existing loans.

Another credit union in my district, Kinecta Federal Credit Union, is offering unpaid workers \$2,000 at 0 percent for 12 months. That 12-month loan period recognizes how long it will take unpaid workers to right themselves from the harm of this missed paycheck.

These efforts by these credit unions will go a long ways to mitigating the real consequences of this shutdown for American families, and I hope other financial institutions and lenders join and engage in similar efforts.

President Trump has the power to reopen the government and stop hurting families, especially unpaid workers. Orange County, California, and this Nation deserve a government at work.

I yield to my colleague from Michigan (Ms. TLAIB).

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out against drunk driving, a senseless, unacceptable, and preventable act. I uplift my dear friends, the Abbas family, who lost their lives tragically due to the fault of a drunk driver. They were kind. They were loving.

According to the CDC, alcohol-impaired fatalities accounted for 29 percent of the total vehicle traffic accidents in 2017. I honor their memory today by supporting my colleague, Congresswoman DEBBIE DINGELL, in her proposal to expand the use of breathalyzers in new vehicles.

This doesn't change the fact that someone got drunk and got behind the wheel of a car, and, as a result, we lost

five bright lights in Michigan: Issam Abbas, Dr. Rima Abbas, and their three children, Ali, Isabelle, and Giselle.

I want to repeat a quote by Helen Keller: "What we once enjoyed and deeply loved we can never lose, for all that we love deeply becomes part of us."

Let us honor the memory and the lives of the Abbas family and pray for the comfort of their surviving family.

In regards to the shutdown, Mr. Speaker, I would like to help my colleagues understand the human toll on our residents and thousands of Federal workers across the Nation. It is now day 20.

Today, over 400 housing units across my district, the 13th Congressional District, are directly impacted by the HUD funding expiring due to the government shutdown. HUD is begging landlords to not evict our residents due to the lack of payment.

HUD provides affordable rent for over 40,000 low-income families across this Nation. We are talking about residents who are disabled, children, seniors, and veterans who are living with challenges that require assistance to live.

Mr. Speaker, again, going on day 20, we are creating a humanitarian crisis. In Detroit, Michigan, there are nearly 1,000 families affected by this current situation. The number is sure to rise as the shutdown continues.

Another area of the shutdown that we cannot stress enough is the amount of workers who do not know when they will receive their next paycheck. In Michigan alone, we have 6,000 workers, mostly in southeastern Michigan, and now they are scrambling to figure out how they will pay for their shelter and food for their family.

In Wayne County, Michigan, Federal workers are being given an extension to pay their property taxes. The shutdown is causing a disruption in their lives and so many that are connected. The bills will continue to come, Mr. Speaker. The late fines and interest fees will pile up while the administration plays games with the lives of the American people.

Government must be about people first. The continued denial that the real crisis is the shutdown will cause a detrimental impact on our residents. The cost to reopen government will continue to increase. We deserve better. We deserve our President to lead with compassion.

It is critical that we put a human face to this crisis so that we understand the real impact on everyday people.

The U.S. Coast Guard employees in Michigan today are at risk of missing their next paycheck. They are currently working around the clock on the Great Lakes breaking ice to keep our shipping and logistics industries going. They are providing a critical role in our regional economy and security without knowing whether they will get paid.

Our Coast Guard even rescued a man from Lake Michigan, an honorable action, but let's thank them by paying

them so they can take care of their families.

Jasmine, a worker that has been with the TSA for nearly 16 years, has already been unable to cover her bills and had to turn to her own mother for financial help. She said that they are doing their job to the best of their ability and feel that they are being treated as pawns in something they have no control over.

She is right, Mr. Speaker. She and her fellow workers are wondering how they are going to pay for gas and feed their children.

I know I am a new Member here, but the disconnect of many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and the current administration, it has been felt here and also back home. I see it. It is toxic, and it will never serve the American people. The disconnection with real people will continue to deny the right for our citizens to live with human dignity.

I have vital EPA workers that monitor air pollution in my district that have been off duty for weeks now. One in five children has asthma in my district, Mr. Speaker. This is unjust. We need to have a functional and open government that protects us. We have some of the worst corporate polluters in the country in the 13th Congressional District, and now we have no one protecting us from air pollution violators. Let's get them back to work for our residents.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a handful of examples of Americans that are being harmed by the actions of this administration and the inaction of the Senate. We must end this shutdown now. Our residents deserve us to lead with compassion and responsibility.

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague from the great State of California, Mike Levin.

Mr. LEVIN of California. Mr. Speaker, when the people of California's 49th District elected me to represent them in Congress, I did not imagine that I would be sworn in during a partial government shutdown. However, on the same day that I raised my right hand and took the oath of office, I also cast my first votes to fund Federal agencies that have been shut down by President Trump.

We have since voted on several similar bills, including earlier today. The bills we voted on were not controversial. In fact, they were the same exact bills that Senate Republicans supported just 1 month ago, and they have received bipartisan support here in the House. In fact, just today, 12 Republicans voted to fund and reopen Transportation and HUD, and 10 voted to reopen Agriculture and the SNAP program.

One-third of the Federal workforce is comprised of veterans. The shutdown is hurting their credit rating and that of all Federal employees. How can President Trump claim to care about veterans while allowing this to continue?

For those in my district back home who are impacted, I hear your voices. I

have heard the voice of the Fish and Wildlife Service employee in my district who told me the other day that many of her colleagues are living paycheck to paycheck and can't afford to go any longer without the pay that they have earned and that they deserve.

I have heard the grocery store owner in my district who can't get help with his food stamp eligibility because the appropriate USDA office is shut down.

The Trump shutdown is hurting people in my district and every district who have done nothing but worked hard and played by the rules.

We can end this today by reopening the government while we continue to debate border security. And make no mistake, we need smart, effective, and humane border security, but we do not need 5th century technology for a 21st century problem.

I strongly urge Leader MCCONNELL to bring up the bipartisan funding bills for a vote in the Senate, and I urge President Trump to do the right thing and sign them.

Mr. Speaker, 20 days is far too long. The American people have had enough. Let's end this senseless shutdown, and let's end it now.

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from California has 43 minutes remaining.

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), my colleague.

□ 1815

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, the distinguished Congresswoman from California, for her leadership and her amazing journey here to the United States House of Representatives. It is clearly because of life stories like hers that we will be more effective in representing all of the American people, so I thank her for leading the Congressional Progressive Caucus this evening and really speaking to our colleagues and, yes, the American people.

I know that the number 20 has many meanings. For 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds and 5-year-olds, you give them 20 pennies for their piggy bank and you can see their sparkling eyes, just really happy.

You can count down 20 days till your vacation. It is reasonable. You can get ready, get new clothes and new suitcases.

You may be able to count down if you are suffering from an illness and the doctor says that in 20 days things will be looking up.

But in this instance, I am standing alongside of this sign, "20 Days," because it represents pain and frustration. It certainly represents a sadness that is truly unnecessary, for we will approach the longest shutdown of the Federal Government, the longest abuse of power that the United States of America has ever seen.

Just a few weeks ago, we saw the President of the United States indicate that he will take ownership of a shutdown. I think it is important to take note of the fact that this is a policy dispute, a simple policy dispute that is not catastrophic.

In the meantime, we have dangerous conditions in the Nation's parks, national historic sites, and we have a shut door for the Nation's schoolchildren at our museums.

Individuals who are seeking mortgages, first-time buyers, young couples, retirees, have been stopped in their tracks.

Those brave men and women, including firefighters under the Department of the Interior who fought those terrible fires in California, will not be paid tomorrow.

My colleagues and friends in Texas, as a border State resident, will not be paid tomorrow: border Patrol, Customs and Border Protection, the brave men and women that I visited with working in the Nation's airports and in my airport, the George Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston, Texas.

Mortgages and rent not paid, car payments not being paid, spring tuition checks not being paid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance not being paid. So much is riding on the fact that these individuals are working without pay because of, simply, a temper tantrum.

Now, I want information. I was down at the border just a couple of weeks ago. I go all the time. I served on the Border Security Committee on Homeland Security. I helped write a bipartisan Homeland Security border security bill.

When the Border Patrol was a small agency, we poured millions of dollars, post-9/11, to build up their personnel, give them laptops, night goggles, jeeps. I went to the border at night, in the dark of night. I saw their work. I know what they need. I know that they have their views.

Many have said: I don't care what kind of barrier it is; a concrete wall will not work, but we need a combination of things.

And so what the Commander-in-Chief will see at the border that will warrant the shutting down of government, the make-believe national crisis, I hope—and I wanted him to visit the patrol stations, the Border Patrol stations where hopeless families and children are there, some suffering, as little Felipe was, because the conditions are not there for welcoming women and children seeking asylum through the normal legal process, of which some would be granted and some will be directed to go home. That is the American way.

But yet 35,694 employees are not getting a paycheck in Texas because of this tragic condition.

So I say to the commonsense people, the Democratic majority that voted on legislation that could have simply gone to the other body, been placed on the calendar for the Senate, voted on, and

sent to the desk of the President of the United States, I would say: Mr. President, sign the bill and open the government.

Policy changes are not warranted for a shutdown. Fifty-one thousand TSA agents missing their paychecks is not defensible, and the 800,000 total employees, 16,000 NASA employees who were furloughed, and the impact on the fourth largest city in the Nation, rural home loans financed by the USDA, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Hurricane Harvey Federal aid.

I heard the pain of a Member whose Pacific Island, which he represents as a Delegate, has just suffered a massive typhoon. We need disaster aid for them.

The good news is that the Democratic leadership is doing our job. We are on the floor every day passing the bill to open the government—let me say it again—to open the government.

Mr. Speaker, let me conclude on these two points:

I always believe that it is important to be truthful in one's statement. Any of us in public service should give the best evidence of the truth that we can.

Those of us who have served in the last 2 to 3 to 4 or 5 years have seen the pain of our constituents and the pain of Members of Congress who come from districts where the enormity of the opioid crisis has taken whole families. We know that there are 100-plus people dying every day from opioid abuse.

For those of us who come from inner-city communities, that was yesterday's crack and cocaine that didn't get the attention that we are getting now. But I am not selfish. I am glad, as a nation, we recognize the literal destroying of a human being and family.

So we have invested money in treatment. We have looked at the criminal justice system, and we will look even more to not penalize those who are addicted. We are trying to eliminate access to meth and some of the most poisonous drugs, now kush, and many others.

But it is shameful to use the pain of these families and to create a false narrative that I put up a wall and I will heal Johnny Smith way up in New England from his opioid disease.

Drugs, we have a war that we must finish, fight and finish. We must get people off of drugs. We must cure them. We must treat them as if they are sick.

But I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, no wall is going to stop the epidemic. We must engage in diplomacy and the frustration and the poverty in South and Central America.

By the way, I have introduced a bill that says if we have a wall, concrete wall, then, as was promised by this administration, Mexico should pay for it.

But we must engage with the South and Central American countries, and any drugs that want to get into this country, you can be assured they will be coming in underground, in tunnels, well-lit tunnels, well-known pathways and legal points of entry.

How do I know? I have been at the border when a bust has been made and seen the car open and the most unique places where millions of dollars of drugs were hidden.

Thank you to the canine team that is so effective.

None of this was spoken about. The narrative was not true. The White House is not presenting to the American people what really is a national emergency. Opioid is, but the way it must be dealt with is increased access to healthcare and not the continued undermining of the Affordable Care Act.

So, finally, we have heard the President call and scream that he will declare a national emergency.

I think it is important, as it is for the Members of this great body, this great Nation, to know that we have a Constitution where Article I is the Congress and Article II is the Executive, and nowhere in those two articles does it say that the Congress has to be told what to do by the administration—nowhere. An independent body must stand for what the American people need. So there are statutes that govern the emergency declaration.

I will give it to you straight: There are two statutes that require either that there be a declaration of war—I have not heard that—or else a proper formal declaration of national emergency. They don't dictate exactly what the conditions are. It is all about process and transparency.

If, for example, the President would want to declare this a national emergency, he would have to frame it, and he would have to determine what that means. Do we want to use the Armed Forces? What kind of national emergency is it?

And do you realize that national emergency means taking money from so many vital programs? Just like the \$5.7 billion wall that, for some reason, the supporters or people listening to this narrative of the wall, they must think that we have a hidden treasure somewhere that we will just go in and dig down in the pot and get \$5.7 billion.

You take \$5.7 billion, and you will take it out of the United States military. You will take it out of the Coast Guard. You will take it out of education. You will take it out of healthcare. You will take it out of the environment. You will take it out of international diplomacy. You will take it out of those suffering from HIV/AIDS. You will take it out of the starving people around the world. That is where the money will come from.

So I hope that there will be a pathway where this body of Congress works to send the bills to the President's desk. I hope that we don't go 2 or 3 more days past this day tomorrow, when no checks will come to thousands of Americans, and get this government open.

If the President thinks he can declare a national emergency and that is the only narrative he wants to use, we will

do our job. He will do his job, but we should have, as our number one job, to open this government now and to provide the good, hardworking Americans who serve us in the Federal Government and those who are impacted by them to be able to get a check, to be able to do the things that this great Nation has allowed them to do; for we stumble, we do not realize that, in the Declaration of Independence, it indicated that we were all created equal, with certain unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

I take that to heart, what this country stands for, and we have got to fight for those who cannot fight for themselves.

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for the kind words.

I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ESPAILLAT).

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, I want to first thank the gentlewoman and the Progressive Caucus for organizing this very important Special Order hour. It is an important opportunity for us to share stories about how the Trump shutdown is causing real damage in many of our communities and to remind the American people that President Trump is holding government hostage not for some noble cause, but for his petulant demand for an unnecessary and medieval border wall.

□ 1830

There are 14,000 Federal workers in New York State whose pay has been impacted by this Trump shutdown, but I will share the story of one of my constituents.

This is the reality of a constituent from the 13th Congressional District, someone I have the privilege to represent and know. That person is a NASA employee who, along with dozens of her colleagues, has been furloughed due to the Trump shutdown.

Most Americans are unaware that NASA operates and conducts some of the most important climate change research in New York City through NASA labs right in the heart of New York City.

My constituent's work is even more critical now than ever before, as our global climate is in its most fragile state, with record-shattering hurricanes pounding the Caribbean. We saw how Hurricane Maria ravaged through the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico and the Gulf Coast of our country, as well as the massive wildfires burning throughout California and other parts of the West Coast.

My constituent and her fellow workers, dedicated researchers, conduct observational-based climate assessment. Now, because of the Trump shutdown, these crucial studies will stop.

The intensive models they build explain past climate behavior and help us predict future climate conditions so we can be better prepared in the future.

This is not surprising, Mr. Speaker, because many of the folks around the

White House believe that climate change is a hoax, that it doesn't exist at all.

These researchers that have been furloughed are so necessary for the future of our Nation and our planet. Their periodic reports are essential for understanding our climate and how it is changing.

In a response from agencies that seems almost like a cruel joke, furloughed Federal workers, like my constituent, have been encouraged to get creative, to budget closely. They have been asked that perhaps they could make ends meet if they baby-sit or if they have garage sales.

This is the message that these agencies have given to some of the furloughed workers across the country, but too many in our Federal workforce simply cannot afford to miss a loan payment, a utility bill, their rent, their mortgage.

This President simply doesn't understand just how hard it is for working class people and middle class people. As Speaker PELOSI aptly put it, President Trump doesn't understand that working people cannot ask their dad or their mom for money.

This whole situation is unacceptable. And just like President Trump said when he accepted the Republican nomination back in 2016, he alone can fix this. He created this crisis.

I bring this here to show the American people who is crossing the border. I went down to the border in New Mexico, and I saw moms and little children running away from violence, from hunger, running away from natural disasters, sleeping on a cold, dirty, dingy floor, packed like sardines.

We are a better country. We are a better America.

We ask you, Mr. President: Give up your wall. Give up your wall and reopen government. Free the 800,000 Federal workers you have held hostage in this manufactured, fictitious security crisis.

This is the moment, this is the time. Mr. Speaker, we must fight back, we must reopen government. We will not give in to the wall.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me.

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for being here tonight.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I was just on the floor, but I could not leave the floor without reminding us that our constituents have names.

So I wanted Edith to know how concerned I am about her, and to say that when I spoke about the 20 days and the 20 pennies, all of that is, if you will, things that are static, but a human being who has to deal with life's ups and downs is real.

Edith Banda—recently returned from a reservist deployment in the Middle East—is among thousands of people in the Houston area feeling the impact of the government shutdown.

Edith has not worked her Federal job in downtown Houston, which is where my congressional office is, since the shutdown 17 days ago.

Making matters worse, she and dozens of others in Houston are unable to seek private sector work, because such jobs require permission, and the people who process these requests have been furloughed; just like some are trying to get unemployment, and some of the documentation they need are with people who are furloughed.

Edith has been selling her personal possessions to make ends meet, but she said another couple of weeks of no work would be crushing.

Now, I know our Speaker has indicated that we are working very hard here to get access to credit through credit unions and no-interest loans. We have letters that they can send.

I want to personally say that my office is open. 713-655-0050 is my local office. My staff, get ready, in case we can be of help to you down in Houston to be able to see what we can do about your circumstances.

Finally, I just want to say that Carol has been a Federal employee for over 25 years. She is waiting to find out when she will be allowed to return to work. She has been furloughed.

After reflecting on her two daughters enrolled in college and her fears of no longer being able to help them with their education expenses, she wrote about how the Trump shutdown was hurting her. And like many employees, she has a mortgage, credit card payments, Federal student loans, and she is trying to be a mother.

And I would just say this as I close, that she has got to deal with late fees, interest rate hikes and damage to her credit score, and so she is one of those individuals.

I just want to say that the metaphor, the narrative, again, of so many people having gates to their homes, and to use that when these people are pouring out their life savings, they are pouring their heart out, they are in distress, I have a very diverse district, and I can assure you I can travel around and see very few gated communities of all economic levels. And they love their family. They have a door, but they are moving around the community.

This is a great Nation. That is a poor example, that we have gated communities because we love the people that are in or not, because we don't like the people who are out.

It is because you have a dislike for the people who are out. That must be your lack of understanding of all of our humanity, because for those of us at Homeland Security who have been to the northern border as well, there is not one fence there and not one person that wants a fence. And we know what happened in 2000 when a person came across to do harm to the United States.

We can find a better solution. Let's stop using the narrative, because I think many Americans live in circumstances where they see their neighbors, they interact with their neighbors, and they don't have locked gates and walls. Some do. That is their choice. But that is not the definition of who we are.

So I want to say to Edith and to Carol and others, Democrats are here working as hard as we can. Congresswoman PORTER is working as hard as she can. And we will be back on the floor again tomorrow.

I am just hoping that the Senate, the other body, can take up our bills. Once they do that, it is very clear that they can go right to the President. If it sits for 10 days, it is law.

I feel that if it is vetoed, I really feel that the good people of this House and Senate will override it and get these people back where they need to be.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding so I could tell Edith and Carol's story.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to join my colleagues in discussing the Trump Shutdown and its devastating impact on the financial security of federal families and contractors.

As the Trump Shutdown enters its third week, the effects of President Trump and Republicans' reckless decision to shutter the government over a wasteful and unnecessary border wall are obvious.

Frontline federal employees, including law enforcement and public safety personnel, have been working without pay since December 22.

This includes around 14,000 FBI agents, 54,000 Customs and Border Protection agents, 47,000 Transportation Security Officers and 6,000 Forest Service firefighters.

TSA employees received their last paycheck on December 28, giving them money that would typically last through the next pay period but which will now have to stretch much further.

The shutdown has already forced some employees to look for new jobs or take on extra work, and the pressure is immense for employees and families with no other source of income.

This also includes 3,200 Secret Service agents who risk their lives every single day to protect President Trump and his family.

In addition to the federal employees working without pay, hardworking federal employees at agencies like the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Agriculture, and NASA have been furloughed without pay, plunging them and their families into uncertainty.

These are real American families that are being put through an unwarranted and unnecessary shutdown and are suffering because of it.

With many federal employees being furloughed, and those deemed essential being expected to work without pay American families are now stuck wondering how they are going to get by without an income, especially since things like rent, groceries, and general day-to-day living costs still need to be paid whether the government is fully functional or not.

The Trump Shutdown will end when the President comes to his senses.

Not only are Americans struggling to pay for their day-to-day expenses but veterans and military families are suffering as well.

If the shutdown lasts for more than two or three weeks, the Department of Veterans Affairs has said that it may not have enough money to pay disability claims and pension payments.

That could affect approximately 3.6 million veterans.

For military families, although their pay has continued, the military is suffering in other areas.

For example, changes of station for military personnel will be delayed, medical offerings could be scaled back, and facility and weapons maintenance could be suspended.

Additionally, military commissaries (base grocery stores) have shut down and military families are being forced to shop elsewhere.

According to the Defense Commissary Agency, military families generally save more than 30 percent on average at the commissaries.

Shopping off the base can be pricey, especially for military families living in cities with a high cost of living.

Edith Banda who recently returned from a reservist deployment in the Middle East is among thousands of people in the Houston area feeling the impact of the government shutdown.

Edith has not worked her federal job in downtown Houston since the shutdown 17 days ago.

Making matters worse, she and dozens of others in Houston are unable to seek temporary private sector work because such jobs require permission, and the people who process those requests have been furloughed.

Edith has begun selling her personal possessions to make ends meet, but she said another couple of weeks of no work would be crushing.

There are so many other issues that we could tackle with the money Trump wants to spend on the wall.

With an increase of \$265 million the Department of Justice could hire 2,000 new police officers and make steps towards making many communities a safer place.

With increase of \$99 million the Office of National Drug Control Policy could support community-level efforts to address substance abuse programs in nearly 730 additional communities.

Economic Development Administration with an increase of \$200 million could create or preserve 31,000 jobs for our hardworking Americans.

Small Business Administration grants with an additional \$20 million could support dozens more Women's Business and Veterans Outreach Centers providing business training, counseling and outreach to 47,000 additional US veterans and women.

These are the changes that American citizens deserve.

Mr. Speaker, it is critical that the President ends this government shutdown and end the unwarranted suffering of American families across the nation.

Carol with the Bureau of Land Management wrote to me sharing her frustrations and anxiety over the Trump Shutdown.

Carol has been a federal employee for over 25 years. She is waiting to find out when she will be allowed to return to work. Carol is one

of 800,000 federal government employees living with constant worry and angst. Hearing that President Trump is willing to keep her and many others furloughed for years has her questioning her career choice.

After reflecting on her two daughters enrolled in college and her fears of no longer being able to help them with their education expenses did she write about how Trump's Shutdown will hurt her.

She, like many other federal employees, has a mortgage, has credit card payments, has federal student loans. The places where she would look for assistance are closed, leaving her to attempt to navigate and negotiate late fees, interest rate hikes, and damage to her credit score that inevitable missed payments will create.

Carol is just one of the 800,000 federal government employees who will not be receiving a paycheck tomorrow.

The President should be ashamed.

Prior to Trump's election the nation heard about his history of refusing to pay contractors for work they had completed. The United States Federal Government does not and will not conduct business in this way. The United States Government pays its workers.

Ms. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman very much. I appreciate her sharing their stories and adding the stories of Edith and Carol to those that I shared of my constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I think this really shows that the harms of the shutdown are being felt in communities around the country, including from her home State in Texas and mine in California.

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

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call for an end to the Trump shutdown. This Republican-imposed shutdown is threatening job creation, harming small businesses and leaving families with uncertainty and instability.

It is shameful that President Trump and Congressional Republicans are so desperate to secure taxpayer funding for a senseless border wall that they're willing to harm hard-working Americans by shutting down the federal government.

This outrageous shutdown is forcing 420,000 federal employees to work without pay. These dedicated public servants have been doing their jobs and serving the public without pay since December 22. They include about 14,000 FBI agents, 6,000 Forest Service firefighters, and 54,000 Customs and Border Protection agents. Furthermore, thousands of airport security screeners and air traffic controllers are working without pay to protect the safety of the flying public at airports throughout the country, including LAX in my congressional district.

In addition, 400,000 federal employees have been furloughed without pay. This includes federal workers at the Departments of Transportation, State, Commerce, Interior and Agriculture.

These dedicated public servants are sitting at home wondering how they will pay their mortgages and buy food for their families. Yet, they want nothing more than to go back to work serving the American people.

As the Chair of the House Committee on Financial Services, I am especially concerned about the impact of the Trump Shutdown on American homebuyers and renters. Millions of

families that rely on Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Department of Agriculture (USDA) rental assistance programs are dangerously close to eviction and foreclosure due to lapses in funding. Families aspiring to become homeowners may see their Federal Housing Administration (FHA) or rural housing loans delayed or be unable to close on their loans altogether during the shutdown. In rural communities, very low-income, elderly homeowners who rely on HUD grants and loans to address health and safety hazards will not receive payments and may be forced to live in dangerous conditions.

In addition, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the agency that investors and the public rely on to police Wall Street and maintain the safety of our capital markets system has furloughed roughly 94% of its staff, leading to a backlog of complaints that could delay enforcement actions. Companies looking to go public and enter the stock market for the first time may also have to delay their Initial Public Offerings (IPOs).

Meanwhile, our National Parks are overflowing with uncollected trash, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has stopped conducting inspections of drinking water systems, hazardous waste facilities, and chemical facilities.

If the Trump shutdown continues beyond January, about 40 percent of 40 million individuals and families across the country who are dependent upon the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also known as Food Stamps, will see their benefits reduced.

These are just a few examples of the harm being caused by the third shutdown this nation has experienced since Trump took office. It is time for Republicans to stop jeopardizing livelihoods, the financial system, and our economy by ending this shutdown immediately.

It's long past time to end this Trump shutdown, and put America's public servants back to work serving the public.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 24. An act to provide for the compensation of Federal and other government employees affected by lapses in appropriations.

OUR GREATEST DIFFICULTY AS A SOCIETY IS DEMOGRAPHICS

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, this is one of those opportunities, now that we have the new session of Congress up and running, to come up here and sort of walk through some of the math and the reality.

And, look, it is always fascinating when we hear, you know, the discussion of, well, there is \$5 billion for security and the barriers, but I just want