

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

to say to everyone, before we sort of go into the presentation of the actual math of what is going on in our society, you do realize the total amount that is being discussed as the plus-up for the border security is less than we borrow in 2 days. It is less than 2 days of borrowing.

I mean, we live in this world of absurdity where the politics actually have outstripped sort of the reality and the math.

And, look, I accept that there is part of our society that so desperately doesn't want the White House to ever get any of its priorities, they will burn the place down, but come on.

Being from a border State, you know, come and see the fentanyl, the heroin, the human exploitation that is happening not only across the country, but particularly for those of us that are from border States.

But that isn't why I had reserved tonight's time. I actually want to make sure that once we get beyond this partial shutdown and we maybe get back to the business of governing, we actually start to have some understanding of the reality of what our society is up against.

In the first chart I have brought I am going to try to make an argument that our greatest difficulty we have as a society, as a country, is actually demographics. This is something we often don't talk about, because it is not something we really can do a lot about, but the reality of it is, as a society, we are getting older very fast.

There was an article just last week saying we are growing older the fastest in 80 years. You have seen the crash in our birth rates. I mean, you do realize that our birth rates are nowhere near what we call replacement rates as a society. We are down to, what is it? What do they say? 1.76 births, when you need to be up around 2.1 just for population stability.

What does that actually mean? Well, we are going to walk through a number of these boards and start to understand what that fiscal impact means if you want to keep our society's promises on things such as Social Security, Medicare, and how we deal with it.

I actually want to give sort of an optimistic idea. We believe we have sort of a five-point idea, but it is going to require my brothers and sisters on the left, my friends on the right, and people in between to pull out their calculators and think.

The fact of the matter is I often feel like I work in a math-free zone.

Just a bit of trivia. In 11 years, you and your partner, so two people, will be supporting one retiree. In 11 years, two workers for every one person in retirement. Think about that.

No matter what you think about politics and who pays and who doesn't pay, just think about that structurally as a society: two workers for every one person in retirement, and that happens in 11 years.

□ 1845

It is hard to talk about because, let's face it, we are Members of Congress. We often like talking about the shiny object, the thing that when we walk out these doors, the reporter is going to stick the microphone in our face, and it is going to be the shiny object of the day instead of the structural reality of what threatens our Republic.

The first slide here, all I want to be absorbed is this is 1965, a long time ago, 50-some years.

Do you see the red? That is what we call mandatory spending. Those are things that are on autopilot.

The most elegant way I think to describe that is that you have Social Security and Medicare. Those are earned entitlements. You worked a certain number of quarters; you paid in; and you get those benefits.

There are other entitlements that fall under this. If you are part of a certain Tribal population, we have a treaty obligation. Or if you fall under a certain income, you get these benefits. But they are mandatory. They are built into the base. We don't vote on them. They are on autopilot.

In last year's budget, actually, well over 70 percent of all the spending was on autopilot. It is what, ultimately, is consuming the budget.

We are going to do a couple of these slides, just to try to get our heads around this. Let's swap to the next one. This is just to sort of help the break-out.

My understanding is that in this coming budget year—you need to think about this—defense spending in the 2019 cycle will basically be the same as Medicare.

How many of us, when we go home to talk to our constituents, somehow think defense is two-thirds, a third of the budget? Basically, as you start to look at the charts here, you will actually see—and these are the 2018 numbers.

As you walk through, you see the blue. We will call that the sea foam blue. That is Social Security. That is 24 percent of all our spending.

If you come over here, national defense is this rust. That is 15.

Last year, Medicare was actually a little over 14-point-something. This year, Medicare and defense are almost the same.

With our demographics—remember the baby boom, 74 million of our brothers and sisters who were born in that 18-year period who are baby boomers—the peak of the baby boom right now is about 62, 63 years old. They are just starting to move into the years where they will receive those earned benefits.

Then you come over here to Medicaid and other income programs, net interest—remember, interest is a mandatory. You have to pay it to protect the sanctity and full faith and credit of U.S. debt. You start to realize, the amount that we, as Members of Congress, actually get to work on starts being about a quarter of all the spending.

It is not driven, really, by current policy. These are previous policies. It is driven by our demographics. We are getting older very fast.

This is the slide that is the most devastating to get your head around. Yes, I have not adjusted this for inflation, so these are stagnant dollars. When you use a 30-year time window, you can deduct about a third. Eventually, I will get this slide up, and I will do the interest deduction.

But think of this: Over the next 30 years—2018 to 2048, a 30-year window—what is causing an \$84 trillion budget deficit? It is substantially interest, the shortfalls in Social Security, and the shortfalls in Medicare. The rest of the budget has about a \$16 trillion surplus in what we calculated as revenues to spending.

That is really important to get our heads around. It is fascinating that, when you show these numbers, I will get people who will protest the math. It is not Republican math; it is not Democratic math; it is just math.

The reality of it is that we have these massive, unfunded liabilities that are basically in two programs, Social Security and Medicare, and we have a moral obligation to keep our promises as a society.

So how do we get there?

The next one, I am just going to put this one up so it helps reemphasize the way this works. Think of this: From 2008 to 2028—so that 20-year window—91 percent of the increased spending in this body comes from three things: interest, the growth in Social Security, and the growth in spending in healthcare entitlements.

When you see my kind come behind these microphones, and we speak as eloquently as we can, unless we are telling the truth about the demographics, we are actually not telling the truth of what is really going on. I know it is hard. It is math with lots and lots of zeroes. But this is the reality. When you look at the charts, things like defense, nondefense discretionary, even some of what we call the other entitlements, they are substantially flat over that 20-year period.

We are getting older very fast as a society, and our birth rates as a society have collapsed. We don't have enough children right now, over the last decade, to even be at replacement rates. We are basically following the trend of the rest of the industrialized world.

You have to think that through. What does that mean for our ability to promise Americans, as they move into their senior years, that retirement security? That, I think, both Republicans and Democrats all agree we must have, but, yet, then we do everything we can to avoid the actual math.

The next slide I want to go to is to, once again, reemphasize the reality of what is happening in our society population-wise. For this next chart, I am using Arizona, because that is my home. But guess which State appears

to have the biggest fall in birth rates? Arizona.

Now, please be merciful on me. I am going to try to explain something with a lack of sort of elegant language. I have had multiple conversations with a couple of folks who make their living just fixated on demographic numbers, and they, partially, are giddy about this for one thing in society. They sort of come back and say: Look, in previous demographic modeling, we thought parts of our Hispanic populations, parts of our LDS populations, and parts of others were going to continue to have very high birth rates, and that was going to provide some population stability.

But the fact of the matter is the melting pot, apparently, is actually working in our society. In our country, the melting pot is working. One of the ways that demographers refer to it is say: Look, we are all not having children like each other. The likelihood you will have a similar education, live in the same neighborhood, and now also not have children like each other, you see it in the math.

So, on one hand, yes, the melting pot is working. That is great for our country. We are Americans. We are a diverse lot, but we are Americans.

Now we need to deal with the social entitlement problem. That is, in 11 years, if I have two workers for every one person that is retired, and my birth rates are continuing to fall, how do you make the math work? How do you keep your promises?

Remember my first quip when first coming up to the podium: We are having this dispute over an additional \$5 billion of border security and the effects that has on humanitarian aid. But the absurdity is that it is less than 2 days of borrowing right now, and almost all that borrowing is driven by—you saw it on the previous slide—our allocation to cover our interest costs, Social Security, and the healthcare entitlements, where almost all the spending growth is.

This is a reality, but it is fascinating. The beginning of this is 2000. In 2000, we were basically about 3.1 in birth rates. Fertility rates have collapsed. When you actually start to do the mean nationwide, we are now down to—what is it?—1.67.

We need to actually couple that in with the massive unfunded liabilities we have and start to understand that the greatest threat to our country right now is massive entitlement promises and the lack of resources to cover them.

I have done it before, and I am going to do this about every week. I am going to bring in different boards. I have a series of boards that show almost every idea that gets quipped out of: “Well, we will raise tax rates to this, or we will do this.” None of them come anywhere close to actually covering the scale of our obligations.

Right now, I want to do one or two things that I actually believe are opti-

mistic. I am going to give you sort of a five-point idea. This is something I have been talking about in Arizona and partially around the country and other places. I need us to think about, okay, this is the math reality. We have these massive unfunded liabilities that are basically driven by two programs and our interest obligations. How do we fix it?

Let's actually walk through a list and understand it. I call this the unified theory because we have to do all of them. We have to do all of them at the same time, and we have to fixate on the growth aspects they all bring.

The first one I want to talk about is immigration. As we go through, partially, the political theater, as this body has been doing with regard to immigration, let's actually take a step backward and say: What immigration policy maximizes economic growth for the country so that growth helps us pay our promises, so people will receive their Social Security and Medicare?

We will have to move to a talent-based immigration system, because, as the rest of the world has done, whether it be New Zealand, Great Britain, Canada, or Australia, the rest of the world has basically moved to a talent-based system because they figured out it maximizes economic growth.

In our case, hopefully, we would move to a substantially talent-based system. You still are going to have compassion. There will still be types of visas for our brothers and sisters around the world that meet our standards of compassion. But with that, I believe, you also are going to have to put in math shock absorbers that deal with the fact that we are going through a cycle right now with birth rates falling. Would you adjust certain portions of that talent-based immigration population to deal with something we call population stability for the future?

Remember, this is about maximizing economic growth, so we can keep our promises as a society.

The slide I have next to me is sort of as we deal with the next couple issues. So I believe a major reform in the immigration system can maximize economic expansion.

The next thing is a fixation on growth. When we did tax reform, as we get together and start to realize this supercomputer we carry in our pocket, oddly enough, could be the greatest regulator in our society because it can crowd source information. I have done presentations on this in the past.

Instead of building bureaucratic models, where we make people fill out lots of pieces of paper and shove them in file cabinets, how about moving to a modern system?

As a simple example, how many of you use Waze as a way you drove to your office, or to work, or to pick up the kids? That is a crowd source model that gives you information.

It turns out that same concept can actually be a way to regulate air quality and know that we are safe without

building a bureaucratic model. It can be so many things.

We need to fixate on what maximizes economic growth in our society, and that is Tax Code; that is regulatory code; that is removing barriers, removing the barriers at the State, local, and Federal level that encourage risk-taking entrepreneurship, the things that create the economic disruptions, so we grow.

□ 1900

The third thing, and that is what that chart is about, we call it labor force participation. We got the report last week that was actually in some ways wonderful and in some ways it is heartbreaking.

We are giddy that we broke 63 percent labor force participation. We hit 63.1. I can show you a stack of articles from the last decade from really smart economists, mostly on the left side. They said we are never going to get back to 63 percent labor force participation because we are getting older as a society, we have so many worn-out workers, or whatever the current pop cultural term is.

Well, we broke through 63.1 last month in December. But understand, it was only a decade ago we were pushing around 67 percent labor force participation. What does that mean? It means we have substantial portions of our population who, for lots of reasons, whether it be drugs, whether it be certain educational aspects, whether it be societal expectations, are not in the labor force.

I have actually done it before, and we will do it again over the next couple of months. I will do some charts where it is actually a really interesting sort of barbell-type curve where we have lots of young people—mostly males—who are not in the workforce, and then older parts of our population who are choosing maybe the rational thing, to retire.

How do you build a society that encourages a person to stay or to enter the workforce? So as we have debates around here where the left wants to talk about certain types of income assistance, we in the right will talk about: How do you take that and make it a reward to work?

We need more of our population to work. If we could go right now from that 63 percent labor force participation and get back to that 67 that we were at just a decade ago, it is amazing how it helps.

So the third thing I am going to give you is we need to have everything, whether it be from the discussion of SNAP—food stamps—to incentives in Social Security and Medicare, to encourage someone to stay in the workforce longer, to a young person in their student loans to actually enter the workforce and begin that process.

Every program we as a government, as a society, participate in, we should maximize the incentive to work because we need it if we are going to keep our promises.

Remember, this is a loop. Everything here we talk about is, if we are going to keep our promises on Social Security and Medicare, we have got to have the economic expansion that provides the resources.

The next one I am going to give you is the one that I am most optimistic about. And let's put that board up. But this one is a little harder to talk about, so I will beg you to bear with me.

When we have had debates around here on the ACA—some people know it as ObamaCare—or our Republican alternative, or this healthcare debate, I need everyone intellectually to strip away our partisanship and take a step backwards. Almost all of the debates have been about who gets to pay.

The ACA just shifted lots and lots of the spending onto the government. Some of our alternatives were actually trying to spread the cost out more across the private payer populations. But we have done almost nothing to disrupt the cost curve.

So part of the thought experiment I want us all to engage in is: How many of us went to Blockbuster Video last weekend? I know it is a little starky, but think about it. Didn't it feel like almost overnight you no longer stood in line at the local retail strip center at Blockbuster Video to get the little silver disk that you were going to take home and shove into your Blu-ray player? You would now go home and you hit a button and you get Netflix, or HBO Go, or Hulu, or whatever you are watching.

That is what we call a disruption. Almost overnight, society figured out, hey, this is cheaper, faster, better.

How do we take that sort of concept of disruption and make it part of healthcare? How do you say, instead of playing this game that we have played over and over of just trying to move around who gets to pay, we are going to engage technology in such a fashion that we disrupt the cost curve of healthcare delivery?

The fact of the matter is there is so much technology rolling out, this is about to become your primary care physician.

How many of you have seen the articles of something that looks like a kazoo, a large kazoo that you blow into and it tells you if you have the flu virus. The article from last week, something a little bigger, a cone over your nose and mouth, you blow into it and it tells you if you have a bacteria.

There is the Apple Watch that will help you manage your arrhythmia. There is all of this technology rolling out. There are things, I am told, right

now at the Consumer Electronics Show, a couple of hundred items being shown at this moment that are all technology—we like to refer to them as digiceuticals in our office—that will disrupt the cost of healthcare if we can break down the regulatory legal barriers, whether it be on how we pay for them or the fact that many of them provide a level of autonomous healthcare. Our system as it is regulated and compensated today does not, was not designed for a level of autonomous.

We have a company in Scottsdale that now has four or five locations up. I guess they used to be Therascan booths. I think they are at Safeways, if I am allowed to say such a thing.

You go in and you functionally fill out your information in an iPad. You go into a private booth. There is an avatar on the screen. You grab the scope—and forgive me, I am not a medical person—and you shove it down your throat, in your ear, in your nose. It tells you how to move it. It tells you what they need.

You put your hand on something. It can do a pulse and the temperatures and other things. And an algorithm does the calculations. Apparently, the algorithm is amazingly accurate.

What would happen if that type of healthcare became available to all of us? We crash the price. We dramatically change the availability. And, yes, these things are scary because it is a disruption of technology into our economy, but we don't have a choice.

You saw the charts before. The greatest fragility in our society is promises we have made that we have no money. And almost every solution gets us nowhere close to the types of resources needed. We must have a disruption in the cost of delivery.

And part of the thought experiment, it has been a year or two, but we have seen things like the contact lens that can calculate your blood glucose, that talks to your insulin pump.

Because we do know that more than half of our healthcare costs in this country are for the 5 percent of our brothers and sisters who have chronic conditions, what happens when those digiceuticals help manage those chronic conditions to prevent the crashing?

How about the pill bottle that makes sure that—we know that 50 percent of pharmaceuticals are not used properly. The solution becomes a technology one when all of a sudden your phone rings. The beeper goes off. You haven't taken your hypertension medicine that morning.

We desperately need this body to start to understand this. And is that

Republican or Democratic? It is technology. Now, I am sure, eventually, we will break down and it will become a Republican issue or a Democratic issue, whether it be because which lobbyists go where, but for right now, it is just a solution.

The last one I will give you of my five is when we do all of this progrowth, this ability to crash the cost of delivery of healthcare, we are going to then have to have a really honest conversation of what we must do, particularly in Medicare, to modernize the design, deal with the reality that life expectancies for those who make it into retirement are going up.

Many of us will spend a third of our life in retirement. Do we need to change the incentives within those individual programs on how we take our benefits? How we manage those costs? How we participate in them?

We have some really interesting ideas: Would you make adjustments for folks who may have the ability to carry previous healthcare options with them?

But I truly believe we need to do all five of these, and we need to do them almost immediately because every day we wait, another 10,300 of our brothers and sisters, Americans, reach 65 and start to move into their benefits. And every day we wait, we avoid the reality of math.

I guess there are a couple of smart people out there who many years ago said: Tell me your demographics and I will tell you your destiny.

I have just told you our demographics. I have just shared with you the scale that is off the charts on the promises we have made and our lack of resources, and I believe I have actually begun to give an approach of a unified theory of how we make it work and how we make it through, functionally, our 74 million baby boomers who are moving into retirement and how we move through that population bubble so someone like my 3-year-old daughter also has the economic opportunities that I have had.

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 7 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, January 11, 2019, at 9 a.m.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the first, second, third, and fourth quarters of 2018, pursuant to Public Law 95-384, are as follows: