

paid, not because they did a bad job, but because of a temper tantrum from a President whose first allegiance is not to the national interest, but to protecting his fragile ego, and keeping his racist campaign promise to build a wall that no one with an ounce of common sense wants.

The U.S. House has passed legislation to open the government, pay our employees and contractors, and get on with the people's business. It is up to Leader MCCONNELL and the President to do their jobs and end this ridiculous Trump shutdown.

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

REOPEN THE GOVERNMENT

(Ms. STEVENS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on my colleagues and the President to reopen the government.

Too many lives are being impacted. Too much is at stake. I cannot sit idly by and watch the impasse that continues to plague our country. I have been in constant discussions with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to come to agreement, but to no avail.

This shutdown is hurting our economy, causing distrust in our sacred democracy, and putting the lives of hundreds of thousands of Federal employees in limbo. This is unacceptable.

There are currently 5,730 Federal employees in Michigan who are out of work. This shutdown is seriously impacting our country's safety and health.

There are FDA labs in Detroit that inspect for food and drug safety and oversee the interdiction of items coming into our country. They must be allowed to continue this work.

The House just voted on the final appropriations bill to reopen the government. I urge my colleagues in the Senate and the President to put an end to this for once and for all, and to pass these bills.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF BARBARA YAROSLAVSKY

(Mr. TED LIEU of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the life of my friend, Barbara Yaroslavsky, who died on December 26, 2018, at the age of 71.

Barbara dedicated her life to public service, activism, and supporting her community in as many ways as she could find.

Born in Los Angeles on August 9, 1947, Barbara was raised with the belief that community involvement was the key to making a difference in the lives of those around her. She took a special

interest in education and healthcare issues, championing the welfare of children and families.

She also actively participated in the Jewish community, sitting on several boards at the Jewish Federation of Greater L.A., and ensuring the Jewish community's voice was heard in government and policymaking.

Additionally, Barbara volunteered with many nonprofit organizations. She served on the L.A. Commission on Community and Family Services, the California Board of Registered Nursing, the Advisory Board for L.A.'s Best, and Friends of the Saban Community Clinic. She was also a past chair and member of the California Medical Board.

Barbara and her future husband, Zev Yaroslavsky, met while he was a hall monitor at the L.A. Hebrew High School, and she was at the front desk of the American Jewish University. They married in 1971, 4 years before Zev was elected to the L.A. City Council. Zev then vacated it to run for the L.A. County Board of Supervisors, where he served for many years.

Barbara is survived by her husband, Zev, two children, David and Mina, and four grandchildren.

I hope that Barbara's family takes comfort in knowing that her memory will live on in the lives of people she helped throughout her life.

CONGRESS HAS A CONSTITUTIONAL DUTY TO FUND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

(Mrs. FLETCHER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. FLETCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues here and in the Senate to vote to end this shutdown.

Across Texas, there are nearly 30,000 Federal workers who will not receive their paychecks today, many of them still dutifully performing their jobs.

This Congress has a constitutional duty to fund the government so that the agencies can do their important work, the work of and for the American people, and there is much of it.

In my own district in Houston, for example, this shutdown is delaying our recovery from one of the most devastating natural disasters in our country's history. As Members of this body will recall, Hurricane Harvey hit Houston and the Gulf Coast in August of 2017, causing nearly \$115 billion in damage.

This body appropriated funds to aid the recovery from Harvey, but nearly 18 months later, the City of Houston, and Harris County, still awaits these funds. And the funds can be distributed only after the publication of rules from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, funds that are desperately needed.

The shutdown has delayed publications of these rules, and I urge my colleagues to vote to end the shutdown.

I understand that we have differences over issues—including the best way to secure the border—but shutting down the government is neither a responsible nor reasonable approach to our differences.

I urge Senator MCCONNELL to take up the multiple spending bills the House has passed this week, which Senators approved with a large bipartisan majority just weeks ago, so that we can open the government and get back to work for the people.

PASSAGE OF THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, Democrats in Washington continue to urge the President to reopen the government, end the crisis of his own making, and get Federal employees back to work.

Despite this unfortunate situation dragging on, we can celebrate good news out of Richmond, Virginia. Wednesday marked the first day of Virginia's State legislative session. And on day 1, a Senate committee passed a resolution to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment.

Thirty-seven States have voted to ratify the ERA since it passed Congress in 1972, two in the last 2 years. Thirty-eight States must ratify a constitutional amendment, and Virginia could get it across the finish line.

I am thrilled to witness this energy to enshrine women's equality in the Constitution where it belongs. I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this incredible State effort, in Virginia and elsewhere, to amend the Constitution to finally ensure equality for all women and men in this country.

THE GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN IS HURTING PEOPLE

(Mr. EVANS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, the government shutdown is hurting people in Philadelphia right now.

I met a HUD employee this week who is tired of being used as a pawn. She said: "I'm ready to go back to work. I'm ready to serve the people."

Instead, she has to worry about her mortgage and student loans.

She said: "My American Dream is slipping through my fingers. It's really not fair."

Mr. Speaker, she teared up. I understand why.

For the 800,000 Federal workers and Federal contractors, this is not some reality TV show. This is real life.

The workers and citizens served by the government need the President and the Senate to reopen the government first, and then we can have a debate about border security.

The Senate should join the Democratic House in passing the spending bills to reopen the government, bills

that they have already passed last year. And we all need to keep foremost in our minds that this debate about the wall—we should be talking about the real people and getting to work now, Mr. Speaker.

ISSUES OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING).

CLARIFICATION OF REMARKS

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding to me here this afternoon.

I come to the floor here of the United States House of Representatives with a specific purpose today, and that is to address an issue that has become a controversy.

I regret that I made a freshman mistake a week ago today when I took a call from a reporter from the New York Times, and that was a 56-minute interview, without a tape, that resulted in a long article. In that article were snippets of the 56-minute interview.

Part of that inquiry was about the history of immigration policy in this country for over the last, say, 18 or so years, of which I have been a significant part, especially in Iowa, as we have a voice to shape policy and help these presidential candidates move on to the Oval Office.

I am grateful that much of the policy that was debated then is in the Oval Office today, and it is being debated all over this country. But one phrase in that long article has created an unnecessary controversy.

That was my mistake, Mr. Speaker, so I want to start this out with some context of that discussion, and that is this: That if you can control the language, you can control the policy.

Labels have been hurled in this country at people like we have never seen in this history of America. I made a point of this in a September 12 tweet that I sent out as a component of this broader dialogue, and here is the tweet, verbatim, Mr. Speaker:

The word “Nazi” is injected into leftist talking points because the worn out and exhausted word “racist” is overused and applied to nearly everyone.

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That is the foundation for at least part of that discussion with a New York Times reporter, Mr. Speaker.

In that also was discussion of other terms that had been used, almost always unjustly labeling otherwise innocent people the word “racist,” the word “Nazi,” the word “fascist,” the phrase “white nationalist,” the phrase “white supremacist.”

They even are derogatory toward Western civilization, which is the foundation for the American civilization, and we are today the flagship.

At this point, I will read the quote that had brought about this controversy, Mr. Speaker, and this is from The New York Times article titled: “Before Trump, Steve King Set the Agenda for the Wall and Anti-Immigrant Politics,” which, by the way, is a bit pejorative, because I have never been anti-immigrant. I have been anti-illegal immigrant, and I remain that way.

But here is the quote. It says: “‘White nationalist, white supremacist’”—and this is from me, by the way, Mr. Speaker—“‘White nationalist, white supremacist, Western civilization—how did that language become offensive?’ Mr. KING said. ‘Why did I sit in classes teaching me about the merits of our history and our civilization?’”

That is off of this article, and that is the substance of this heartburn that seems to be churning across the media in America today.

So I look at that and I think, well, what was that conversation? It was about how those words got plugged into our dialogue, not when the words became offensive, which is what the technical interpretation of this is. How did that language become offensive?

It is, how did that offensive language get injected into our political dialogue? Who does that? How does it get done? How do they get by with laying labels like this on people?

When I asked the question, “Why did I sit in classes teaching me about the merits of our history and our civilization?” that response was strictly for: Why did I sit in Western civilization classes to hear about the merits of our history?

I have never sat in a class at any time and heard any merits about any of those other names, including I have never heard a merit about “racist.” I have never heard a merit about “Nazi” or “Fascist” or “white nationalist” or “white supremacist,” but Western civilization has merit, and I remain a defender.

So I put together a statement, which is public, and I choose to read it into the RECORD now, Mr. Speaker, and it is this:

“Today, the New York Times is suggesting that I am an advocate for white nationalism and white supremacy. I want to make one thing abundantly clear: I reject those labels and the evil ideology that they define. Further, I condemn anyone that supports this evil and bigoted ideology, which saw in its ultimate expression the systematic murder of 6 million innocent Jewish lives.

“It’s true that, like the Founding Fathers, I am an advocate for Western civilization’s values and that I profoundly believe that America is the greatest tangible expression of these ideals the world has ever seen. Under any fair political definition, I am simply an American nationalist. America’s values are expressed in our founding documents. They are attainable by ev-

eryone, and we take pride that people of all races, religions, and creeds from around the globe aspire to achieve them. I am dedicated to keeping America this way.

“This conviction does not make me a white nationalist or a white supremacist. Once again, I reject those labels and the ideology that they define. As I told the New York Times, ‘It’s not about race. It’s never been about race.’ One of my most strongly held beliefs is that we are all created in God’s image and that human life is sacred in all its forms.”

All of my life’s work, all of my public record, all of my bills, all of my votes, all of my activities support that statement that human life is sacred in all of its forms and that we are created in God’s image.

So, Mr. Speaker, I regret the heartburn that has poured forth upon this Congress and upon this country, and especially in my State and in my congressional district. But the people who know me know I wouldn’t have to even make this statement, because they do know me. They know my life. They know my history. They know that I have lived in the same place since 1978. There is nothing about my family or my history or my neighborhood that would suggest that these false allegations could be supported by any activity whatsoever.

I reject that ideology. I defend American civilization, which is an essential component of Western civilization.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas again for the opportunity to address you here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the gentleman from Iowa, for his comments. I have traveled with him, been to different parts of the country and different parts of the world with my friend, Mr. KING from Iowa. I have seen him dealing with different races, nationalities around the world. And I have had a lot of private conversations and never seen anything that indicated anything but condemnation for white supremacists.

But he is a proud American. He is an American; he is very proud of it. And he is proud to carry the moniker of being an American in any situation, and I would contend that is not a bad thing.

Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to the speeches on the floor here this week. There has been a great deal of righteous indignation and constant condemnation for a shutdown. It is deeply troubling. There are some people working who are not getting paid. I would like to see that fixed.

But President Trump got his answer this week when he continued to try to compromise with Senator SCHUMER and Speaker PELOSI, trying to get a compromise.

I was delighted to hear Majority Leader HOYER mention that we have to have compromise. It is how things are