

reverse a longstanding Medicare prohibition on critical health services for our seniors.

Since its implementation in 1965, Medicare has excluded coverage for hearing aids and related audiology services, routine dental care, and routine eye exams and eyeglasses, despite the large number of older Americans who critically need these items and services.

The Commonwealth Fund reports that, among all Medicare beneficiaries who needed a hearing aid, only 75 percent did not have one. Of those who had trouble eating because of problems with their teeth, 70 percent had not seen a dentist in the past year. And of those who had trouble seeing, 43 percent had not had an eye exam in the past year. The reason for many seniors was affordability.

According to the latest statistics from the Kaiser Family Foundation, more than half of Medicare beneficiaries live on incomes below \$26,200 per year. For them to pay out of pocket creates extreme hardship.

Sadly, reliable data shows that neglect of all health, and even the lack of routine dental exams and cleanings, can deteriorate overall physical health and exacerbate serious and complicated health problems that increase with age.

It is also increasingly well documented that untreated vision and hearing loss diminishes quality of life and increases the risk of costly health outcomes, such as falls and resulting disability, depression, and dementia.

My bill would remove the restrictions currently prohibiting Medicare coverage of these basic healthcare necessities such as eyeglasses, hearing aids, and dental care. Expanding Medicare coverage for these services is a cost-effective intervention that will prevent accidents, falls, cognitive impairments, and increases in chronic conditions and oral cancer.

Madam Speaker, if we do not address these gaps in health coverage now, the overall health of our aging population will continue to suffer and the need for costly and avoidable services will increase. But most importantly, giving our older adults the gift of hearing, vision, and oral health would go a long way toward helping our seniors enjoy their golden years free from depression and social isolation.

It is time to recognize that total healthcare for our seniors must include adequate access to vision, hearing, and dental services. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor the Seniors Have Eyes, Ears, and Teeth Act, and ensure a healthier future for all our seniors.

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PUT THE PEOPLE FIRST AND END GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Mrs. TRAHAN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. TRAHAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about what is now the longest government shutdown in American history, its impact on the hardworking men and women of Massachusetts, and the opportunity cost of the current impasse.

Over the last several weeks, I have heard heartbreaking stories from Federal workers and their families from across north central Massachusetts. During a meeting I had last week in Andover with furloughed IRS employees, I heard about veterans struggling to afford their prescriptions and parents worrying about putting food on the table.

One woman had just recently lost her husband and others were still recovering from last September's gas explosions in the Merrimack Valley. A few days earlier, I spoke with an air traffic controller at Logan Airport who, after hearing President Trump's assurances from the Oval Office that the budget standoff would not lead to a shutdown last month, felt comfortable splurging on Christmas presents for his wife and four children. Now, with the bills coming due and his pay stub reading zero, he and his family are confronted with anxiety and financial hardship.

Each of the over 800,000 Federal workers impacted by this shutdown, close to 7,500 in Massachusetts alone, has a story to share. I am the daughter of a union iron worker and the country's biggest union, the AFL-CIO, has a saying: A fair day's wage for a fair day's work. We gain nothing from punishing the dedicated Federal workforce, nor do we position ourselves to recruit the best and the brightest if we can't even keep the lights on.

Today, the majority in this Chamber continues to vote for legislation that reopens the Federal Government, restores critical services, and makes Federal employees financially whole again.

As we continue to wait on the President and his party's leadership in the Senate to do the right thing by approving House-passed legislation to end this shutdown, critical pieces of legislation languish as the American people wait anxiously for Congress to act on real issues and crises, not the manufactured one on the border.

Healthcare costs continue to rise. Our climate is rapidly changing as coastal communities suffer from more intense storms and more frequent flooding, while California has faced down some of the largest and deadliest fires in the history of the State.

Gun violence continues to rip apart families and communities, and more Americans died of an opioid overdose than died during the Vietnam war. There is so much more we should be focused on.

Madam Speaker, we cannot allow shutting down the government over a policy debate to become the new normal. I was here as a staffer in 1995 during Newt Gingrich's shutdown and remember feeling that it was an unprecedented event, never to happen again. Sadly, that feeling was wrong.

We were all elected to this body to debate issues that matter to the American people. It is what our constituents expect us to do. It is time to open the government and debate border security on the floor of the people's House for all to see.

Ensuring the safety and the security of the United States is among our most solemn responsibilities. I take it very seriously, but the only crisis right now is the one the President is making.

Each day that the administration keeps the government closed, it threatens the financial security of Federal workers, the people who process our taxes, inspect our food, and ensure airport security as well as all of the people who depend upon them.

Each day of the shutdown is a day lost supporting education, improving roads and bridges, and providing affordable healthcare.

We have sent bill after bill to the upper Chamber to provide border security and reopen the government. This week, we will do it again. If the President wants to improve border security, he should work with Democrats on real solutions.

Madam Speaker, I oppose a \$5 billion wall. Experts say the wall won't stop the flow of drugs or prevent visa overstays. The people who live at the border don't want it. But wherever you stand on funding a border wall, holding Federal employees and their families hostage is unacceptable.

Madam Speaker, it is time to put people first, end this government shutdown, and get back to work.

MOURNING THE LOSS OF GDANSK MAYOR PAWEŁ ADAMOWICZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, as co-chair of the bipartisan Congressional Caucus on Poland, it is with a truly heavy heart that I rise this morning to express deepest sympathy to our NATO ally, Poland, and its countrymen and women on the brutal slaying of visionary Gdansk Mayor Paweł Adamowicz.

Mayor Adamowicz had served his city since 1998 as it championed the values of liberty, equality, and democracy. I hold profound respect for his enduring dedication, perseverance, and honorable service to his community and nation. He loved Gdansk as a beacon for a free Poland and gave his life to it.

What a deep tragedy this is for his grieving family, his wife, his children, his associates, for the Polish nation, and for freedom-loving people everywhere.

Far too much blood has been shed on Polish soil for the world to ignore such a heinous crime that took his life.

I visited Gdansk in both 2009 and 2013, and through these visits, I gained an even deeper respect for its noble history and its place on Earth, including the location where Nazi shelling at Westerplatte began the cataclysmic invasion of Poland starting World War II.

This year, we will commemorate the 80th anniversary of that moment.

Then more recently, Gdansk's redemptive transformative role in world history with the courageous Solidarnosc worker strikes that tripped the collapse of tyranny across Central Europe, imposed by the Soviet Union, ushering in the possibility of freedom for the millions who suffered under dehumanizing repression for over half a century.

In our modern era, Gdansk became that symbol of liberty. It formally partnered with the city of Cleveland, Ohio, which I am privileged to represent, along with Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE, in a sister-cities relationship. As part of my own congressional district, I am deeply honored and proud of this relationship.

In Mayor Adamowicz's memory, I and this Congress must stand ready to strengthen this alliance of liberty, certainly at this moment in history. In his memory, our Poland Caucus must pursue an annual liberty exchange in his name to nurture aspiring young Polish leaders who follow in his footsteps in pursuit of liberty and security for Poland.

Let his death serve as a constant reminder of how precious freedom remains. I am certain Polish law enforcement officials will examine the circumstances surrounding the perpetrator's actions with a diligent eye. They must ascertain whether there are any linkages that exist with outside influence or propaganda that might have catalyzed this heinous crime.

I know I speak on behalf of all Americans and of millions of Polish Americans across our country, including in Ohio, to remind all freedom-loving people that the United States stands with Poland now at this hour of mourning.

During these uncertain times, we must work to strengthen our transatlantic and NATO alliances through increased diplomatic, cultural, and military exchanges.

May the soul of Mayor Pawel Adamowicz rest in peace, and may the worth of his noble life inspire the young leaders of Poland to pursue his visionary leadership.

OPEN THE GOVERNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania). The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, today reflects two interesting commemorations. First, it is the actual birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who lost his life in a fight for justice for public employees. I wonder what he would say on this day while we are in the longest shutdown that is really against the Nation's proud and needed Federal employees across the Nation.

I think it is important for my colleagues to reflect that 80 percent of

those impacted who work for the Federal Government are outside of the Capital of the United States.

The second commemoration is a founder's day for Alpha Kappa Alpha. That is the group of young women who organized in a segregated America at Howard University to stand for service to the Nation. They were African American young women. As I have said, in a segregated Nation, in the midst of Jim Crow-ism, these women stood up to be servants of change and good business.

As I mention this, I do it because of where we are today. It is important to note the tragic impact that we cannot see that are not the headlines of Federal employees, their families, but even those who are not Federal employees impacted by the lack of service, such as a disabled woman who may not get her payments from HUD and may be evicted from housing that she desperately needs.

So why are we here? It is interesting that for the 2 years that the President has served after convincing every voter in America that any wall will be paid for by the country of Mexico, our neighbor and our friend, he never found a pathway for that to happen, because it was a fantasy, untrue, and it would never happen.

But in the 2 years that he had the Presidency, the Republican Party, the House and the Senate, he never made an issue of this wall. But when the Nation wanted a change and elected Democrats to the House of Representatives in the majority, all of a sudden in the close of the Mueller investigation and a number of other investigations going forward, indictments of various collaborators and close associates of the White House, all of a sudden the wall becomes a major national issue, rather than the crisis of dealing with the needs of the American people from gun violence, to jobs, to dealing with our disasters, it is that.

But, yet, we have worked as Democrats in the House to get the government open and to stop the Trump shutdown. When we first were sworn in, we voted on every bipartisan bill that the Senate had voted on to open the government. That was the week of January 3. We then, in the last week, voted for every Republican appropriations bill in order to send to the Senate for the government to be open.

Then there were ideas of extending the homeland security funding for a short period of time to February 8, 3 weeks. We supported that. We were even eager to hear from the Senator from South Carolina to open the government and then begin the negotiations.

None of these suggestions were taken. In fact, the suggestion of the Senator from South Carolina, a Republican, was rejected out of hand on this past Monday.

The President has not been able to provide his own solutions. He has not understood smart border security

means we can sit down and devise ways to ensure more personnel, to be able to make sure there are TSO officers, Border Patrol officers, Customs and Border Protection, laptops, technology, drones, and scanners.

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That is what the American people believe in. That is what the American people believe in. The American people are smart. They know that we can find a solution, and they also know the solution comes in many forms, an infrastructure of some sort.

Those of us on the border States have been to the border. It is our home. We have seen the 700 miles of border infrastructure. We have seen construction going on.

I just came back from the border again. I am from Texas. I was there in the space where Felipe, the little boy who died, came across. He came across with family members. They turned themselves in seeking asylum. More courts and more judges we need to ensure—

So there is a solution. In the name of Dr. Martin Luther King, I would simply say: let us be a peace finder, and let us be a warrior for justice and find the peace and solve the problem. Open the government to this White House.

THE PLIGHT OF AMERICAN WORKERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. JACKSON LEE). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise to praise what must be two corporate CEO superstars based on just how much they have made in compensation.

The first is Irene Rosenfeld who was CEO of Mondelez/Nabisco. Over the last 5 years she was paid over \$100 million, and her successor—who makes Ms. Rosenfeld look poor by comparison—Mr. Dirk Van de Put in 41 days was paid \$42 million.

Now, \$42 million for 41 days of work, \$105 million for the last 5 years' worth of work, you must think: What superstars these two are. What great achievements or great invention did these two CEOs come up with?

Here is what they have done leading Nabisco.

They closed the factory in Philadelphia in my district that employed hundreds of people for over 60 years. They closed a similar plant in Chicago that employed over 600 people. By the way, when I say employed, I am not talking about minimum wage jobs. I am talking about good, family-sustaining jobs.

Now, where did these jobs go?

To what other part of the United States did they go?

Salinas, Mexico, where workers, instead of getting family-sustaining wages, are getting paid approximately \$1.50 an hour. That is wrong. When you wonder why there is such angst in our