

For decades, students and families had few options when they went to choose education for their children. Today, there is a flourishing education marketplace. Some States have erased school district lines, directly creating choice within their traditional public school systems. Many others have embraced charter schools and dual-enrollment programs, and still others have provided educational savings accounts for parents and allowed voucher programs to assist families with offsetting the cost of private school tuition.

Educational options should meet the variety of unique needs of students. I am glad to see leaders across the country understand those needs and promote policies that provide an abundance of options.

Nearly 30 years ago, my wife and I studied the options available to us as parents as we went to educate our children in Arizona. At that time, there were very few options. I took the required general certification test that allowed us to home educate our oldest children.

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As our family and children grew, so did educational choice in Arizona. Our children are each unique individuals with varying talents, abilities, and interests. Homeschooling worked for some of our children, charter schools for others, and, even within the charter schools, different charter schools worked for different children. But each of our children received a quality education that allowed them to flourish and which prepared them for life.

Four of our children have graduated from college, the fifth has attended college, and our youngest is in her freshman year of college. My wife and I are pleased with their successes and are deeply appreciative of Arizona's liberal school choice policies that allow every child an opportunity to thrive and grow in a school that is the best fit for them.

Today, in Arizona, there are more than 550 charter schools, with 186,000 students enrolled in the 2016-2017 school year. That is an increase of 6,000 students, or almost 6 percent over the previous school year, and makes up about 17 percent of all of Arizona's public school students.

But school choice doesn't stop with charter schools in Arizona. We also offer scholarships funded by State tax credits to help make private schools more affordable, as well as education savings accounts that help more than 5,400 students and their families choose the educational option that is best for them.

I firmly believe parents and students should be in the driver's seat when determining which educational path best fits their needs. They can only do this if local, State, and Federal leaders continue to reduce involvement in education decisionmaking.

Again, I thank Representative MITCHELL and the leaders here today

and those who are working for school choice across this country, those who are fighting for policies that benefit students and their families.

Today's youth will be our future leaders in this great Nation, and even in the world. It is, thusly, imperative that we provide them with the highest quality education to ensure they have the foundation necessary to become the leaders we need.

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman BIGGS for sharing his experience and background. I really appreciate him taking the time this evening to talk about the importance of school choice.

As he notes, education should be measured by skills gained, not by standardized tests, not by grades, but what young people can do as they move through an educational process, begin postsecondary education, and start careers. Because long-term, ultimately, the assessment is not what a standardized test said; it is what you can get done in a day and what you can achieve.

Part of that is an exposure to STEM—science, technology—vocational skills, trades. The reality is we don't do enough in the education system to give those choices to young people. In many cases, where they live limits their access to those options.

I have an example of neighbors of mine. Their son wishes to take a vocational program that is offered in the school on the other side of the county line.

Now, ironically, by the way, it is closer if he goes there, but because of the funding limitations in the school systems, he can't. Again, we don't want to limit young people's choices. We want to give them options.

In order to make education options more available, students, parents, and school choice advocates must work together to get out the information of why it is so important, what difference it makes.

Let me give you a couple more examples.

Natalie Fenchel testified before the Michigan Civil Rights Commission in July of 2018 talking about school choice. She says:

There are a lot of misconceptions about charter schools.

Fenchel said:

I really got a lot of benefits from going to a charter school and continue to go throughout my college career. Especially with my nursing school, I feel so well prepared.

She lives in Traverse City, by the way, northern Michigan.

Traverse City is pretty rural, and charter schools really provided a second option for me. Grand Traverse Academy provided so many benefits that would be unable to be achieved for rural students that otherwise it would be difficult. I'm just really grateful I went to a charter school. It's helped me pursue my nursing degree.

Let me give you one more example I think will kind of tell the story of school choice and school options.

Kendra, now at Howard University, says:

Things could have turned out differently if I didn't have the opportunity to pursue a different educational path when I was younger. Thankfully, my parents were given the option to exercise school choice, which is, unfortunately, not the norm for every student.

Kendra is right. It should be the norm for every parent and every student.

We can't wait, nor should we, for government policy to fix it. There should be no Federal policy. I am not here advocating a Federal policy for school choice. Rather, I am advocating that we make those options available through sharing information, highlighting models, encouraging States and communities to make sure they are meeting the needs of young people across America because, as Congressman BIGGS notes, the future of America is those young people.

Parents, not Washington bureaucrats—I suggest, not bureaucrats in States—know what is best for their children. School systems, educational options, and funding options for that education need to be determined by the parents, working with their children as they get older.

School choice enables communities and local educators to focus upon preparing young people for the future, again, rather than preparing them for standardized tests, grades, or to push them into a model.

We need to stop with the whole idea of putting a round peg in a square hole and saying that is the best we can do, because America can do better for our young people.

Ultimately, our number one priority ought to be and needs to be getting children, getting kids an effective education that will enable them to pursue their lives going forward, whatever career path they choose, so they are prepared to be successful in this world today.

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

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. TLAIB. Madam 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 Michigan?

There was no objection.

HONORING DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. ON HIS 90TH BIRTHDAY

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today to take a moment as we honored Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on his

90th birthday yesterday, and we continue to honor him throughout this week and next Monday.

During this time, we recognize that we are in a society that is still riddled with injustices. As Representatives, we have a duty to lift up those who are marginalized and work to ensure that we continue a path toward justice for every person. No person should ever feel less than in the United States of America.

May we remember his legacy and his words and recommit to fighting for justice and equality. May we also speak out loudly and unapologetically about the ills of our society and work every single day to stay on the right side of justice.

Madam Speaker, in regard to the government shutdown, I am very passionate about making sure that we put a human face to this crisis, so I rise today, during the 26th day of this reckless government shutdown.

The real crisis here is the negative human impact. In the homes of each of the Federal workers across this Nation, nearly a month without pay. Our Federal workers are having to go to pawn shops to get cash to live. This is not right.

Yes, there is a crisis for the families in my district who have corporate polluters today in their backyards that do not have any EPA inspectors monitoring our air quality.

Yes, there is a crisis for the families who are wondering if their housing assistance will come next month from HUD.

The shutdown will have a long-lasting negative impact on our lives, and it must end immediately.

Madam Speaker, I would like to take some time today to share stories about residents in Michigan who are impacted directly.

Gregory Simpkins, who is president of the American Federation of Government Employees Local 778, said four of the union's TSA employees quit last week and three the week before. Right now, TSA employees are deemed essential and still going to work but are not getting paid.

Ms. Wilson, one of our TSA employees, said the morale is so low she has never seen anything like it. With personal budgets stretched, she is afraid they will lose even more workers. One worker said to her that he can't pay for gas money to get to work, and he is worried and scared for the future of his family and for his life.

Federal environmental protection workers right now are not at work protecting us, so when I think of this, I think of Line 5, which is a very dangerous oil pipeline that threatens the drinking water supply for Michiganders and our freshwater in the Great Lakes.

We are in trouble, Madam Speaker, because the computers that run that model for emergency response is shut down during this crisis.

Mark Coryell, president of the American Federation of Government Em-

ployees Local 3907, represents EPA workers who work in the Motor Vehicle Emissions Laboratory in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He and his colleagues are furloughed, meaning they are not working right now and not getting their pay.

For the public, this means they are not working on regulations that are now lagging because they are not showing up. Their lab certifies fuel efficiency numbers automakers display when selling cars to ensure that they protect our air quality and abide by the emission standards.

So, Madam Speaker, this is reckless and irresponsible. It is reckless that MITCH MCCONNELL's Senate cannot muster up the courage to reopen the government.

Senator MCCONNELL works for the American people. He has been missing in action during this crisis. He doesn't work for the President of the United States; he works for the American people. I ask him to stand up and do what is right for all of us and for our Nation and to open up government.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. OMAR).

Ms. OMAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to mark the 26th day of what is now the longest running government shutdown in history, a shutdown which is nothing more than a manufactured crisis designed to distract us from the instability and dysfunction that rules the Trump White House.

Trump has orchestrated this shutdown because he is looking for someone else to blame for the ineffectiveness of his administration. He wants to point to us here in Congress and claim that we are the reason he is failing to lead this country.

But that blame, Madam Speaker, belongs to Trump—and Trump only. He singlehandedly forced seven agencies to stop their crucial work, work that impacts the health and safety of every American.

Soon, millions of people could start to go hungry as the government runs out of money to fund nutritional assistance through the SNAP program.

Thousands could face eviction and become homeless as HUD becomes unable to deliver desperately needed housing assistance.

Federal courts could shut down.

Our aviation system could come to a halt as flights are grounded.

And the list, Madam Speaker, goes on and on.

But even before this shameful shutdown began, the executive branch agencies were already struggling to operate under Trump's leadership, or the lack thereof. As of today, there are more than 200 critical agency positions for which Trump has failed to even put forward a nominee. That is more than 200 agencies, offices, and programs that are operating without defined leadership, full staff, or resources.

Consequently, even once we are able to end this debilitating shutdown, our Federal Government will still be oper-

ating at less than full capacity so long as we have an ineffective, ego-driven President at the helm.

As Members of Congress, we took an oath to put the people of this country first, to protect their rights, safety, and well-being. That is why we, here in the House, voted on day one of this Congress, and nearly every day since, to reopen this government.

The President took a similar oath, and it is time that he honor it because, Madam Speaker, the American people deserve better.

The 400,000 furloughed Federal employees deserve better, including the 6,000 workers in my district, alone, who are currently wondering how they are going to pay their rent at the first of the month and if they are able to afford simple necessities like childcare and food. They deserve better.

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If the President wants to have a real conversation about border security, we are ready to have it. We can talk about finding a solution to our broken immigration system and how to adopt policies that extend humanity and compassion to migrants and refugees.

Every day, families are fleeing violence and untold hardships in countries like Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. These people are running from situations that are so brutal, that most Americans, thankfully, could not comprehend, but as a refugee from Somalia, I do. So I invite the President to engage in a real conversation with Congress on immigration.

If he wants, we can talk about the \$2 million the Guatemalan Government paid to D.C. lobbyists and how our government is cozying up to corrupt regimes in that country.

If he is interested, we could also talk about the U.S. funding and training for Honduras security forces that are involved in serious human rights violations and how these policies that we support are forcing people to flee from their homeland.

If he wants to talk, we are ready to talk, but we don't need a government shutdown to do it.

I join the similar calls made by my colleagues today, and I demand that the President end his temper tantrum and quest for a racist and cynical big wall, and I demand that he work with us to reopen the government before any more damage is done.

Enough is enough. The American people deserve better.

Ms. TLAIIB. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ).

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Madam Speaker, today I rise to tell the story of one of my constituents, Yahey Obeid.

Mr. Obeid was born in Yemen and came to the United States when he was 8 years old. His childhood dream was to become a pilot, and he knew and felt that in the United States, all things are possible and his dream could come true.

Mr. Obeid's dream did come true. He has been a Federal employee for 14 years, has two children, and a mortgage for his home in the Morris Park neighborhood of the Bronx. He studied hard, got his pilot's license, and is now an air traffic controller supervisor at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York City.

I spoke with Mr. Obeid today over the phone. He and air traffic controllers like him across the country missed their first paycheck this past week. He was telling me about how stressful his job is. Every single day, air traffic controllers have thousands of people's lives in their hands. With weather changes, flight delays, staffing complexities, and a myriad of other issues, their days almost never go exactly to plan. His job is to find solutions, analyze and adapt in real time to keep people safe in one of the busiest airspaces in the United States and the world.

It is terrifying to think that almost every single air traffic controller in the United States is currently distracted at work because they don't know when their next paycheck is coming.

Federal workers' jobs are stressful enough. The rise in New York City's cost of living is stressful enough. The fact that Mr. Obeid's family cannot be reunified due to fears over the Muslim ban is stressful enough. His several-thousand-dollar-a-month Bronx mortgage is stressful enough. The anti-immigrant sentiment of this administration is stressful enough.

The truth of this shutdown is that it is actually not about a wall, it is not about the border, and it is certainly not about the well-being of everyday Americans.

The truth is this shutdown is about the erosion of American democracy and the subversion of our most basic governmental norms.

It is not normal to hold 800,000 workers' paychecks hostage. It is not normal to shut down the government when we don't get what we want. It is not normal for public servants to run away and hide from the public that they serve. And it is certainly not normal to starve the people we serve for a proposal that is wildly unpopular among the American people.

Each and every Member of this body has a responsibility to this Nation and to everyone in the United States of America, whether they voted for us or not. This President shares in that responsibility as well, which means he has a responsibility to my constituent, Mr. Obeid.

President Trump has a responsibility to all air traffic controllers, FDA inspectors, TSA workers, and he has a responsibility to maintain the basic functioning of the United States Government.

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LEVIN).

Mr. LEVIN of California. Madam Speaker, on my first day in office, I

joined Democrats and Republicans in voting to reopen the government and end this senseless and now record shutdown.

And we have passed Republican legislation. Make no mistake: this is the same legislation that Senate Republicans supported just last month to fund the Federal Government, but instead of taking that legislation up for a vote, MITCH MCCONNELL and Senate Republicans have joined President Trump in what can be best described as a temper tantrum.

As the father of a 6-year-old and a 4-year-old, occasionally I know something about a temper tantrum.

MITCH MCCONNELL and Senate Republicans have joined President Trump in holding 800,000 Federal workers hostage over a demand for an ineffective, wasteful wall, a fifth century technology for a 21st century problem.

Don't get us wrong. Democrats continue to support strong, smart, effective border security solutions, including the following:

First, we support new drug, weapons, and contraband scanning technology at official ports of entry; installing new technology to eventually scan all commercial and passenger vehicles for illegal drugs and other contraband at our ports of entry. According to both CBP and DEA, 90 percent of heroin, 88 percent of cocaine, 87 percent of methamphetamine, and 80 percent of fentanyl being smuggled into the U.S. are seized at official ports of entry, not areas between the ports of entry, where President Trump wants to build his wasteful border wall.

Second, we support advanced technology to detect unauthorized crossings; cameras, sensors, and radar to spot moving people and objects in any weather or time of day that are mounted on towers and border patrol vehicles and on drones to surveil tough terrain.

Third, we support more customs personnel, filling the more than 3,000 vacancies for customs officers who facilitate trade and travel at our land, air, and sea ports of entry, inspect commercial and passenger vehicles for illegal drugs and other contraband, and ensure that travelers are vetted and screened before entering the United States.

Fourth, we support expanded port of entry infrastructure, building up our port of entry infrastructure to improve security and better facilitate trade and travel, ending the long delays for visitors and commercial shipments that cost our country billions in economic activity and thousands of jobs.

We support all these measures, and we have for some time, and we will continue to support these measures, but we will not waste billions of taxpayer dollars on an ineffective, expensive wall that can be tunneled under, climbed over, or cut through, a wall that Mexico was supposed to pay for.

A discussion about border security is no reason for President Trump to keep government shut down. Perhaps even more importantly, we cannot and must

not allow this President or any President to hold our government and Federal workers hostage every time we have a disagreement.

Federal workers in the communities I serve in California are being directly hurt by this shutdown, just as they are being hurt all across this country.

I recently heard from a Fish and Wildlife Service employee whose co-workers don't know how they are going to pay their bills and make ends meet.

I heard from members of the Coast Guard. And, yes, the Coast Guard is being impacted by this shutdown, because they are funded through the Department of Homeland Security. I heard from the Coast Guard.

I heard from air traffic controllers, and they are being forced to work without pay, and this becomes a security issue.

If this President and Senate Republicans truly cared about security, they would want to fund the Coast Guard and they would want to fund air traffic controllers and they would want to fund TSA agents at our airports.

I have heard from veterans. I have a huge number of veterans in my district. One-third of the Federal workforce consists of veterans, both Federal employees and contractors, and they have been negatively impacted by this.

So, Mr. President, you claim to care about veterans. How can you allow this to continue to hundreds of thousands of veterans who have served our country and who are working without pay?

The solution that we Democrats support is simple. Let's reopen the government, and then we can talk about the best way to secure our border.

Earlier today, I was honored to join some of my freshmen colleagues in trying to deliver a letter to Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL, simply asking him on behalf of the freshman class to end this shutdown. We couldn't find him, but we will keep at it.

We have got to get this government back open again. We have got to get people back to work.

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PORTER).

Ms. PORTER. Madam Speaker, huge critical elements of our Federal Government have now been shut down for 26 days. 800,000 blameless Federal employees have already missed their paychecks, and they don't know when their next paychecks are coming.

These furloughed workers are in crisis. They are facing impending loan defaults, utility shutoffs, long-term reductions in their credit scores, and potentially foreclosure or eviction proceedings. They are unable to buy necessities for themselves and their families, including necessary medications like insulin.

About 42,000 of those Federal workers are in my home State of California, and they are hurting. The costs of housing are a real challenge for families in my district, California's 45th. Thousands of Orange County residents

rely on Federal affordable housing programs to pay the rent each month.

Nationwide, this shutdown has already forced the expiration of over 1,100 rental assistance contracts between the government and private landlords and developers. These housing units are at risk of being permanently removed from our affordable housing stock.

In my district, California's 45th, the tenants of 749 homes rely on the Department of Housing and Urban Development to help pay their monthly rent. Our local Public Housing Authority distributes those funds to needy families. As required by law, 75 percent of these funds help applicants who are low-income.

Orange County's rental costs are the ninth highest in the country, averaging over \$2,000 per month. The cost of living is entirely unaffordable for many tenants without this Federal housing assistance.

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This past spring, our Federal Reserve found that 40 percent of Americans—4 in 10 Americans—don't have the cash to pay for an unexpected \$400 expense without selling a belonging or borrowing funds. American workers cannot withstand the financial shock of going unpaid.

For workers living paycheck to paycheck, this shutdown can easily spiral into bankruptcy. Even if we provide workers with backpay, which we have passed legislation to do, it will not make the harms of this shutdown erased.

The government isn't paying for groceries or utilities or child care. When the government reopens, it won't be paying the late fees that these workers have incurred in the meantime. It also won't pay the interest on new loans taken out by Federal workers to try to make ends meet until the President chooses to put people over politics.

These families will still have \$30 late fees on credit card payments. They will still have to pay interest on mortgage payments, which can be hundreds of dollars. They will still have delinquencies on their credit reports, which can drop their credit scores and stay on their records for up to 7 years.

That is why I have asked the major financial institutions of this country to step up and provide relief to Federal workers and their families who, through no fault of their own, have found themselves in financial distress. These banks and credit card companies should waive fees, pause debt payments, and stop eviction and foreclosure proceedings until weeks after workers receive their pay.

Lenders should also stop reporting negative information to credit reporting agencies during this difficult time.

Many of our Nation's credit unions are offering zero percent interest, short-term loans to help furloughed workers.

I have sent letters to all of the Nation's largest lenders and, each day,

have been meeting with representatives of the major banks, urging them to do more to help those affected by this shutdown. I have been pleased with some of their responses.

For example, Discover is allowing furloughed workers to use its existing disaster relief program to cope with the financial shock of going unpaid. This generous program halts all payments and prevents the imposition of late fees.

Ally Financial has created a customer assistance program that offers help to those hurt by the shutdown. Ally is willing to refund transaction fees, to eliminate bounced check fees, to waive late charges, and to remove early withdrawal penalties on CDs and other savings accounts.

Wells Fargo is waiving fees and pausing negative credit reporting, auto repossessions, and foreclosure proceedings for furloughed workers.

I urge all lenders to contact our office to share what they are doing proactively to help customers, their customers, who are going unpaid through no fault of their own.

I will continue to share with my colleagues what banks and lenders are doing so that they may do outreach to constituents in their districts who are being affected by the furlough.

The damage the shutdown has caused, and will continue to cause, doesn't end there. Thousands of IRS employees have been furloughed because of the shutdown, which has delayed tax refunds and income verification processing.

Without income verification documents, lenders may not be able to finance or refinance mortgages or other loans. For families experiencing recent financial hardship, access to refinancing could be critical to helping them right themselves.

These delays in tax processing are particularly harmful to low-income filers, especially those who qualify for the earned income tax credit and the additional child tax credit. The EITC is one of our government's largest anti-poverty programs, and millions of taxpayers rely on tax refunds each year to catch up on bills, to pay off debts, and to fund items like delayed medical procedures.

Understaffing will make it difficult for the IRS to answer taxpayer questions this year. This is the first year that taxpayers will be filing after the Republican tax law was implemented.

As a result of President Trump's tax law, Californians are, for the first time in our country's history, unable to deduct all of their State and local taxes. The elimination of this deduction is incredibly punitive to Californians in my district. At this moment, Californians, who are about to owe more Federal taxes than they did a year ago, don't have access to the Federal Government, to the IRS, to help them navigate this tax morass.

From late January through March 2, 2018, the IRS paid out tax refunds to-

taling over \$147 billion to 48.5 million households. Californians submit more tax returns than any other State. For families expecting an average refund of about \$3,000, the shutdown will have very real consequences.

If that weren't enough, the shutdown has also created an open season on the American consumer. Consumer protection websites run by agencies, like the Federal Trade Commission and the Federal Communications Commission, are closed due to lack of funding.

The FTC maintains the National Do Not Call Registry. Consumers can't sign up, and telemarketers can't check the updated lists. There is no one on the beat to enforce robocalling regulations.

The FTC has also shut down its critical website identitytheft.gov. In normal times, victims of identity theft can use this website to file a report and get the paperwork that they need to prove to banks and businesses that someone stole their identity. That website is no longer operating.

I want to take a minute to speak directly to every American hurt in any way by the shutdown.

Whether you are a Federal employee or someone who relies for support on one of those employees, I encourage you to ask for help. The shutdown is not your fault and you could not have predicted the longest shutdown in our history. I know how hard it is to ask for help. But do not let embarrassment prevent you from protecting your credit score and maintaining your financial well-being.

I have spent the last few days meeting with those representatives from our Nation's banks. Every bank I have met with has said to please contact them and ask for help, and do it sooner rather than later. They will waive your late fees. They will push back your payment deadlines, whether it is car insurance or your mortgage or credit card or some other line of credit. If you need something specific, like to delay foreclosure or have a bounced check fee waived, ask for that thing.

I have cast my vote to end the shutdown multiple times, and it makes me sick to think about how working families are hurting. I have dedicated my career to protecting consumers from financial hardship and from bankruptcy. I am proud to have the opportunity to use that expertise to help my constituents and unpaid Federal workers across this country.

Call your lender, call your bank, call your credit card company and ask for help. And if you need more help, call my office. Until the President ends this shutdown, it will be my priority in Congress to help all those who are being hurt by it.

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, as you can see, there has been a huge challenge among the American people across the country. In my district alone, I have the third poorest congressional district, with ZIP Codes with the worst air quality in the country.

Many of the workers who are not showing up to work are directly providing critical services to our residents back home. It is important for us to see beyond, obviously, the numbers of 800,000 workers. What were they doing? How were they providing for the American people? How were they serving our Nation?

We to continue to be very focused on the fact that this is a huge crisis that needs to be addressed, and we need the leadership of the Senate to rise and to support the bills, the same ones we sent to them before our January swearing in. They supported it then. I have no idea why they haven't been able to pass again the same exact bills they supported before we became the leaders in the majority in the House.

Madam Speaker, I, again, urge all of the Americans who are directly impacted by the shutdown to please reach out to us. Seek out help.

As the gentlewoman from California said, we are here to serve you. We are here to help you in any way that we can.

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

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, today is day 26 of the Trump Shutdown. Federal workers missed their first paycheck last Friday, and still there is no end in sight to this cruel and senseless shutdown. It is truly shameful that President Trump and Congressional Republicans are so desperate to secure taxpayer funding for an irrational border wall that they're willing to harm hardworking Americans and jeopardize national security by shutting down the federal government.

This outrageous shutdown has furloughed 400,000 federal workers, and it's forcing another 400,000 federal workers to work without pay. Among those working without pay are 53,000 Transportation Security Administration employees, more than 24,000 air traffic controllers and other Federal Aviation Administration employees, 54,000 Customs and Border Protection agents and customs officers, 42,000 service members in the United States Coast Guard, 17,000 Bureau of Prisons correctional officers, 14,000 FBI agents, and 6,000 Forest Service firefighters.

These dedicated public servants go to work every day for the American people. These hardworking people keep us safe. They should not have to worry about how they will keep a roof over their heads and feed their families.

My congressional district is home to Los Angeles/International Airport (LAX), the sixth busiest airport in the world and the third busiest in the United States. In 2017, more than 84 million passengers used LAX. All of these passengers depend upon the TSA's airport security screeners and the FAA's air traffic controllers to get them to their destinations safely.

The Trump shutdown doesn't just affect government employees. An economic study in 2011 reported that operations at LAX generated 294,400 jobs in Los Angeles County with labor income of \$13.6 billion and economic output of more than \$39.7 billion. The economic vitality of Los Angeles County depends upon the safety and security of LAX and the TSA and FAA employees who work there.

TSA employees are dedicated public servants who risk their lives every day to keep our

nation's airports and travelers safe. On November 1, 2013, a Transportation Security Officer named Gerardo Hernandez was tragically killed in the line of duty during an active shooter incident at LAX. He was the first TSA employee to be killed in the line of duty, and my colleagues and I passed the bipartisan Gerardo Hernandez Airport Security Act of 2015 in his honor. Our President has forgotten the critical role these American patriots serve in our national security.

Today, at LAX and airports throughout the country, Transportation Security Officers like Gerardo Hernandez are working without pay.

The Trump Shutdown is endangering public safety, national security, and the livelihoods of the people whose job it is to protect us.

Democrats want to end this shutdown now. On Day One, the new Democratic House of Representatives passed Senate Republican legislation to end the Trump Shutdown and re-open government. Despite the Republicans' relentless obstruction, Democrats have continued to take further action to re-open government, passing individual Senate Republican appropriations bills to re-open all government agencies.

American families and workers should not be punished because of a policy disagreement in Washington, D.C. Donald Trump should stop holding the safety, security, and paychecks of workers in my district, and throughout the country, hostage. He must re-open the government immediately.

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. Lasky, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 251. An act to extend by two years the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards Program of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

BORDER WALL IS NOT ANTI-IMMIGRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, I know we have had a lot of people talking today on the issue of the shutdown. I thought I would like to give a little different talk, or a little bit of explanation, as far as what is going on here, to the American people.

The first thing that offends me is when people imply that the position of the President is that he is anti-immigrant. Every year, in this country, we swear in 700,000 new people to become citizens of this country—700,000. On a per capita basis, that is, for example, twice what Germany swears in and over 50 times the number of people who become new Mexicans each year.

We should not apologize for swearing in 700,000 new people, and President

Trump has made no effort to reduce that amount. He is just saying people who want to come here illegally should get in line and be one of those 700,000.

I also want to point out, in addition to that, we let in another million people every year, primarily because they are relatives of other people who are already here. We let in over 180 million people for other reasons, including about 70 million people, every year, who want to work here.

There is no reason why anybody should, under any circumstances, as President Trump let's these things go on, say that he is anti-immigrant, or anybody who wants to build a wall is anti-immigrant, because that will not affect these very generous numbers.

Now, let's look where America is compared to historically. We, right now, have a higher percentage of people born in other countries in America than any time since World War I, and those are people who we can confirm. It is very difficult to get accurate numbers on the people who are here illegally, for obvious reasons.

We have had an increase in the number of people who speak a foreign language at home, and that is wonderful. I am sure all of our ancestors, or most of our ancestors, at one point spoke a foreign language. But it is nice if, over time, we accept enough immigrants that, at any given time, most of us are speaking a common language.

The number of people who spoke a foreign language at home in 1980 was about 11 percent. It is now 21 percent.

Again, these numbers have not caused Donald Trump to ask for a cut in legal immigration. The American people should realize Donald Trump and the people who want a wall are pro-immigration.

But the next question is: Do we have a crisis?

First of all, about 80 percent of the heroin in this country comes across our southern border. Now, some of it can be prevented by a wall, some can't. But the huge number of people who are dying around the country, to me, makes this a crisis.

We are getting more and more children at the border. Why are we getting more children? Because, I think, the word is out, particularly in Central America, that if you come to America with children, you are going to be able to find a way to get in. We need a border wall, not only to prevent people from coming in, but to send the message that America is treating its immigration laws seriously.

People who sneak across the border, who are, after all, breaking one law, while very few are horrible criminals, of course, are going to bring a given number of people who break the law. We believe, in the last 10 years, illegal immigrants coming across the border have, during their lifetime, been charged with over 1,000 homicides. We have enough high crime areas in America as it is without letting people come through here without being appropriately vetted.