

woman on a subway who was attacked by persons who said that she was diseased. They used a word that I would not use—the b-word is what it is called in this forum tonight—because she had on a face mask.

People have assumed that this is beneficial. It may not be. Many scientists—the persons who are supposed to know, the persons who deal with these things, who have studied these things—are saying to us that the mask doesn't help people, in general. It does help the persons who are aiding and assisting us, perhaps the physicians and nurses.

Be that as it may, if a person chooses to wear the mask and happens to be of Asian ancestry, that person ought not be attacked, that person ought not be spoken to in harsh language.

People have a right in this country to wear the type of face gear that they choose. If they choose to wear a mask, so be it.

We ought to respect people and not assume things and say things about them because of their ethnicity, because of their ancestry.

Another example, a person who is of the Hmong ancestry was checking in at a hotel and was told that Asians are not welcome. That is not a live-and-help-live philosophy. That is a form of nativism and xenophobia that is invidious, that is harmful to our society and harmful to this person trying to check into a hotel.

I remember a time in this country when there were certain places that I could not check into simply because of the hue of my skin. I was not allowed. There were signs that said: "No coloreds allowed." Those were the polite signs. There were some that had words that I will not repeat.

But I remember this. And when I remember this, I relate to persons of Asian ancestry told that they can't come into a given business place simply because of who they are.

I am here because I believe in live and help live, and I want to help them through this time of crisis.

In California, a 16-year-old high school student was sent to the emergency room after being attacked by bullies who accused him of having the coronavirus simply because of his ethnicity.

I have been attacked in my life, chased because of my ethnicity. I reflect on this, and it causes me to understand the plight of this person.

I stand here tonight to speak up, to speak on behalf of people of Asian ancestry who are being assaulted, who are being accused, who are being denied simply because of who they are.

I have an indication that even just looking Asian has been enough to incite attackers, to hurl insults and accuse individuals of being disease carriers.

Friends, this is a time for us to band together and come together as a Nation. This is not a time for us to engage in this sort of phobia, this xeno-

phobia, this nativism. This is not the time.

This disease is not something that is related to any ethnicity. It is not related to any party. It doesn't assault or attack Republicans or Democrats because they happen to be of a certain party. It doesn't matter what your gender is.

This disease attacks you because you are a human being and because you have been exposed to it in such a way as to allow it to enter your body.

We ought to see each other now as people of one race, the human race. We ought to see each other as people who we should help live.

We should embrace the philosophy of live and help live. Help the minimum wage worker. Help those who are not as fortunate as we are. Help those who may not be of the same hue as you. Help those who have been accused and attacked. This is a time for us to send a message that we won't tolerate it.

I am here because I believe that Asian Americans, those of Asian ancestry, should not have to defend themselves by themselves.

I think that it is important for persons who are not of Asian ancestry to send a message that we stand with them, and we stand against the Islamophobia that might ensue, the homophobia, all the various invidious phobias that can ensue from persons deciding that they are going to attack people because they are different.

I have moved on from the Asian ancestry now to persons who are different. In this country, we ought not attack people simply because they are different.

I believe that the differences that we have can make a difference in the culture, and it makes us richer for having these various differences. They are good for the country.

Please, let us send a message that we will not tolerate persons being assaulted because of who they are, that we will not tolerate persons being denied the opportunity to have access to various places within our society that we ordinarily would have access to simply because we happen to have the bill of fare. If we can pay our way in, pay for the hotel room, then I think we ought to allow people to have access.

More important than all of these, I think that it is important for us to treat each other with dignity and respect simply because we are people of the same creator. That creator, I believe, expects us to treat each other the same, regardless of our hues, regardless of our various differences.

This is an opportunity for us to pull together. I believe that this is a great adversity, but I also believe that it provides us a great opportunity to come together and stand up for each other.

Let us live and let live, simply leave people to find their way as best they can.

Let's help people through life. I am here because somebody helped me, and I want to be there to help others.

I promise that I will do what I can to be of service to man, to humans, more specifically, to men and women in this society.

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

PUTTING ECONOMIC REPORTS IN CONTEXT

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. Madam Speaker, we try to come here every week to do sort of a combination of economic reports and what we believe is a solution to long-term debt.

Often, we sort of get a little, shall we say, technical, if not a bit geeky. But, tonight, I am going to try to do a little bit of that but also try to put it in context to where I think we are.

We in the Joint Economic Committee, and also even some of the staff from the Ways and Means Committee—and bless their souls for tolerating my questions. They have been very helpful, but there is still a lot of things we don't know. But I want to start off with encouragement.

About 20 minutes ago, I got off the phone with my father. My father is in his mid-eighties, still doing pretty darn well but still has some health issues.

How do you turn to a family member like that—he is blessed to live in Scottsdale, Arizona, which is just a beautiful, beautiful place—and say, "Father, for the next few weeks, you may want to not go to the different activities," which I know he loves, the art shows, the art walks, and all of these other things that are activities in our community.

For the next few weeks, because of the things we are learning about the coronavirus, the populations that appear to be most at risk are those with a series of health issues. Do you have heart issues? Do you have diabetes? Do you have lung issues? Particularly, are you in your seventies or, in my father's case, mid-eighties?

Sort of the moral outreach I am going to ask everyone to think about is my call to him: "Hey, we have family in the neighborhood. If we can convince you to maybe spend a little bit more time around the house and avoid crowds and some of your activities, we will be happy to make sure food and things are dropped off at the house. If you need your pharmaceuticals picked up, we will be happy to go out and do that. We will try to be good family and be supportive."

Why don't we take that same concept, as both Democrats and Republicans, and say to the VFW, the Legion, my Knights of Columbus club, or some of the other things in our community: Are you reaching out to the seniors in your community?

□ 1900

Are you reaching out to those who may have certain health issues?

If they are making the decision to follow what our county and State health departments are suggesting, what the CDC, HHS, and the others are suggesting, that, if you are in those more statistically vulnerable populations, you are going to stay home, avoid the crowds, those things, at least for a few weeks, what do we as a community do? What do those organizations do to reach out to their friends and their members and let them know they are loved and let them know we care, but also provide a little bit of that human contact, even if it is through the phone, even if it is through FaceTime.

We were having the conversation of putting my little daughter a little more so he could FaceTime and have that contact with his granddaughter, but also picking up the food, the pharmaceuticals, and other things so that we don't create a situation where we take a vulnerable population and make them isolated from everyone else; so just a little moment of kindness, a little moment of thought.

If it is our grandparents or the friend from over at the VFW and they happen to be in those age brackets, they have what they call morbidity, comorbidities—and I always mispronounce that, so forgive me—what do we as a community do to try to actually reach out and be supportive and be helpful?

These are the sorts of things that those of us who are Members of Congress go to, all these briefings. We hear all the statistics. We are moving money around. We are trying to get the manufacturing and testing of all these things where they need to go. And a lot of good things are happening.

We know there are a lot of really smart people going as fast as they can, but now is the moment also for a lot of us in our communities to reach out and say: Look, the experts are saying, at least for the next few weeks, maybe the best thing is, if you are in that defined vulnerable population, stay home.

How do we, as their friends and neighbors, make sure that they are not feeling locked away and isolated, that they are still loved and they are still part of our community? It is also our moral obligation to reach out and help our neighbors, bringing things to their doorstep.

So, actually, what I am calling for—that is not Republican or Democrat; it is actually being human—is that idea of let's make that happen.

This evening I am going to do a telephone townhall in our district. That is actually going to be one of the themes. We have already been on the phone reaching out to a number of the veterans service organizations because we know, in a lot of their organizations, their mean ages are much, much older.

So how do we get the younger veterans now to actually be that contact with the world for those older veterans who may be choosing to isolate for a little bit?

Madam Speaker, math is math. We see the data that so many who are young seem to be doing just great. Someone like myself, I am a fairly severe asthmatic. I worry a little bit. But we are washing our hands, and we are taking the basic precautions you would take during any severe flu season.

We actually now have a little timer in our office, and every couple of hours, we are washing the doorknobs and doing things like that. It is a little compulsive, but it is the right thing to do.

So I just ask all of us, don't be macabre, don't be looking down. This is just part of life. But let's treat it like adults. Let's respect the professionals and their talents and the information they are providing us and let's work through this. Let's do the right things. But also, let's not isolate those populations we are being told are vulnerable.

On one hand, we are saying: You really should stay out of crowds, stay out of these things for a few weeks. We have the moral obligation to make them know they are still loved and cared for.

All right. A couple of things I do want to go through because we are trying to get our head around what is happening economically.

The fact of the matter is we just don't know yet. We don't have enough inbound data. I can give you some great data where we were a week ago. Has that changed? I promise you it has changed. But how much?

The good news is we went into this March actually surprisingly economically healthy. Do you remember last Friday, the jobs report number?

Now, remember, that jobs report number is looking back over the last month and working out particularly over the last week and the hires. But when you are gaining over 273,000 new jobs, Madam Speaker, that is pretty amazing, particularly where we were in the cycle.

Forgive me for reaching back here. I hope I am not breaking a protocol, but I actually subscribe to an app called GDP Now. It is the Atlanta Fed's calculator.

On March 6—that is the last update—they were at 3.1 percent GDP for this quarter. That is wonderful.

Do I think we are going to end up there? Probably not. But it at least lets you know there was something really, really positive happening in the economy.

When you start seeing numbers like this where we were hitting 3.5 percent unemployment—and I am going to touch on that just because I am fascinated with labor force participation and what that means to economic growth, but also what it means to the numbers of people in our community who are choosing to come back into the labor force, come back to work.

These are people who quit. There are fancy economic terms of the marginally detached, but from a societal

standpoint and from an economic standpoint, when those who are not looking all of a sudden start popping up in the data as coming back into the labor force, these are wonderful things. We were clicking along pretty darn well.

When you start looking at this February jobs report, we, as all Americans, should have been really happy with the economic robustness and stability.

I am also going to show another board and demonstrate how we are also the engine that is basically saving the rest of the world economically. We are pulling the rest of the world along where, just a few years ago, 3 years ago, the rest of the world was actually moving up and they were sort of pulling us along. Now that is somewhat reversed.

You always have to put that in context, Madam Speaker, because it gives you a sense of how strong the last couple years have been economically, particularly for labor markets.

I have been behind this mike a dozen times showing the wage charts and the miracle that has really happened the last couple years for the working poor.

It is a certain societal cruelty we have had for the last couple decades of our brothers and sisters who didn't have particular skills or may not have finished high school, the really smart economists were functionally writing them off. They were going to be part of the permanent underclass.

In many ways, if you sort of step back, there is a level of cruelty in just taking any American and saying: You don't have certain things we think the economy is going to look for. We are writing you off.

One of the great miracles we have had in the last couple years is that population, that bottom 10 percent of income earners—we refer to them as the working poor because they often have very moderate to low to none in the way of skills—their wages have actually been going up the fastest, double the mean of everyone else.

So part of our theme is also growth is moral. You can see it in society in how many people who have had a pretty rough decade seem to have come back the last couple of years.

But now we are going to have to face the issues of what do the next couple months look like with the coronavirus, what sort of disruption, what do we do as a body to maximize economic stability, also be rational, and then get back to the pattern that actually was helping so many Americans start to have these opportunities.

Madam Speaker, hopefully, that doesn't become partisan. Hopefully, that is just math and smart people coming up with ways, because those policies actually affect people's lives. That is the decision whether you can buy that new vehicle or buy a house or some of these other opportunities out there.

This slide is one we have been working on as a concept. It is a little noisy,

and these are really hard types of charts to read and look at, but it is really important.

We had lots of smart people a couple years ago basically saying that, as we are getting older as a society, we are never getting back to those days of the mid-1960s and labor force participation. It is just not going to happen.

Then we started to break apart some of the numbers, and we found this really interesting thing out there: We have, functionally, millions of Americans who were not looking—they basically had quit in previous years—who suddenly are coming back into the labor force.

So this is a slide of the share of newly employed from outside the labor force. So these are folks we don't consider traditionally as, well, they are part of our unemployment statistics or they are part of the rolling—they are getting unemployment benefits, or they have been looking, or even outside the marginally attached population. These are, functionally, folks who were not even looking.

What is stunning is you can see the wild ride we have had. Post the 2008 recession, this population had just sort of detached. They were in the mid-fifties of looking at working, coming into the labor force. Today, this population is starting to approach the mid-seventies, and it has substantially happened in just the last couple of years.

I want to argue that is a combination of lots of complex things, and it is something we don't talk about enough. Because there has been wage growth, the value of their labor has gone up.

You may actually get some things that are uncomfortable to talk about, Madam Speaker, and the numbers are difficult, so it is still theoretical. Some things have happened with immigration that have also made their labor, possibly, more valuable.

The other thing also is that work has changed, where, if you or I went back 10 or 15 years ago for parts of this population, they are not picking up bags of concrete. Now their work has changed. Is that part of it?

We have these fancy economists who come in and walk through all these different reasons, and we are trying to get our head around it, but the one thing we know is that there is something good happening in our society.

How do we as policymakers, those of us on the more conservative side, our brothers and sisters who might be on the more liberal side, and some of the people in the middle who call themselves moderate, how do we actually come up with ways to keep these good things happening? How do you do that in a society right now where our politics are often so polarizing?

I want to argue we actually have a moral obligation to figure out things that are working, figure out what is making them work, and do more of it.

This is a slide I am just putting up because it rounds out a discussion we were having a couple of weeks ago about what is happening in the world.

If you see the blue, Madam Speaker, that is the G-7. That actually has the United States in it. If you look at the orange, that is actually the G-7 without the United States. So call it the G-6, I guess. The green is the United States.

If we go back to the numbers that were coming out in 2017, you see the rest of the world through economic growth was very similar to the United States. They were helping us; we were helping them. But you can also see the last couple years the United States' economic growth has dramatically surpassed the rest of the industrialized world, the big economies.

There is this push-pull concept in economic growth. In the last couple years, we are basically—if you look at the last two sections of the graph, you start to understand that we are the engine that functionally has been keeping much of the rest of the world afloat. You can also see the incredible spike in growth and the continued growth post-tax reform.

The fact of the matter is what we did in the U.S. tax reform and the economic growth that it brought did things for the entire world. It is in the charts. It is in the data.

The other thing I want to put up, and I try to put this up about once a month just because it is that continuing conversation that we often get lost in our rhetoric and we get a piece of rhetoric in our head, we get behind microphones, we say it over and over and then, later on, find out that the math actually doesn't match the rhetoric.

This is actually what we call tax receipts. Many of you will think of it as revenues, but the proper term from the IRS and those of us on the Ways and Means Committee is "receipts." These are revenues as they are booked into Treasury. It is just really, really important to get your head around this.

In 2017, '18, and '19, even though we are post-tax reform and we had lots of really smart people—Members of Congress and economists—who were saying that this chart was going to crash this way, it didn't. As a matter of fact, if you look at this chart, those are the highest receipts in U.S. history.

□ 1915

So I beg of us—at some point those folks who will spend their time attacking the tax reform—I understand it is an election year—attempt to tell the truth about the math. And the ultimate test is: Are we getting the revenues in or not?

Now, the mix of the revenues has changed. Corporate taxes are down. Individual taxes are way up, particularly payroll, because more Americans are working. But that was the idea. And it wasn't just a Republican idea. If you actually go back during the Obama years, President Obama's economic team actually recommended much of the same thing in corporate taxes.

The difference is, it happened over here, so, therefore, it must be vilified,

even though that is truly unfair. This has been an economic concept for years. We finally got it delivered, and it is working.

This is the chart that I will often get the most phone calls about, and it is getting a little dated. We need to update it. The chart is not adjusted with constant dollars. That means over the next 30 years—this is a 30-year chart—you would probably reduce the numbers by a third, and that just means adjusting the purchasing power of today's dollar for an inflated dollar in the future.

The chart is very, very simple, though. And it is one where I am trying to communicate the future debt—and it is overwhelming—that is coming is demographics. It is those of us who are baby boomers; we are getting older. We have earned benefits. We have earned Social Security. We have earned Medicare. We just have a small problem. We didn't set aside the actual cash.

So here is a simple thought experiment with this chart:

This is Social Security. This is Medicare. If we would pull those out, 30 years from now—actually now, it is like 28 years—we would have \$23 trillion in the bank. But if we roll Social Security and Medicare back in, Social Security and Medicare's shortfall is \$103 trillion at the end of that 30 years, meaning when you add these two together, you are functionally at an \$80 trillion debt.

And what is really hard for this body to talk about is saying we have made promises, we are going to have to find a way to keep them. So every week we try to come here and say, "there is a way to do that." But you have to be willing to engage in something that sometimes is disharmonious around here, and sometimes just a little complicated. Because let's face it, as a body, we have difficulty doing one major concept, and our argument is you need to do dozens of things, and we almost need to do all of them immediately.

And what is so frustrating and heart-breaking is almost all of these turn partisan. And the ones that are technology we will find a way to make partisan and they are all absolutely necessary to create the economic growth, to create the price disruption in healthcare. As you just saw, most of that \$80 trillion debt at the end of that 30 years is Medicare.

I use this slide over and over, but we are trying to make an argument. A tax code, a regulatory code, an immigration code that maximizes economic expansion, incentives to be in the labor force.

And think about that. We right now still have a problem with millennial males coming into the labor force. We have had a miracle in the last 20 months of millennial females coming back in. They are coming in like crazy. We still have a problem with millennial men.

How about people who are older? Can you design incentives in the Social Security, Medicare, and other benefits to stay or come back into the labor force with their talents?

The other one is: Are we willing to actually unleash technology? And these are the presentations I have enjoyed the most. Just last week, I was here on the floor showing things, technology-wise, that could crash the price of healthcare. We actually brought in a slide a couple of weeks ago saying there was a major success in being able to put in T-cells that grew pancreatic cells, and those pancreatic cells in a mouse looked like they were growing insulin.

Now, when you go from a mouse experiment to humans, it is a decade. But the previous slide, you saw the math for Medicare—and Medicare is the key driver of U.S. debt in the future—30 percent of Medicare's debt is just diabetes. As a body, let's make sure the resources, the talents, the mechanisms, the encouragement, all the things we can do to create those disruptions is not a cure for something like diabetes because it is good policy. It is the moral, ethical thing to do, and it is also an amazing change in U.S. debt if you just cured diabetes.

Now diabetes, it turns out, is complicated. There are autoimmune issues. There are lifestyle issues. There is 1 and 2. It is complicated. But that is the way we need to be thinking around here if we are going to have an impact.

Well, it turns out in that same discussion of technology, a couple of years ago, I became fascinated with the concept of a universal flu vaccine. And the Gates Foundation, I believe, has moved \$60 million there. I believe Congress, a couple of years ago, we started to move some lines of research money into that concept. Now, we are told it is complicated, but we may be a couple of years away from actually having a universal flu vaccine.

So think about the societal economic disruption we believe we are stepping into right now. Now, it is not going to last forever, but it will last for a little while. Just that technology of something like a universal flu vaccine may become the solution that this type of viral—this economic disruption, societal health disruption, never happens again.

My argument is, I think, fairly elegant. We need to do all these growth and cost and technology disruptions. And if we do them, I believe we can make an argument that the ability to keep promises—our promises for Social Security, our promises for Medicare—there is a path. It is just uncomfortable to talk about these things, because when you use the word “disruption,” that often means someone's business model, someone's current technology.

We have used the example dozens of time here on the floor: “How many of you went to Blockbuster Video last weekend?” Of course not. The technology changed. Now, you hit a button

at home and you stream your entertainment.

We need to make sure that those types of disruptions are now happening in environment and healthcare technology, and who knows what else. We also see some of them even now coming in energy generation.

So there is a path. We don't have to be dour as we think about the future of the United States. It is actually incredibly optimistic. But to make the optimism a reality, this body needs to stop being dysfunctional. We cannot spend another year of our lives like we did last year, functionally accomplishing nothing of value. We are better than that. We know there is a path. We actually know the math. Now, let's just get our act together.

OUR IMMIGRATION ISSUES

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 think one more time we have to address what I feel 10 years from today will be viewed as the most significant issue that our Congress has to deal with, and that is immigration.

Madam Speaker, I want to mention the issue one more time, because a couple of weeks ago, I again went to the Arizona border to see what is going on, and I have since talked to a leader of the union of the Border Patrol agents.

I say this is the most important issue because our immigrants are going to determine where America is or what America is like 10 or 20 years from now. Donald Trump has made a lot of progress on the border, but we have to remember all of this progress—or almost all of this progress—is solely caused by our President.

First of all, let's recount the progress. He has begun to build the wall. When I was down in Arizona, I saw 12 miles of the wall along the Arizona border. While it is possible to get over the wall, it is very difficult.

The wall is 30-feet high. It is very difficult, and people, I think, only in the best of physical shape can get 30 feet up. There is sometimes concertina wire at the top, which causes some people, at least in Nogales, to get stuck at the top, and it is very difficult to get back down. So that is some progress.

We also have made progress, and we have reached agreement with Mexico, saying “if you are coming here for asylum, you have to be held on the Mexican side of the border pending a hearing.” Not only does this cause people not to be able to come across immediately but discourages people from Central America or Africa or South America from coming here in the first place. Because prior to President Trump becoming President or reaching an agreement with the Mexican Government, people would come here, say they were seeking asylum, and they

would be placed somewhere in the United States and never show up at the hearing anyway. Therefore, this is the way we have many people who are going to wind up living in America.

And the third thing President Trump has done, is he has put in a public charge rule covering people coming here legally, saying, “we do not want you in this country if you are going to wind up taking advantage of our public benefits.” It is not too strict of a law. He allows people to stay for 1 or 2 months, if they are on food stamps during that period of time—but, obviously, given that we can pick whoever we want around the world, we do not—our country right now, which is running a trillion-dollar deficit—want to take more people who are taking money out of this system rather than putting money in this system.

So the question is: What should Congress do now that we have kind of begun to take control of our borders?

The first thing we have to do is we have to permanently change our asylum laws so that in the future when people come here, we know we are dealing with people who genuinely have to seek asylum. We should not be taking—per President Trump—people who have to cross several countries to get here.

If you are in Venezuela, and you are genuinely at risk for your life, what would you do? You would move to Colombia. You would move to Panama. You would move to Costa Rica. You won't go through six or seven countries to get to the United States.

Secondly, we have to hire more people at the border. As we put up our wall, and as we hold people south of the border who are seeking asylum, more people will try to sneak in the country. As more people try to sneak in the country, it is more important that we have border patrol agents.

Over time, the drug cartels, which run the southern border, become more and more sophisticated. They have spotters along the border. And, quite frankly, they have equipment that is superior sometimes to the equipment our own Border Patrol has.

As long as we continue to allow this to happen, the cartels south of the border break up families. And they break up families by using minors, 16-, 15-, 14-year-olds to smuggle drugs across the border. They use these young people as spotters, knowing full well that if they are caught, they will not wind up in American jails but just turned around and sent back south of the border again.

Another thing that we have to look at is we should pass a bill, which I have introduced in the past, saying no public benefits for people who are not American citizens. Historically, in this country, when people come here, many return to their country of origin. The reason they return to their country of origin is they are not able to find work here.

We ought to across-the-board say, “no public benefits for people who are