

Bob was a genuine public servant who cared about the well-being and safety of all his Redding residents.

I send my sincerest condolences to his family and all of his colleagues he served with so many years.

COMMEMORATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON ALCOHOL ABUSE AND ALCOHOLISM

(Mr. TONKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TONKO. Madam Speaker, I rise today in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

For 50 years, NIAAA has been the leader in generating and disseminating fundamental information about the effects of alcohol on our health and well-being and applying that knowledge to improve the lives of those struggling with alcohol-related problems.

In the United States alone, nearly 15 million people have an alcohol-use disorder. An estimated 88,000 people die from alcohol-related causes annually, and alcohol misuse has immeasurable impacts on families and communities across our Nation.

While NIAAA has made significant achievements toward improving public health over the past 50 years, such as illuminating the negative effects of prenatal alcohol exposure and supporting the development of effective behavioral therapies and medications to treat alcohol use disorder, more work is needed.

With technological advances and an expanding knowledge base, NIAAA is poised to advance alcohol research to the next frontier toward the goal of helping more Americans live healthier, more productive lives.

STOP THE IMPORTATION OF SYNTHETIC FENTANYL FROM CHINA

(Mr. BURCHETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURCHETT. Madam Speaker, our country is still battling the opioid epidemic, and every day we hear heart-breaking stories of those lost to overdoses during this crisis. Congress must remain vigilant in the fight against opioids, especially synthetic fentanyl from China.

China is the heart of the global fentanyl supply chain, and most fentanyl trafficked into the United States is produced in China. Sometimes Chinese fentanyl is shipped directly into our country, and other times it is brought across our northern and southern borders by smugglers working with Chinese drug dealers.

It only takes a small amount of fentanyl to overdose, and unsuspecting drug users often purchase drugs cut with fentanyl. More and more Ameri-

cans are dying from synthetic opioid overdoses. There were an estimated 31,000 deaths in 2018.

The Chinese Government needs to go after the massive fentanyl operation in their country and should execute the dirtbag fentanyl drug dealers, smugglers, and producers.

I was a cosponsor of the Fentanyl Sanctions Act, which was included in the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act, which gives the President the authority to impose sanctions against countries failing to do their part to stop illegal opioid traffic. If the Chinese Government wants to avoid sanctions, they must bring the lowlifes running this massive fentanyl operation to justice.

RIISING NUMBER OF COVID-19 CASES

(Mr. SOTO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, coronavirus cases are rising again in Florida. Today, Florida reported 7,925 new cases.

Coronavirus cases are rising nationally. Yesterday, there were over 155,000 Americans who contracted the coronavirus and another 1,707 Americans dead. That is the highest daily death toll since May 14.

American families need our help: testing, tracing, treatment, and a vaccine; keeping our first responders on the job; small business relief; jobless benefits; and food and housing assistance.

And what is Congress doing about it?

The House majority has voted twice for the Heroes Act, including a compromise. President-elect Joe Biden has said right now Congress should come together and pass COVID relief packages like the Heroes Act.

Where is President Trump? Where is the Senate Republican majority? Millions of Americans would like to know.

America is in crisis. We must come together as a Congress, and the time for action is now.

CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS DISCUSSES COVID-19 DISPARITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. LEE of Nevada). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ESPAILLAT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Madam Speaker, today we reconvene our monthly Spe-

cial Order hour of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus for the first time, really, since the COVID-19 pandemic reached America's shores.

As we speak here today, America's staring down the barrel of a third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, the worst one, perhaps, that we have so far faced.

We are adding a million cases a week—yes, a million cases every week. We are approaching a total of 11.5 million cases, more than any other nation in the world by far, despite many more populous countries with outbreaks.

Even more grim, we lead the world in the number of confirmed COVID-related deaths and quickly are approaching 1,000 deaths per day, more than any other nation facing this new wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

States and cities are careening towards lockdowns.

Just today, Madam Speaker, New York City ordered a shutdown of its schools. It had attempted to open, partially, the schools, but today the mayor of the city of New York ordered another shutdown of the school system. Over 1 million children will stay at home with their family members.

And so States and cities are locking down as we speak, right now, as we near the Thanksgiving holiday.

Many States across the country, Governors and mayors have spoken to their constituencies and asked them not to congregate in their homes with more than 10 people, family members, during Thanksgiving. It is a wise recommendation by mayors and Governors.

□ 1830

Show your loved ones that you love them by keeping them alive. Don't expose them to the COVID-19 virus. As we speak right here, as I said, New York City has announced that it has indefinitely closed schools.

Madam Speaker, we all know why America is facing such a terrible outbreak of this virus: The abject failure by this administration to act and numerous Republican leaders to take this pandemic seriously. It was minimized, underestimated, yet it was deadly to over 250,000 Americans. The failure of leadership—the failure of leadership to encourage something as simple as wearing a mask.

The phenomenon of the COVID-19's unbridled spread throughout the United States is a serious one. But there is even more serious phenomenon taking place, and that is the alarming disparate impact on communities of color.

So this pandemic zeroes in on communities of color with high rates of diabetes, high blood pressure, asthma, and other respiratory diseases, and cardiovascular problems. Deadly conditions for those that are infected by the COVID-19 virus.

When my home State and the city of New York became the Nation's first epicenter of the pandemic, the racial disparities were very clear. The hardest

hit ZIP Codes were those with the highest number of minority population.

My district that has Harlem, East Harlem, Hamilton Heights, Washington Heights, Inwood, and the Northwest Bronx was devastated by the pandemic. Some of the ZIP Codes had the highest numbers of deaths in the country. As the pandemic began to subside in New York, but took hold in other parts of the country, the disparities continue to go unabated.

Studies conducted in June bore out statistically what I had seen with my very own eyes and on the ground. Now, as the U.S. surpasses 250,000 COVID-19 deaths and quickly approaches 12 million confirmed cases, racial data is more complete, and the trend of this pandemic is crystal clear, it discriminates. It discriminates poor people, people with preexisting conditions, with diabetes and high blood pressure. It discriminates communities of color, disproportionately hurting and killing individuals every single day.

The system is broken in so many ways that the pandemic has both laid bare and exacerbated many of these communities. Both African Americans and Latinos are consistently at higher risks for health conditions both environmental and inherited that have detrimental effects on quality of life.

NPR recently did an analysis using information from the COVID Tracking Project, and it shows how the disparities are consistent State by State. One key finding is that Hispanics are consistently dying from COVID-19 at higher rates than their share of State populations, no matter where they are. In May, this was true in only seven States, but it has spread now much more.

Latinos also have a disproportionate rate of infection in 45 States and the District of Columbia. It is, unfortunately, easy to see why this trend is happening. These communities are often more likely to face economic hurdles that have kept them from receiving the quality healthcare that they deserve.

The kinds of preventative treatment that many of us take for granted are a luxury to those folks who cannot afford health insurance. We made some major improvements with the Affordable Care Act, lowering costs and getting millions more Americans insured.

But the Trump administration has done everything in its power to hamper that law. As the pandemic raged across this country, they went into court to take away, steal the healthcare for those that need it. And we have begun to see a decline in the rate of those with insurance rather than the other way around.

Preventative care is important because it ensures that other comorbidities are detected early and well-managed. In the absence of that care, something like an infectious disease can make the difference between life or death.

Furthermore, things like food deserts leave many low-income families of color without healthy food options, driving up the rate of problems like diabetes, heart disease and more.

Heavy air pollution in densely populated urban centers, which many communities of color call home, means higher rates of asthma and other chronic respiratory illnesses. So when a highly infectious virus that attacks the respiratory system comes along, it is more likely to take its toll on those that already have respiratory illnesses.

And need I mention that Latinos and African Americans make up a disproportionate share of our frontline workers, putting them at much higher risk. As all of it piles up, it plays out in an obvious way. More Black and Brown bodies in the morgue than there should be.

Madam Speaker, it doesn't have to be this way. Not only can we turn this pandemic around, we can also turn the disparities around. With a national strategy to contain and combat the virus, we can reduce its spread. With a targeted campaign to communities of color, we can keep our fellow Americans safe. And with aid to communities who need it the most, we can keep families economically stable until finally we are out of the woods.

Since enacting the CARES Act, Democrats have twice passed the HEROES Act to get critical aid to our communities. Billions of dollars for testing, tracing, and treatment. The three Ts. Testing, tracing, and treatment. Billions of dollars for hospitals and needed personal protective equipment.

Billions of dollars for small businesses, and the entertainment and food service industries, which are taking a devastating hit. Billions of dollars for public transportation and their frontline workers, who have heroically kept service going despite months of plummeting ridership because they need to get doctors and nurses and first responders and supermarket workers to and from work, back home.

Billions of dollars for State and city governments who are facing dire revenue shortfalls through no fault of their own.

The President has blamed States, divided our country, pointed fingers. This is a time of leadership in crisis. There are no blue or red States. There are the United States of America. And many of those State governments are hurting. They are at the precipice of a fiscal crisis of unprecedented proportions.

Madam Speaker, billions of dollars directly into the pockets of fellow Americans through a second stimulus payment, and the \$600 unemployment benefits. I have seen with my very own eyes the food lines getting longer and longer around the block. People need the \$600 unemployment benefits. People need another stimulus check for \$1,200. They need the help. America needs the help. But the White House is

silent and MITCH MCCONNELL is Doctor No.

But Republicans in the Senate have refused to even consider the HEROES Act. The Trump administration has dragged us along as we have tried to negotiate to get robust help for the American people, as they should have it in this moment of crisis. It is long past time for them to come to the table and work with us to get the HEROES Act signed into law right now. The people need the help.

Finally, Madam Speaker, while we have seen terrible news about the rise in cases and deaths these past couple of weeks, we have also been given a light at the end of the tunnel.

But before I speak about that, I also want to highlight that many families across the country are backed up in their rent payments—2 months, 3 months, 4 months, 5 months, and maybe 6 months—and they just don't know where they are going to get the money to pay their rent at the end of the road. So we must provide also the rental assistance, the \$100 billion in the HEROES Act for renters across America that can't sleep at night because they do not know where they are going to get the money to pay the rent. They are backed up 3, 4, 5, 6 months' worth of rent. This is a crisis.

However, in just the past few days, we have received the good news that the COVID-19 vaccine may be more than 90 percent effective at an incredible rate. It is within our reach. And while it may take time to produce the doses that we need to treat everybody and stand up the infrastructure to get the vaccine to those who really need it, we must make sure from the outset that the vaccine distribution is fair and equitable. The ethics of the vaccine distribution must be fair and equitable.

We cannot make the same mistake with the vaccine that we made with testing. We can't leave States and communities on their own to fight in the free market to wing it on their own for such a vital public health resource that is of life and death.

We cannot allow important things like a vaccine that will be in such limited supply to flow to those who are able to pay the highest prices. We cannot allow rich folks to muscle in and get the vaccine while poor people that suffer from preexisting conditions are exposed to the virus.

We need a comprehensive plan to ensure that the vaccine gets to the most vulnerable, the quicker the better. And we must make sure that communities that were hardest hit by the pandemic are attended first.

Communities of color, the African-American community, the Hispanic community, Native Americans and others were left out of testing and they were short-changed. We must not do that again. They were left out of the ICU beds. We must not do that again.

But they must not be left out of the vaccine distribution. They must be fair

and equitable. The distribution must be fair and equitable. Given the disparate way which this virus has hit our communities, they should be amongst the first to receive the vaccine and get treated.

I thank the Madam Speaker for allowing me to address the House on this issue of crisis, of imperative action that must be taken immediately to address the millions and millions of families that are scared in their homes with this pandemic raging across the country.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GARCÍA).

□ 1845

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman ESPAILLAT for organizing this Special Order hour.

Madam Speaker, we are more than 8 months into the COVID pandemic, and I know that each and every one of us has been impacted.

For months, we sounded the alarm on the pandemic's disproportionate impact on Latinos, minority communities, and especially frontline workers.

It is no coincidence that the top five most impacted zip codes in Illinois are in my district. And as many as one in 15 Chicagoans has COVID-19, with a vast majority being either Latino or Black.

But this is a different moment. We are heading into a dark winter and working families cannot wait for Congress to act.

Unless we take immediate action, more will die. The sick are splitting pills to pay rent. Diabetics are rationing insulin to save money. People are going hungry or doubling up in homes to keep off the street.

This falls on us. Congress. The White House.

How can I continue to go back home and explain to my constituents again why Congress can't pass relief for families?

We expect everyone to do their part. Stay home or continue working the frontlines. It is way past time that we do ours.

\$1,200 is all people were given to get through the lockdown, and many of my immigrant constituents didn't even get that. Three, five, four. U.S. citizen-born children could not get their \$500 checks. U.S. citizen spouses could not get their \$1,200 checks because they may be married to someone who doesn't have a Social Security number yet.

We call them essential workers, but really, they are expendable as far as Donald Trump and the Republican Senate are concerned. We call them essential, but they are expendable in the eyes of those who hold the keys to relief.

What do I tell the exhausted doctors and nurses working days at a time at hospitals quickly reaching capacity? How do I explain our inaction to the

mother who had to wait 4 hours just to get tested? Or patients trying to figure out how they are paying next month's rent? Or children who won't have parents sitting at the table this Thanksgiving?

Most of my constituents don't have the luxury of working from home. They are essential workers. They are on the front lines making sure we keep this country running.

Workers are having to make tough choices these days. Go to work with fears of contracting or spreading COVID-19, or stay home and risk losing a job, health insurance, or their home.

All they are asking for is help to get by. People are afraid, frustrated, and worried. I am pissed off, and you should be, too.

What are we doing here? What the heck is the Senate doing sitting around confirming judges while 246,000 families grieve?

Yes, we are all exhausted.

But months of willful neglect and recklessness from the White House, most Republican Governors and the Senate is devastating the Latino community and our entire country and economy.

We have got to get a handle on this virus and our inaction—rather than the failure for the Senate or the White House to act—will only lead to more death and suffering.

We must pass the Heroes Act now. Working people cannot wait until January. Lives are literally depending on it.

I plead with all decision makers to come to their senses to save people's lives and to help restore our economy by doing the right thing. Passing COVID relief legislation that families, small businesses, and communities are dying, literally dying, to receive.

Now is the time for that action, before it gets colder and darker in America. We have the solution and the power to act and bring relief to all of those grieving and hungry and sick families if we act today.

It is time for action and no more words. It is time to rise to the occasion and restore our people and our economy.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague JESÚS CHUY GARCÍA from the State of Illinois. As he clearly said, this pandemic is not just about health issues and the catastrophe that has set on America with the number of folks that are COVID-19 positive or dead, but also has an economic dimension; small businesses must also get another round of grants and PPP forgivable loans to ensure that they continue to function, to ensure that they continue to provide jobs and opportunities for our communities.

Madam Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity to allow the Congressional Hispanic Caucus to talk about the importance of combating the disparities laid bare by the COVID-19 pandemic and how we can make up for the harm that has been wrought.

I want to thank all of my CHC colleagues, including Congressman GARCÍA and those that were not here today, that I know are on the streets every day attending to their districts and their communities to ensure that we get through this together, for all the hard work that they have been doing on a day-to-day basis since March to help their constituents and keep all our communities safe.

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

FAREWELL REMARKS

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

Mr. CONAWAY. Madam Speaker, before I get to the heart of what I came here to talk about, I would encourage the two gentleman who just spoke to sign the discharge petition on the bill that would do much of what he just talked about, and that is reopen the PPP program to those small businesses that would be eligible to participate in that. So if they would take that small step, then that may be able to alleviate some of the issues we are dealing with.

Madam Speaker, the first remarks that I gave in this Chamber were during the debate on a concurrent resolution to count the electoral college votes for President Bush and Vice President Cheney after the 2004 election. While I had been in the House Chamber before that January day in 2005, stepping up to the podium was an entirely different and nerve-racking experience.

The Capitol is quite a bit more familiar to me now because it has been 16 years that I have been able to serve. The tunnels are no longer a mysterious labyrinth. I have grown accustomed to long days packed full of hearings and briefings and meetings. My walking speed is certainly quicker than it used to be.

But it is with the same awe and wonderment that I felt on January 6, 2005, that I stand in this Chamber today to deliver my final floor speech as a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

When Suzanne and I began this journey back in 2002, we had no idea that this is where it would wind up or how long it would last. All I knew was that I had a window of opportunity to serve my community, and I thought I could do a decent job.

There is a verse in the Bible, Luke 12:48 which says, "to whom much is given, much shall be required." That verse has guided much of my decision-making. God has blessed me with a little bit of talent and an awful lot of life experiences that I thought qualified me to do this job.

There is often an easy path in life, but rarely is it the right path to walk. I have done my very best to use my