

Alexander Hamilton. It is a good plan, and I am hopeful that the Biden administration considers its recommendations.

To protect the environment against climate change, we got the H-Prize Act and the BRIGHT Energy Savings Act into law. To protect victims of sexual assault in the military, we got the SANE Deployment Act into an NDAA. For veterans, we got the Purple Heart and Disabled Veterans Equal Access Act and the Tarawa MIA Recovery Act.

As an engineer, I love the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. We did much on that committee to increase funding for scientific research and to boost technological innovation activities of the Federal Government. I was proud to author the National Science Foundation Reauthorization Act of 2010. NSF continues to be the gold standard of all international scientific research and innovation agencies.

The most successful program that we were involved with has been the Innovation Corps, or I-Corps, program. I was the nonstop promoter of this program, which teaches university faculty and graduate students about entrepreneurship and has helped launched dozens of startups. We were able to grow that program at NSF and expand it to many other Federal departments and agencies. We were also able to get an offshoot hacking for defense set up at the DOD.

Representing the heart of the transportation hub of our Nation, we were able to accomplish much for northeastern Illinois and the Nation in transportation. Locally, we brought home hundreds of millions of dollars in Federal money to improve local transportation, including funding for roads, bridges, public transportation, sidewalks and bike lanes, and airports.

We helped get a billion dollars for the CREATE rail modernization program to improve the rail network in the region and alleviate some blocked crossings. We added commuter train service on Metra's Heritage Corridor and SouthWest Service lines. We got funding for a new tower at Lewis University Airport and for rail underpasses in Bedford Park in Bridgeview. Midway Airport has been made safer and more successful as an economic engine for the southwest side.

I want to thank individually the staff here in D.C. that made all this possible:

Staff assistants, Veronica Neuberger, Sarah Pittenger, Noah Woodiwiss.

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Legislative assistants, Keith Devereaux, Wendy Adams, Carl Roberts, Chris Lyons, Kim Koleos, Juri Jacoby, Emily Chibnall, Adam Weiss, Andrew Hoffner, and Paul Dorsey.

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For all 16 years, our office administrator, Jennifer Sybolt.

Our communications directors over the years: Joel Reed, Phil Davidson, the late Chris Ganschow, Nathaniel Zimmer, Isaac Sancken, and our digital press manager, Grace Graunke.

Legislative directors, John Veysey II, John Rattliff, Ryan Quinn, Jason Day, and Alexander Beckmann.

Chiefs of staff, Jason Tai, Jaclyn O'Day, Brian Oszakiewski, Michael McLaughlin, and Eric Lausten.

Mr. Speaker, I thank all of them for the great work that they have done for me and for the people of the Third District of Illinois. I was going to start naming Members that had helped me get all this work done, but I know the danger in this business of leaving anyone out, so I will just thank all of my colleagues for the work that we have done together over these last 16 years.

Back in the district, we had what I would argue hands down was the best constituent service in the Nation, whether it was helping constituents with issues related to Social Security, Medicare, veterans' benefits and military service, immigration issues, passport issues, mail delivery issues, and many, many more issues.

The staff included Anthony Constantine, Yareli Cortez, Dawn Courtney, Salvatore DiFranco, Jessica Jaroch, Chris Jutton, Joseph Kirkoff, Jean Krupa, Josh Luke, John McGlynn, Frank Salerno, the late Zac Plantz, the late Marianne Viverito.

Over the last few years, we have lost a number of staffers. It has been very difficult, but we have grieved together as a staff and we are thankful to all those departed staffers and their families.

Over the years, Jerry Hurckes was the chief of staff in the Chicago office for most of my time in Congress and he ran that office and ran the district for me.

Lenore Goodfriend was there for most of my time, and she is well-loved by veterans across the district.

Joe Bonomo, who is now my district director, has been with me for all 16 years. Joe has done a great job.

Paula Belmonte, who has been there 16 years also, has helped so many immigrants, and we had a few that we saved from being deported.

And last, but not least, Jerry Mulvihill, who was probably, I would argue, the best case worker in the history of the Congress. Jerry has been called a saint more times than I could ever count for all the work he did for so many people for so many years not just on Federal issues, but any issue that anyone ever brought to Jerry. He is the only staffer I know who was ever written up multiple times in the Chicago newspaper for what he did for people.

Mr. Speaker, all these people made it work and did so much for all the residents of the Third District, and I thank them so much.

Finally, I thank my mother, who gave me the love of learning; and my father, who helped give me the love of

politics; but above all, they both gave me a love of helping others, as my mother was a teacher and my father served in the Chicago City Council before he served here.

I also thank my wife, Judy, who thought she was marrying a lifelong professor but then provided me with more support than I could have ever hoped for in this job. It is only those spouses of Members who know everything that it takes and everything they go through. So I thank Judy so much for her support.

Lastly, I thank the people of Illinois' Third District, who gave me the honor and privilege of serving as their representative.

□ 2115

Mr. Speaker, the greatness of our Nation springs from the founding principles which sound common to us today but were radical for their time: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

I still believe that this is the greatest Nation in the history of the world. It is not perfect because humans aren't perfect, and we cannot be perfected. But we must pray and work every day that each of us and our Nation better uphold the principle of equality, and we had better protect the life and liberty every day for every person, from the very first moment of life until natural death. With God's grace, we will do that, and we will be that shining city upon the hill for all the world to see and follow.

God bless this institution, and God bless the United States of America.

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

ECONOMIC MIRACLE IN 2018 AND 2019

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. Mr. LIPINSKI, being someone from the other side, you really are one of the good guys. I have had a handful of great conversations with you over the years. Even though I am a conservative from the desert, you have always been very kind to me, and your concern and love for your community have always shone through, so it is appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, this is one of those opportunities where you have the feeling you are going to be doing this a lot over this next year.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make an argument that growth is moral, and I want to go a bit further than that. One of the things that spurred me to come here is I listened to Janet Yellen just a couple of days ago, who may be becoming Secretary of the Treasury, give a

speech. In that speech, there were wonderful words about caring about working men and women, helping the working poor, but there was a complete failure in that discussion to talk about where we have had success.

Look, so many people in this body run around saying, well, you are conservative, you are liberal, but we care about the hardworking taxpayers of America. We want to see our brothers and sisters in the country, particularly those who—and I hate this term, and it is one of the hazards as a Republican. We often sound like accountants on steroids. You know, we will go and say, well, our brothers and sisters who are in the lower income quartiles—and no one knows what a quartile is.

But the point, we claim we care. We claim we want to do things. I want to claim we have the proof that, in 2018 and 2019, there was a miracle happening in this country.

For the first time in modern economic history of the United States, the thing particularly the left used to scream at Republicans, because they cared so much about income inequality, I am going to make the argument we delivered policy, that, for the first time, income inequality began to shrink, 2 years where it worked.

As the demagoguery, which is the modern political scene, as we hear people like the Janet Yellens of the world, who I have had a great working relationship with over the years, read their script and don't take a moment to say what worked in just the last couple of years, what worked to help so many of our American citizens have opportunity, to see a light at the end of the tunnel, to stop seeing the purchasing power of their lives, their ability to plan for retirement, the ability to take care of their families and their kids.

Even outside the political rage that drives this body so often, could we take a moment and understand America was doing something it had not been able to do for decades and decades and decades, where the income inequality, the movement of wages, the value of someone's labor, had been being crushed decade after decade? In 2018 and 2019, the data is absolutely solid and clear: There was an economic miracle happening in this country.

If you care about the working poor, take a look at what happened, and let's do more of it. Those things that weren't working in the previous years, let's do less of it. The problem is, in this environment, that becomes partisan.

Let's walk through some of the facts. This is my moment to get a little snarky at my colleagues from the other side and some of their comments they have made. Those of us on our side are looking for our apology because they didn't tell the truth. They projected the future.

This is when Speaker PELOSI then was the minority leader. She, basically, when we did the tax reform, after calling it a scam and then, in her

quote, saying making the rich richer, except that is not what happened. The math is the math is the math. I know it doesn't fit the political rhetoric of this place, but the math is the math.

If you take a look at the highest income quartiles, their percentage of the income, the wealth actually went down in 2018 and 2019, something that had not happened in modern economic history.

You would have thought the Democrats would say, hey, we got it wrong, but we really care a lot about this, because they claim they care a lot about it. So why don't we look at some of the other reality.

My colleagues on the Ways and Means Committee on the other side, the House Democrats, kept doing speeches. I just snipped one of the quotes: You know, the one-time bonuses are nice, but what American workers really deserve are permanent wage increases. The true beneficiaries of the Republican tax bills are shareholders and top corporate executives, not the middle class.

It turns out they were absolutely wrong. And the math is the math is the math. The facts are the facts. If you look at the population—and we even broke this down—you could see wage increases for African Americans were the fastest movement growth in modern times. When I say modern times, I mean like the last 50 years. Hispanics outpaced Anglo workers rather dramatically.

Do you think those of us on the Republican side are ever going to get an apology for them making up things?

Why don't we go on and just make it for gender? It turns out that 2018 and 2019, movement in wage growth was miraculous. There should have been joy in this body if you care about the working poor. It turns out that wage growth for females, particularly females who didn't have a high school education, was remarkable.

I believe in the ending part of 2018, when they did the calculation here, it was over 7 percent wage growth because their labor had value. We lived in a society that actually had more jobs than people.

I will argue that has to be all of our goal. People's work, their labor, became valuable. I desperately hope we start to focus on how we get back to that.

I know some of these charts are hard to read. We will put them up on our website. And I want to compliment the team over at the Joint Economic Committee for helping me do this. But this one and the next one are important because it is a simple fact that the rhetoric after tax reform from the left, they made things up. By doing that, they hurt so many Americans.

If we had been honest about the facts—it would be intellectually honest if my colleagues on the other side would step up and say, okay, yeah, it is really, really helping the working poor. It is really helping the working Americans. But we think we can do it better.

That would be honest. God bless them, that would be honest. But to say it was hurting them was a lie.

Here is a simple example. 2017, before tax reform, if we—we always compare and talk about the top quartile, the top 1 percent of income earners. They were controlling, I think, slightly over 20 percent, 21 percent, of all the income in the country, and they were paying about 38.5 percent of all the Federal income taxes.

What happened after tax reform? How many times did we hear from the left, from the leftwing echo chamber, from the media, that, well, this was tax cuts for the rich? Well, a year later, when there was tax reform, 2018, the top 1 percent were no longer paying 38.5 percent of the Federal income taxes. Now, they are paying over 40 percent of the Federal income taxes, but yet their control of the wage, of the wealth, income wealth, actually went down.

But what was more important—and this is my failing—we don't talk enough about it. We will call it the bottom 50 percent of our brothers and sisters that we claim we represent, that we claim, when we get behind these microphones, we care about. There, the bottom 50 percent, their tax burden actually decreased, but the percentage of the wages went up.

This is only 2018. The 2019 numbers haven't been vetted because they are still not all in yet. Our understanding is, preliminarily, the curve even steepens. The fact of the matter is, there was an economic miracle happening in 2018 and 2019. If you care about people, we need to figure out what we were doing right and go back and do more of it.

Another way to basically say the same thing, this is—and forgive me if I mispronounce the name. Is it Ms. Tanden who may become the OMB Director? She is the potential OMB nominee. She said some incredibly partisan things that were wrong. The lift-out quote here is: Because they practice class warfare against us.

Well, actually, no. It is just the opposite. If you look at the math, the top 10 percent under the old tax system were paying less of the Federal tax burden than they did after tax reform. Our brothers and sisters, the other 90 percent of the income-earners in this country, were paying less of the Federal tax burden after tax reform. The math is the math. But the rhetoric is toxic and didn't tell the truth. Once again, then-Minority Leader NANCY PELOSI: Widening the income inequality gap.

Except the fact is, the Republican tax reform along with some of the other policies that came about in 2018 and 2019 were the first time in modern economic history where income inequality actually shrank.

I always thought that was the holy grail here, that the rich keep getting richer and the poor keep getting poorer—except after tax reform, except after some of the regulatory reform.

If you care about working men and women in this country, if you care about the working poor, you have a template that is only a year in the past where it was working.

Let's figure out what we were doing right, and, Mr. Speaker, let's go back and do more of it. The one thing I will beg of this body, as the Democrats look like they will continue to be in the majority, and they have spent a couple of years demagoguing our previous work as Republicans when we did the tax reform, when we did, the economic opportunity that it brought: Stop making up the numbers. Tell the truth.

Let's hold hands—well, in the COVID world, we will talk at an appropriate 6-foot distance. If our rhetoric is we care, we have delivered tax reform in a fashion where it worked.

□ 2130

It created an economic, in many ways, to quote Chairman Powell of the Federal Reserve, a Goldilocks economy.

I hope it is every Member of Congress' goal here. Let's get back to that Goldilocks economy that was helping so many of our poor, so many of our working poor, so many of our working class, and actually, as you can see in the data, was closing income inequality.

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

POOR TRAINING AND OVERSIGHT OF TEXAS LAW ENFORCEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) until 10 p.m.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, and still I rise, and tonight I would like to initiate this event with some words of thanks for the many people who work late into the night with us.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all of them for what they do and for staying here for the duration. And there are other persons who are without this facility who are also here until we leave, so I thank them for what they do.

I also, tonight, would like to make note of the Houston Chronicle. That is the largest newspaper in Houston, Texas. And I would like to thank the Houston Chronicle for exercising some of its courage and some of its wisdom in terms of what it has produced with some of the news stories as of late.

The Houston Chronicle has printed two stories that I would like to focus on tonight. They are about policing in the State of Texas.

I have two documents that I include in the RECORD. They both deal with policing in Texas. The first one is styled: "Blistering Government Report Blasts Poor Training, Oversight of Texas Law Enforcement." The second one is an editorial, titled: "Editorial: Hairstylists Get More Training Than Texas Cops? That's Unacceptable."

[From Houston Chronicle Local, Nov. 30, 2020]

BLISTERING GOVERNMENT REPORT BLASTS POOR TRAINING, OVERSIGHT OF TEXAS LAW ENFORCEMENT

(By St. John Barned-Smith and Eric Dexheimer.)

Last year, more than 600 Texas law enforcement officers received a dishonorable discharge from their agencies for misconduct. Yet more than a quarter of them were rehired to work as sworn officers.

To qualify for a peace officer license, Texas cops need fewer hours of basic training than licensed cosmetologists and less than half the education required of air-conditioning and refrigeration contractors. While the basic training requires officers to spend 48 hours on the firing range, it demands only two hours of "civilian interaction" instruction.

The difficulty of purging bad officers from the ranks of Texas police and outdated and inadequate officer training highlight how state lawmakers have rendered the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement unable to meaningfully oversee the profession, according to a blistering new report by the Sunset Advisory Commission. The commission reviews the performance of state agencies every 10 years or so.

The Sunset Advisory Commission's critical findings come amid a contentious nationwide re-evaluation of the fundamental role of police. The deaths of Sandra Bland, Eric Garner, Tamir Rice and George Floyd, among others, have prompted calls for stronger oversight from police departments and civilian review boards, as well as stricter limits on police use of force.

But in Texas, the regulation of law enforcement is "by and large, toothless," the Sunset report concluded.

Although it is charged with licensing police and correctional officers and 911 dispatchers, the law enforcement commission differs from state agencies that regulate other professions in that it has almost no authority to act against an officer's license. Instead, most oversight of police conduct is left up to each of the state's 2,700 law enforcement agencies, which set their own policies and standards.

Without a shared definition of professional conduct, many have widely differing rules. For example, "In the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, chokeholds are an acceptable technique west of the 3200 block of Sandy Lane, but are not allowed on the east side of the same street because it crosses two different . . . jurisdictions," the Sunset report found.

Texas' patchwork of uneven oversight has resulted in "a fragmented, outdated system with poor accountability, lack of statewide standards, and inadequate training," the Sunset report stated.

While advocacy groups and demonstrators have demanded better police oversight, they also have called on cities to reallocate millions of dollars from law enforcement budgets into community services. That, in turn, has sparked swift blowback from conservative politicians and supporters of law enforcement. In Austin, a lawmaker recently filed legislation prohibiting local governments from cutting police budgets.

Washington-based criminologist Matthew Hickman said the protests and impassioned conversations about police reform have revealed holes in how municipalities, states and the federal government oversee law enforcement officers.

Accountability starts at the department level, he said, with internal affairs investigation. At the other end, in the most egregious circumstances, the Department of Justice

can pursue civil rights investigations against problem departments.

Charley Wilkison, executive director of the Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas, said the Sunset report was just the beginning of the process of state lawmakers' evaluation of the law enforcement commission. Legislators will hold hearings next year and almost certainly change some of the Sunset staff's recommendations.

"What you're seeing there is not going to be state law," he said. While his organization agreed some changes were needed, he said, it opposed granting the state commission sweeping new enforcement powers to investigate and discipline officers.

Still, policing watchdogs said the report's findings rang true. "Right now, it definitely feels like at the state level, there's little to no regulation of law enforcement that's happening," said Chris Harris of the nonprofit public interest justice center Texas Appleseed, "and to the extent there is, it's not effective."

And one key Houston-area legislator said he was inclined to make some changes. Reforms to the agency are "long overdue," said state Sen. John Whitmire, D-Houston, who said the Texas law enforcement commission should operate more like other regulatory boards such as the State Bar of Texas or the State Board of Pharmacy.

The report was notable for its sweepingly critical evaluation of nearly every facet of the agency, calling its regulation of the profession "fundamentally broken." It said the changes it recommended were stopgap and called for legislators to form a blue ribbon committee "to comprehensively look at how the state regulates law enforcement and recommend needed changes to improve law enforcement regulation in Texas."

It took particular note of the state's inability to discipline officers for misconduct. It pointed to a recent incident in which the San Antonio Police Department fired an officer for giving a homeless man a sandwich filled with dog feces. Yet the officer, Matthew Luckhurst, was able to return to the force. He was later fired—for good—after another feces-related incident.

The example highlighted the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement's limited authority to take any action against an officer's state license. The agency may act only when officers fail to complete mandatory continued education, if they are convicted of or received deferred adjudication for felonies or certain misdemeanors, or if they receive a second dishonorable discharge. The agency has even less authority to sanction individual law enforcement agencies.

Roger Goldman, retired law professor from the Saint Louis University School of Law, said that about two-thirds of states have stronger oversight abilities at the state level than Texas, and that in many states, officers can have their licenses revoked for misconduct even if they haven't been convicted of a crime.

Many states across the country are taking other tacks to try to prevent bad officers from getting hired at other departments after allegations of gross misconduct.

Some states are now requiring departments to screen candidates more rigorously. In Vermont, for example, lawmakers passed a bill requiring departments to provide information about why they fired officers to other departments when those officers try to get new jobs. In Connecticut, lawmakers implemented rules requiring regulators to create a list of officers fired for serious misconduct but whose licenses were not decertified. The list prevented officers from being rehired by other departments, Goldman said.

Matt Simpson, with the ACLU of Texas, said that while the Sunset review recommended a panel to study needed changes,