

small farmers struggle to put food on their own tables. This decisive action to increase domestic competitiveness is what our small family farmers need to regain their footing and make it economically viable to farm for their communities and our country.

I hope my colleagues will join me in this congratulatory note.

CLIMATE CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CARTER of Louisiana). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. CASTEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. 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 our Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR), my friend and the distinguished chairwoman of the Select Committee on the Climate Crisis.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, we are in a climate crisis, and it is going to take American leadership and ingenuity to solve it. But we think we can create jobs and a lot of opportunity when we solve the climate crisis. But what we are seeing right now are devastating health and economic consequences of climate change here all across America, whether it is wildfires out West, flooding in the midsection. We are approaching hurricane season with great trepidation. Extreme heat.

We have got to act urgently, guided by the science, working in concert with our allies across the globe to provide a livable climate for all Americans, especially for future generations.

We have got to harness the technological innovation of the Moon Shot. We have got to harness the creativity of our entrepreneurs, the strength of our workers, and the moral force of this great Nation that is working to establish justice for all. Because I believe that, working together, we will be able to avert the worst impacts of this climate emergency and build a stronger, healthier, fairer America.

□ 1945

But let's look at what is happening right now. People know this. The last 7 years were the hottest on record. You don't have to tell that to the folks out West right now. They are living through some of the hottest days—the hottest, driest days.

This is a departure from the 20th century average temperature. It just

seems like these hotter days, the longer, hotter summers, are more frequent. And the science tells us that is true.

Why is this happening? Carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is at record levels. People thought that, during the pandemic, greenhouse gases would dip and that might provide some salvation from the worst impacts of climate. But, see, these gases build up in the atmosphere. You don't get a bonus for any year.

In fact, NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, has said no, despite the pandemic, carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is at a record high.

This creates enormous costs on families and businesses here in America but also all across the planet. It impacts the air we breathe. It creates very severe health consequences. Think about the folks who have to work outside in the extreme heat and more polluted air while coming out of a pandemic.

Then, there is the cost, not just to the bottom line of the Federal budget, but the cost to all of us. In fact, last year alone, we suffered through about \$100 billion, \$96 billion, in damages from weather and climate disasters. That is just 1 year.

This is an enormous wake-up call for our great country and people all across the planet. We have waited too long to take ambitious action. The time is now. The time is urgent.

We don't have any more time for half measures, so we intend now to hammer out the most ambitious climate legislation that we have ever seen in order to answer the moral call that we have to future generations to make sure we give them a livable planet.

Mr. Speaker, we are joined tonight by a number of colleagues, who are going to speak from the heart and speak with great intelligence to provide a little science, a little know-how. I am really proud to stand with them on the floor of the House tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend, Congressman CASTEN, for bringing his intellect and his passion for solving the climate crisis to this Congress. It is needed now more than ever.

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her words and her leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI).

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. CASTEN for yielding. And thank you to Chair CASTOR, chair of the Select Committee on the Climate Crisis, for her leadership throughout this process. It really has been science-based and meaningful.

Mr. Speaker, as we work to build back better, we have not just the opportunity but the imperative to take bold climate action. By strengthening investments in climate-centric infrastructure, we can create good-paying jobs, reduce emissions, and support frontline communities.

Last month, I had this great opportunity. I got to ride on a new electric

bus at Meadow Park Middle School in Beaverton, Oregon. Thanks to the Portland General Electric's School Bus Electrification Project, the Beaverton School District is working to electrify its bus fleet.

The electric buses are quieter; they are less expensive to maintain; and, importantly, they reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This is good for the health of our children, our community, and our planet. We can and must help more school districts and transportation systems electrify not just in Oregon but across the country.

With the American Jobs Plan, we can create millions of good-paying jobs, combat the climate crisis, revitalize American manufacturing, and make long-overdue investments in our Nation's infrastructure.

As the House works to advance the American Jobs Plan, we can use as a roadmap the climate action plan from the Select Committee on the Climate Crisis. Our bold, comprehensive science-based plan includes investments in zero-emissions buses, transit, electric vehicle charging stations, and pedestrian and bike infrastructure, all to decarbonize our transportation sector.

Mr. Speaker, I want to give credit to Chairman DEFAZIO, my wonderful colleague from Oregon, for his leadership. He has included many of these provisions in his surface transportation reauthorization, the Investment in America Act. I look forward to supporting it when it comes to the floor in the coming weeks.

Mr. Speaker, I tell my colleagues that climate-resilient infrastructure is about much more than just roads and bridges. June is National Ocean Month, and as co-chair of the House Ocean Caucus and the Congressional Estuary Caucus, I want to highlight how the power of our ocean can and must be part of the solution, which is recognized in our plan for solving the climate crisis.

I recently led a bipartisan group of colleagues in calling for a \$10 billion investment in coastal restoration and resilience projects in the American Jobs Plan, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to deliver these needed investments to coastal communities.

Addressing the climate crisis presents an economic opportunity, a tremendous economic opportunity. We can create millions of good-paying, high-quality union jobs that will help working families and displaced workers recover from the economic collapse caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Speaker, the American Jobs Plan meets the moment to not only build back but to build back better. By advancing the American Jobs Plan, we have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to rebuild a resilient clean energy economy, create good-paying jobs to boost our economic recovery, and begin to repair the legacy of environmental racism and pollution that has

disproportionately burdened low-income communities and communities of color for decades.

As we build the infrastructure of the future, we cannot repeat the injustices of the past. Instead, we must pass and implement comprehensive climate policies, such as those set out in the Select Committee on the Climate Crisis' climate action plan.

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. CARBAJAL), my friend and one of the funnier Members of Congress, but heartfelt today.

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, going back to my days as the county supervisor, I fought to make sure the Central Coast was a leader in the clean energy economy. I helped get the first large-scale solar project in Santa Barbara County across the finish line and called it a win-win-win. That is because investing in renewables is one of the best investments we can make. It means a healthy planet, clean air, and good-paying jobs.

Since 2014, the Central Coast has emerged as a renewable energy powerhouse. We are now home to several major solar farms, and soon, we could be home to one of the largest battery storage plants in the world.

After years of negotiation, I helped secure an agreement to realize an offshore wind project and the jobs it will create for the Central Coast. According to a study conducted by a local organization called REACH, this project alone could create 650 good-paying jobs and generate \$262 million in revenue each year.

Renewable energy is also a vital tool to address the climate crisis. Some claim renewable energy funding doesn't belong in an infrastructure package. I say modernizing our energy infrastructure and tackling the climate crisis go hand in hand.

Last year, the U.S. spent nearly \$100 billion responding to extreme weather events and disasters fueled by climate change. Instead of rebuilding each time a disaster strikes, we need to be proactive to keep our communities safe from the realities of climate change. That means weatherizing millions of homes, retrofitting buildings, and shoring up our water infrastructure.

We also must curb emissions in the transportation sector, which is responsible for 29 percent of our greenhouse gas emissions. If we want to tackle climate change, the transportation sector must be part of the solution.

The measures included in President Biden's American Jobs Plan will modernize our transportation system to do just that. It will create millions of jobs in the auto industry building electric vehicles and expanding our network of electric vehicle charging stations.

Transitioning away from fossil fuels to renewable energy is also an environmental justice issue. Sadly, minority communities are disproportionately impacted by air pollution. For example, Latino Americans are exposed to 11

percent more fine particulate pollution compared to the average American.

Burning fossil fuels pollutes our air and destroys our planet. We cannot afford inaction any longer. We also cannot afford to pass up the opportunity to create millions of good-paying jobs that will propel our economy forward.

It is time for Congress to pass a bold infrastructure plan that protects our planet, air quality, and economy.

As we on the Central Coast know, investing in clean energy is a win-win-win.

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LEVIN), my friend and a distinguished member of the Select Committee on Climate Crisis.

Mr. LEVIN of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Illinois, and I thank Chairwoman CASTOR for her exceptional leadership of our select committee.

My colleagues have done a good job so far of explaining why we need ambitious climate action that follows the science and meets the scale of the challenge we face. However, I would highlight one climate impact that is particularly important in the area I represent.

My district encompasses more than 50 miles of coastline in southern California, North County San Diego, South Orange County. Our coasts are a huge part of our communities. They drive our economies and are critical to our way of life. But sea level rise threatens all of this. It is accelerating the erosion of our coasts, which washes away beaches and threatens critical infrastructure, like the Los Angeles-San Diego-San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor, also known as the LOSSAN Corridor.

The LOSSAN Corridor is the second busiest intercity passenger rail corridor in the United States and the busiest State-supported Amtrak route, with nearly 3 million inner-city passengers and 5 million commuter passengers each year. \$1 billion in goods and services are also supported by the rail line.

At the same time, coastal erosion threatens the bluffs that run along our coasts in San Diego County. Bluff collapses have, tragically, taken the lives of eight people in our communities in recent years.

The impacts of climate change in coastal southern California are not theoretical. We see and experience them every single day. I strongly believe that we must take ambitious action to make our country more resilient to climate impacts while transitioning to a zero-carbon future, and we must do it now. We must do it now.

With President Biden's American Jobs Plan, we have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to do so. The American Jobs Plan, as proposed by the President, advances real climate solutions that will make a difference in the lives of our constituents. It will put us on the path to meeting the challenge

presented by the climate crisis while creating 2.7 million new jobs, the jobs of tomorrow in clean energy, the jobs that will help us compete on the global stage. Those are the jobs we need.

The American Jobs Plan will create them, but in order to achieve these goals, in order to pass the American Jobs Plan as intended by the President, we must not abandon the key climate provisions and investments that the President proposed in his version of the plan. The package must deliver on the promise to put our country on the path to a 100 percent carbon-free energy powered electricity grid by 2035.

We can do this if we include strong tax policies that incentivize renewable energy generation. We can do this if we include clean energy and energy efficiency standards that promote renewable energy and reduce electricity use. We can do this if we include the policies and funding to electrify cars, buses, and buildings. And we must include the transportation sector. It is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the country.

We need significant investment to incentivize the sale of zero-emission vehicles. Specifically, we must ensure that 100 percent of new light-duty vehicle sales are zero emissions by 2035, as envisioned under the Zero-Emission Vehicles Act that I introduced last Congress with Senator JEFF MERKLEY.

□ 2000

Moreover, the build-out of zero emission vehicle fueling and charging infrastructure must go hand in hand with the deployment of the vehicles themselves, which is why I strongly support the President's vision for 500,000 new charging stations across the country.

The American Jobs Plan provides us a pathway to finally achieve these goals and to lead the world when it comes to vehicle electrification. So without these key climate provisions, it is hard to imagine supporting any package that comes before this Chamber for consideration.

I am eager to help advance a strong American Jobs Plan that employs our communities, follows the climate science, and matches the scale of the challenge we face. I know my colleagues here feel the same.

Now is our opportunity to get this done. It is an opportunity that we must seize.

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), whom I am delighted was able to make time in a busy appropriation season to come down and join us today.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my very able colleague, Congressman CASTEN, for the opportunity to join him and Congresswoman CASTOR, the leaders of this marvelous committee on climate change. I thank them very much for leading our country and world in this regard.

My goal as chair of the House Energy and Water Subcommittee is to help them and help our generation embrace

a better future for those that will follow. We must sustain life on Earth. Let us all help our country and world meet the challenges as we face the dawn of this new climate change era.

The clean energy future of our Nation and our ability to reboot and reenergize the domestic manufacturing economy depends on climate-related infrastructure programs for inventing that new future. Addressing climate change will create and even bring back good paying jobs right here at home. Addressing climate change is our portal to sustain life on Earth for generations to come.

Headlines coast to coast, as others have referenced, tell part of the story. Yes, the Earth is warming. The rate of increase for damaging weather events is unrelenting. Each of us, and each of our districts, have personally experienced the impacts of this historic change. If we fail to address the hastening crisis, it is to our collective peril.

As a small first step, I would urge every American who may be listening to plant trees. Yes, everyone can do something. A first simple step is to plant a tree to capture the carbon that is already in the air, and the tree will produce oxygen to help you breathe, and to help your children breathe and your neighbors. It is amazing what happens.

Cleveland, Ohio, used to be known as "forest city." We have a big job to do in replanting many of the trees that have aged-out over the years, and making Cleveland, and places like it, a much more oxygen-rich community.

Addressing climate change will help human health. As America stands at a crossroads in this new energy age, we must ensure that infrastructure includes strategic investments in energy, clean energy, climate, and water resources innovation.

Technologies and innovation driven by the Department of Energy are already helping to address climate change. They already have markedly driven down the cost of wind, solar, energy storage, and efficient lightbulbs by 60 to 95 percent just since 2008, and we are not done yet. They have led to widespread deployment and consumer savings.

New innovations will lead to new opportunities. In my own home region, I was very pleased to be at the birth of a company called First Solar, now the largest in the Nation, invented locally using cadmium-telluride technology. And now, just recently in the past month, First Solar has announced the hiring of an additional 500 new employees in good jobs to match the thousands they already employ, to meet an unmet market demand.

Reversing the impacts of climate change will create good paying jobs like these across every State in our country. Already there are more Americans working in energy efficiency and energy production than as waiters and waitresses. Think about that. That is

in a very short time, and more jobs to come. We must continue to innovate and lead in these areas, so our Nation is not left behind. As people in communities succeed, so will America. As someone said to me, Marcy, what America makes, makes America. My, gosh, do I agree with that.

The Biden administration has been clear from day one about the need to urgently address the climate crisis, and I am excited that the President's American Jobs Plan will create new jobs by reinvesting in areas and workers too often left behind, and they will help save our planet and sustain all of us and those who will follow us.

We cannot lose sight of the importance of including climate-related and job-creating proposals in any infrastructure package. In fact, any package that aims to build back better must do that. Climate change can be addressed by every community across our country. Innovation, intelligence, and environmental patriotism should drive this new national imperative.

As we watch President Joe Biden in his foreign trip meet the leaders of democracies across Europe this week, we watch America lead these democracies of the world in protecting Mother Earth for those who will follow us.

It really is a daunting time, but it is also an inspiring time. And any time America has ever set a goal, it has always achieved it.

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take some time now to rise to talk about something that I have talked about—some would say too much—on this floor. To yet, again, discuss the grave threat and the massive opportunity that is the climate crisis.

Even as we talk right now about the necessity of limiting global warming to less than 1½ degrees Celsius, let's follow the math; the planet has already warmed by 1 degree, we only have ½ degree to go. The last 7 years were the hottest ever on record. Even in spite of the pandemic, global levels of carbon dioxide have hit record levels. In fact, the last time CO₂ levels were as high as they are right now was 4 million years ago. Sea levels were 50 feet higher. That is the reality of what happens when heat melts ice, ice dumps water. This is the reality we have made.

If we are to be judged by our works and we do nothing more in this moment, that judgment will not be pretty. That is our challenge and it is our opportunity.

But this change in CO₂ levels didn't happen over a million years, it didn't happen over a thousand years, it didn't even happen over a hundred years. Half of all the CO₂ we have ever emitted as a species since that first fire that some upright hominid built in a cave a million years ago, half of all the CO₂ we have ever emitted was since 1990. That is within my lifetime. It is within the lifetime of almost all of the Members of this body.

That is nearly a century after Svante Arrhenius discovered the greenhouse

effect, since the science was basically settled; 100 years after the photovoltaic effect that was invented that powers solar panels today; and more than a decade after the fossil fuel companies knew about climate change and decided to promote misinformation instead of acting.

In 1989, when the U.N. formed the IPCC, when Ronald Reagan's EPA said, we need to create a global cap and trade program to reduce a global pollutant—to protect the ozone hole, chlorofluorocarbons. When that same EPA and the subsequent George Bush—both Republican Presidents, I would add—they said, let's take that same model and apply it to a domestic pollutant, acid-rain forming compounds.

We have sugar maples in New England because of their leadership. We have a shrinking ozone hole because of their leadership. When they did that at the end of the 1980s, we were on the right track 30 years ago. What do we have to do now to turn this ship around?

The heck of it is, we know what we have to do to reduce our emissions and we know how to do it, building out clean energy infrastructure, creating and building wind turbines, solar panels. Building big things is what America is good at. We do not need to be constrained by our ambition, my goodness.

When the New Deal was passed, we electrified 80 percent of rural America in just 15 years. I would like to think our capabilities are even greater now. Let's embrace that opportunity. The hard questions in this line of work are the zero sum ones.

How do you allocate wins to some parties when they imply a loss to another? That is not climate.

The hard questions in clean energy policy are not how we allocate the pains of this transition; they are how we allocate the gains of this transition. Clean energy is cheap energy. If you don't believe me, ask anyone with a solar panel on their roof how much they paid for electricity yesterday. Ask anybody with a coal plant, they know that number.

The clean energy transition means it is a win for the folks who get to go to work building more efficient buildings and wind turbines and solar panels. It is a win for every American.

I've polled this. 100 percent of Americans like to pay less for energy. They would all win. 100 percent of Americans like cleaner air. They will all win. 100 percent of Americans do not want to live on a coast that is flooding or forests that are on fire or derechos that are coming across the Midwest.

Our obligation is to seize this chance and to make sure—this is a hard problem, but it is a good problem—to make sure that those gains are equitably distributed throughout our society.

The President's infrastructure proposal is just that. It isn't just a chance for clean energy, it is a make-or-break

opportunity to finally do what is scientifically necessary before it is too late.

Proposals like a clean energy standard, a build-out of electric transmission lines, requirements for purchases of clean energy will help send our emissions from the electric sector to zero and will be the bedrock of a new clean economy.

Cutting some or—let's be ambitious—all of the \$650 billion a year that the IMF has said that we currently subsidize the fossil fuel industry, will finally give us efficient markets in our energy sector. \$650 billion—that is about how much we spend on Medicaid—subsidizing an energy that can't compete under a free market.

So help make lives better for hundreds of millions of Americans now and in the decades to come.

Now 12 years ago, when Waxman-Markey was the debate du jour, we let an opportunity to act on the climate crisis pass us by. Since that time, we have kept emitting and temperatures have kept rising.

I told you, I have given this speech a few too many times. I don't want to be giving this speech a year from now. I don't particularly want to be giving it tomorrow. I certainly don't want to be giving it 12 years from now.

We have a chance now to act while our planet can still afford it, and we can embrace that because our wallets are going to love it.

Before I took this job, when I was running a clean energy company, I had a board member who gave me a piece of advice that has always stuck with me, he said: In the end, the only thing that really matters in this life is whether your grandchildren can say they were proud of you. Let's be clear. Our grandchildren are not going to be proud of us. They are not going to pat us on the back for doing only what was politically possible. They don't care.

What matters is, did we do what was scientifically necessary? And I have a lot of colleagues on both sides of the aisle, on both sides of this building, who will say, You are naive, CASTEN, what is necessary is so far in excess of what is politically possible, we just can't do that.

If that is your approach to this moment, the only thing I know for certain is you are not cut out for leadership. Our moment, our challenge in this moment, is to make what is necessary possible, it is all that matters. Because while the best chance for climate action was 30 years ago, our last chance is now.

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

□ 2015

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, to my colleague and my neighbor from Illinois (Mr. CASTEN), I thank him for his leadership on this issue, his experience in sharing his perspective, and his call to action.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to continue to raise the alarm about the rapidly ac-

celerating consequences of the climate crisis.

Mr. Speaker, 30 years ago in 1989 I married the love of my life. When we got married, we looked to the future. We thought about having a family. We have two sons who are today 28 and 26. We still look to the future and hope they will have a chance to raise a family. But that is in doubt because we face a climate crisis.

The climate crisis is the most pressing threat to our children's future and our grandchildren's future. It is a threat to our Nation and to everything we hold dear. It is an existential threat to our way of life, and we have to take urgent action now.

We are already seeing the consequences of climate change throughout our country in our local communities, whether it is the case of more intense forest fires that are starting earlier in the year, 100-year rainstorms that cause floods, not every 100 years but every other year, or more intense hurricanes and also droughts that are devastating much of our West.

These are the consequences we are facing today, and they are putting our Nation at risk. We have to do everything we can to protect our communities, to protect our Nation, to protect our world, and to protect our children's future.

That is why it is so important that we pass the President's American Jobs Plan, that we invest in infrastructure, and that we do it in a way that builds resiliency against a changing climate but plans for a future to address and protect our climate.

There are many sources of the greenhouse gases causing global warming, everything from industry to industrial and commercial buildings, our residences, but, of course, transportation is the greatest source, and among that is air travel.

Airline travel is a growing part of our future, but it is contributing up to 2½ percent of our total emissions of carbon. Air travel has changed the world. It has brought us closer together. It is necessary for us to continue to have the hope for a 21st century global economy. But it is imperative that we work to address the impact.

That is why, among the many other bills I have helped work for and support in this Congress to address climate change, I am proud to have introduced the Sustainable Skies Act, legislation that will cut the carbon of greenhouse gas emissions of airline fuels by as much as or more than 50 percent. It will boost the use of sustainable aviation fuel to make airline travel something that will be a part of a sustainable future.

This legislation is the single most important step in the aviation industry that they can take to lower carbon emissions and to fight climate change. At the same time, sustainable aviation fuel will also enable more travel and commerce. It is, as Mr. CASTEN said, a

win-win. It is good for everybody. It is good for our present, it is good for our future, and it is good for our children.

The facts could not be clearer: climate change is a serious threat to our economy, our national security, the planet, and the future that we pass on to our children. We must take action before it is too late.

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from the great State of New Mexico (Ms. STANSBURY), whose reputation has preceded her during her short tenure.

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Speaker, I rise on this historic day in which we passed and sent to the President's desk the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act. It seems appropriate that we should also take a moment now to talk about climate justice as we are also talking about racial justice in our country.

Because the science is clear, we must urgently address the issues of climate change now. We must address the causes of climate change and our greenhouse gas footprint. We must mitigate the impacts of climate change and lift up and support our communities. And we must build a world that is more just, more equitable, and more climate resilient. To do so, we must invest in our communities, investing in their future, and investing in critical infrastructure that will make that possible.

The time is now to be decisive, to be brave in our policymaking, to be bold in our investments, and to lean into the science. This is especially critical for New Mexico, my home State, where we are already experiencing the impacts of extreme drought, catastrophic fires, and an uncertain future.

I have spent my working career working on these issues, and I know that we must invest in infrastructure like our electric grid, broadband infrastructure, drinking water, irrigation, and green infrastructure so that our communities can remain resilient as we are going through this change and to ensure that we are taking full advantage and leaning into our clean energy future.

We must do all of this through the lens of social, racial, and economic justice by investing in good paying jobs and in the livelihoods and well-being of our communities and our people.

That is why we need the American Jobs Plan now and the investments that are not only going to be shovel ready, but, as a friend of mine says, also shovel worthy. So the time is now to take action on climate change and to ensure that we are investing in the infrastructure that will make it possible for future generations to live resiliently on this planet.

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield again to gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR), who is the chair of the Select Committee on the Climate Crisis.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, hearing my colleague speak with such

passion and such intellect really does give me hope that we have the tools necessary to tackle the climate crisis. But I think we also need to think about climate as a climate opportunity, and there are a few of these.

Our newest colleague, Congresswoman STANSBURY from New Mexico kind of hit on it. And it goes back to—I want to thank Mr. CASTEN—last year before the pandemic hit, Mr. CASTEN was kind enough to invite me to Chicago where we heard from environmental justice leaders. I also had the opportunity to travel to Detroit. I have listened to folks who are demanding greater equity all across America.

Back home in Tampa, Florida, I see it; I understand that now the climate crisis presents us with a generational opportunity to rebuild our country and our infrastructure, so we are not leaving communities behind and we are not leaving any American behind.

We can hammer out these investments that will help us rebuild the economy. Mr. CASTEN knows these examples quite well.

Decades ago, unfortunately, the Federal Government put interstate highways right through the center of many communities. The harms from the pollution still linger today. In fact, Black Americans are exposed to 21 percent more fine, particulate matter pollution than the average American. I just don't think we can pass an infrastructure package that ignores these injustices. We are going to have to create these new opportunities in solving the climate crisis, creating good paying jobs, but also lifting up Americans and American communities that have carried the burden of pollution.

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, I am reminded as I listen to the gentlewoman speak—I know our whip always likes to quote George Santayana who said that those who don't study their history are doomed to repeat it.

We are at the cusp—it has probably already started—of the third great energy transition we have had as a species. The first one was when we transitioned from depending on muscle power to mechanical power. The second was when we transitioned from mechanical power to electric power, and this transition from dirty energy to clean energy. Every one of those transitions has been a massive boon in labor productivity. It takes a lot fewer people to run a steam shovel than it does John Henrys to dig a hole in the ground, and it takes a lot fewer people when you can electrify the country to build all the industries that we have grown accustomed to than it does when you have to live within a pulley's length of the waterwheel.

With those opportunities have come all that we think of as great and truly American. We have freed up people's time to invest in whole new ideas and take away the drudgery of work. But the history we have to acknowledge is that every one of those transitions has also been extremely disruptive for the people involved.

I like to tell folks back home that only a Luddite would say we never should have invented the steam shovel. But you have to be deeply evil not to empathize with John Henry.

As we go through this transition that we are in right now, we are going to create a tremendous amount of wealth because we are going to grow labor productivity again. We are going to have the opportunity, as many people already do, to generate electricity without depending on coal mines and coal railroad lines and natural gas pipelines, and, Mr. Speaker, you are going to be able to do this on your roof from the sun or from the wind or from more efficient geothermal. That is going to free up a whole lot of time to do a lot of innovative things. But it is going to be disruptive for a lot of communities.

There is no doubt that there is a rising tide of wealth that is already upon us. There is also no doubt that not all rising tides lift all boats. Tsunamis tend to swamp them out sometimes, and in the tsunami of wealth creation that is coming down, let's make sure that we look out for the least among us.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I think that is one of the reasons why President Biden's American Jobs Plan targets 40 percent of the benefits of our clean energy and clean infrastructure investments to disadvantaged communities. I think that is smart policy.

I think the gentleman is right. Right now, as we move into our clean energy future, President Biden has the goal of really helping communities that need revitalization. When you think about the hard work in a coal mine or out in the field, we owe such a debt of gratitude to our coal miners and the energy workers who have powered America. They have made it what it is over the last century. They ushered in the economic progress that we enjoy today.

But we now know, according to the science, that our overdependence on coal and fossil fuels and fracked gas has led to a crisis that now threatens our way of life. I wish it weren't so, but we have to now, at this fork in the road, decide that our moral obligation to future generations comes first.

With all of the opportunities that clean energy and greater and stronger and healthier communities can provide, we have got to hammer this out through the American Jobs Plan and make sure that we protect our economy, we protect our national security, our health, our beautiful natural resources from sea to shining sea, and the air that we breathe.

But we have some choices to make. We can double down on the status quo, even as these climate-fueled disasters claim more lives and they hurt the pocketbooks of folks.

I think of my neighbors back home in Florida now, the so-called Sunshine State. Boy, we have a lot of work to do to capture the power of the sun through solar energy, but we are paying more now because we have longer

and hotter summers, it means AC bills are going up.

We have these intense flood events, so we are paying more for flood insurance and stormwater costs. Meanwhile a lot of these energy companies have kind of gotten off the hook over time.

What does the gentleman say about that?

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, I think there is a refreshing change coming in our energy structure primarily because all of those old power plants—that some of the utilities in Florida that we are fighting because they still have all that capital they wanted to amortize—those plants are getting old, and they are making the decisions that intelligent businesses always make: I am going to invest in the stuff that is clean and that generates a high return.

Florida Power & Light Company is a utility that, frankly, has been one of the leaders in deploying wind energy. It took them a little while to do it in their own district, but they certainly did it all over the country, because they knew that was a good place to put their investors' money to work. And we have seen that leadership, I think, throughout the business sector in this country. There is a reason why we are creating so many more solar jobs, and so many more wind jobs. Jobs in the energy efficiency sector I think is the largest supplier of new labor.

□ 2030

But I don't think that absolves us as regulators.

I am remembering when you and I formed what I think we thought was going to be a very small delegation to Madrid a little over a year ago; and we had our pins that said "We're Still In," because we knew, of course, that the prior administration had pulled out of the Paris accord. And I still have a picture that I carry around and show to people of the two empty seats in front of the United States delegation sign when every other country in the world was there.

But I remember there was a—and I wish I could remember the name—European parliamentarian that came up to me and said: You know, we know from experience that when the United States doesn't lead, bad things happen.

And I said that we thought we were alone out there. But you remember when we got there, there were a lot of businesses that were there and there were lot of cities that were there. We spent a long time at a lot of university booths. And we were still in because we were still in, not just because it was a slogan on a pin; because all those companies that made zero carbon commitments and are committing to it because their shareholders are demanding it.

One-third of all of the assets under management in global equity markets right now are in ESG funds. People care. They don't—whether they care for moral reasons, whether they care because they are greedy, it doesn't matter. They care.

We have had over 1,200 State and local officials call on Congress to pass the American Jobs Plan because they care. Environmental and labor organizations across the country have pushed for us to act now because they care.

I am reading in the Tampa Bay Times. Recently, Dr. Rich Templin says: "Everyone who stands for fair, union jobs and climate action can come together. In this plan, pro-workers and pro-environment voices can sing in unison."

We know that is true.

Now, the challenge—you started by asking about the energy sector. If we are really honest, what we all know in this line of work that we are in is that losers always cry louder than winners cheer.

People who have got a loss of investment in this space know exactly what they have to lose. Future generations aren't here yet.

Our job here today is to look around the room and see who is not in the room and make sure we advocate for them. The rest of them are doing a pretty good job on their own, I think.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, well, what has been so fascinating is there are so many people in the room because they understand the opportunities, the job-creating opportunities through the American Jobs Plan.

Here we go. The American Jobs Plan will create 2.7 million new jobs. So let's talk about some of those jobs. I think about some of our colleagues who represent communities that have seen jobs go overseas over time, our industrial base.

We know what President Biden has proposed will help revitalize those communities; plug those abandoned coal mines; plug the abandoned wells; just plain plug the leaks of methane gas that are so damaging to the climate.

We think we can create millions and millions of jobs through a new CCC, a Climate Conservation Corps. We can strengthen our communities at home. I know we have got a lot of seawalls that need repair, a lot of replanting of trees and mangroves to help protect us from these very costly events. We know we need to modernize the electric grid across America.

Representative CASTEN, that is going to create an enormous amount of jobs in the Midwest because a lot of the renewable resources, your solar power, wind power, it is largely in the Midwest. We have got to build the modern electric grid.

Look at this horrendous catastrophe in Texas just a few months ago because the electric grid there was not connected. It wasn't modernized. It wasn't resilient. People lost their lives because of the strange, climate-fueled winter storm in Texas.

We are going to create a lot of jobs just modernizing and making the grid more resilient. And I haven't even gotten to the wind power, offshore wind, wind in the Midwest.

This is our future. This is why I like to think of it not just in the terms of a climate crisis, but a climate opportunity. And I think that is why President Biden says that every time he hears people talk climate, he hears jobs, jobs, jobs.

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, when we deregulated our power industry in 1992, with the energy policy act, that was never presented as being an environmental bill, as far as I can remember. It was designed to encourage people to build cheaper power.

And what did they build?

The nuclear industry went from running 60 percent of the time to running 90 percent of the time. We started building a whole lot of wind and solar. We basically stopped building inefficient gas plants, and the only new gas plants were combined cycle plants that are almost twice as efficient.

Since that bill was passed, the CO₂ emissions in our power sector have fallen from 1,300 pounds a megawatt hour to 900, and the price of power has fallen by 6 percent.

Now, there are those who say that is because of the fracking revolution. And there are people who say a lot of things, I guess. It happened because economics drives clean energy.

You know what people didn't build since 1992?

Coal. It is a really lousy investment.

In just those 10 years, after 1992, we built 200,000 megawatts of new gas turbine capacity. Twenty percent of the entire U.S. power grid, which was twice as efficient as what it displaced, was built in response to economic signals and drove down the CO₂ emissions of the grid. That is a start.

For us to do what we have to do from this point going forward, we have to electrify everything. We have to figure out how to electrify our transportation fleet; electrify the way our factories make goods and services, how our homes keep us warm.

In order to do that, we need to build at least 1,000 gigawatts; 1,000 megawatts; 1,000 kilowatts—whatever unit you would like—of new generation. That is about as much as generation as we already have in this country.

We are then going to need to build the wires to connect that up to all the new loads. And I think as we heard at a climate hearing, they said that is going to take at least \$350 billion of investment. And those investments are going to make money because people are now connecting up a cheaper energy source that is giving people what they really want, which isn't electricity.

What people really want is a hot shower and a cold beer, and it is going to give them that cheaper.

It is going to help us build out electric vehicle charging stations. We are talking about massive amounts of public—and private-sector investments that are not only going to put people to work; is not only going to give us a

more sustainable economy; it is going to leave more money in people's wallets.

The single best thing we can do to disadvantaged communities is cut their energy bill. That is what we are going to do. All we need is the ambition. And I am so glad that we are in this moment and with this President and this Congress that is rising to that challenge.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Mr. CASTEN is right. You know, listing off all the job opportunities, the transportation sector, he is right.

And this is a global competitiveness issue. We have got to win this race with China and the Europeans. They are building those electric vehicles.

But how exciting was it to see the announcement from Ford and GM?

I can't wait to see this electrified F-150 truck, the Lightning.

This is an enormous opportunity, especially in the industrial Midwest that has really seen a lot of job loss over the years to China. We are going to get back on this, and the only way we can do it is through making these targeted investments.

We want to build the electric vehicles that the world drives. We want to make sure that that charging infrastructure goes coast to coast in every community.

But it is going to take the focus of America. And the good news is, all Americans—I don't care if you are a Democrat or Republican or Independent, or what, they understand that clean energy is the future; and that if we do it right, we can lift communities that need it; and we can create millions and millions of jobs.

Now, I started with the science. And we heard from some outstanding colleagues, and we are going to hear a lot more from them in the coming weeks as we hammer out the American Jobs Plan.

But there was one witness at one of our early hearings, Dr. Abdelhadi, who is an expert, who has been focused on climate for many years, and I want to just remind what he said.

He said: The limited actions to address this climate crisis have resulted in lost opportunity and have produced a challenge that is even greater than it was even a few years ago. With political and societal will, and with strategic and scientifically informed action that considers all of the dimensions of climate change, the dangerous trajectory we are on can be altered, such that our generation's story can be one of success and not failure.

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to close, as I often do, by observing that there are really only three things we have to do as a country.

The first thing we have to do is cut the energy—double the efficiency with which we convert energy into economic activity. If we were to cut our energy use per dollar of GDP in half, we would almost be at the level that Switzerland has already achieved. I think we are

better than Switzerland, personally, but let's at least aspire to be as good as Switzerland; double our efficiency.

The second thing we have to do is do the research and development to figure out how to decarbonize industries like steel- and cement-making because we don't know how to make silicone; we don't know how to make steel; we don't know how to make cement; we don't know how to make fertilizer without fossil fuels today. That is an R&D challenge we have to figure out.

Then we have to get to zero CO₂ emissions; not by 2050, not by 2030, by 1990. We have to get back to 350 parts per million in the atmosphere because that is the point that we can say to our children: We are leaving you a better planet than the one we inherited, where wildfires are not the norm, where droughts are not the norm.

And is it going to be easy?

No. But we know how to do it.

The first thing we ought to do is take our hand off the emergency brake. Stop subsidizing yesterday's technology. Embrace markets. Embrace innovation. Embrace all that makes us American. Stop subsidizing the fossil fuel industry by \$650 billion a year.

Unleash the power of our innovators. Unleash the power of our entrepreneurs. Unleash the power and the innovation of all our great universities and national labs who will figure out how to do these hard things.

And then, yes, even after we do all that, make significant Federal investments in the things that the private sector is not very good at, like transmission, like coast-to-coast broadband, like EV stations. We have done it before. That is how we built the railroads. It is how we electrified the country.

It is not going to be easy, but it will be necessary. It will be inspiring, and it will be a story that we will tell our grandchildren about because we will be able to tell them that we were there, in this moment; we saw what was necessary, and we made it possible. I think that is something worth doing.

It is our opportunity. It is our moment.

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

SELF-INFLICTED CRISES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. 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 gentleman from Louisiana?

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, during my time tonight, my colleagues and I will address the major crises happening here at home, happening close to home, and now happening abroad. Our message tonight will cover many topics, but the theme is consistent. These crises are self-inflicted. There are the direct results of disastrous policy decisions from the Biden administration.

We have a large number of Members who want to participate tonight, so I will begin immediately by yielding to the gentleman from central Pennsylvania (Mr. JOYCE), my good friend.

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, under the leadership of the Biden administration, Americans are facing escalating challenges to our economy, to our national security and, ultimately, to our way of life. As we have heard many times, our Nation continues to jump from crisis to crisis.

On this floor, I have often raised concerns about the border crisis, and it continues to spiral out of control as we record an increasing number of migrants crossing the southern border, along with gang violence, human trafficking, and deadly illicit drugs.

Border agents seized over 900 pounds of fentanyl at our southern border last month alone. Today, we are witnessing an escalating crisis and, unlike our Vice President, the American people aren't laughing.

More than 80 days ago, President Biden tasked Vice President HARRIS with addressing the border crisis. Months later, she has yet to visit the border and witness the devastation firsthand.

□ 2045

How many days will it take? One hundred? Two hundred? A year?

If Vice President HARRIS needs encouragement to get to the southwest border, then Congress can provide an incentive. I am proud to support Congresswoman ASHLEY HINSON's See the Crisis Act, which would defund Vice President HARRIS' international travel until she visits America's southwest border.

It is simple. If the Vice President wants to go to Europe, then she must go to the border first.

This is no laughing matter. At home in Pennsylvania, the border crisis is a matter of life and death. Lives are depending on border security.

The truth is clear: We can't afford the Biden border crisis. We can't afford the Biden economic crisis. We can't afford the Biden national security crisis. And we can't afford the Biden energy crisis.

This pattern is rooted in the Biden administration's broken policies. Under President Biden's watch, we are a nation in crisis.

The American people are paying attention, and they are counting on us to stop this alarming trend and restore our Nation's path to recovery.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. The

American people are counting on us, and they deserve a President who will ensure their safety, security, and freedom, both here at home and abroad.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. C. SCOTT FRANKLIN), who represents Florida's Fifth Congressional District.

Mr. C. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight because our country is facing a growing economic crisis, a crisis of the Biden administration's making.

With his massive and reckless spending programs, President Biden has mortgaged our economic security. Long after this current administration has skipped town, future generations of hardworking Americans will be stuck holding the bill.

It is human nature to like free stuff, I suppose, and as long as Uncle Sam is willing to dole out money to everyone and everything in sight, it is easy to understand why people are happily lining up for their fair share.

It is also a universal truth that there is no such thing as a free lunch. Unchecked spending doesn't just hurt us in the future. It is also destructive in the near term.

My Democrat colleagues have tried for months to convince the American people that it is only the rich who will pay for reckless spending policies, but people know better. Americans across the country are starting to feel the pinch of this unbridled spending.

They are certainly noticing it back in my home State of Florida, where drivers are paying more for gas than they have in nearly a decade. They see it when they go to the grocery store, where prices on everything from a jar of peanut butter to a gallon of milk have spiked sharply. They are feeling the pain on nearly everything they buy, with consumer costs rising at the highest rate in nearly 13 years.

This inflation President Biden has created is an immediate tax on workers, causing each hard-earned dollar to be worth less than it was before. At the same time, skyrocketing costs of materials are making it even harder for small business owners to reopen.

With high unemployment, record job openings, and spiraling inflation, it is time for the Biden administration to acknowledge that their bad medicine is hurting the patient. Congress has the authority and the responsibility to rein in this reckless spending, and the time to act is now.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, my friend is exactly right. The people do know better, and the pain hardworking Americans are feeling is very real.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEUSER), who represents Pennsylvania's Ninth Congressional District.

Mr. MEUSER. Mr. Speaker, in less than 6 months, the Biden administration's policies have disrupted the fundamentals of our economy and have caused significant inflation.