

Online learning is a must for our children. We know COVID-19, according to all the experts, may not be the last time that we are faced with such a pandemic. There are some predicting that there could come another, maybe not in my lifetime but maybe in yours. We must be prepared.

So, I am hopeful that this infrastructure bill that we move through this body will not just be traditional but will be looking to the future so we can have the kind of legislation that will prepare our children and grandchildren for a world that we hope they will be competitive in.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. Hopefully, we can have that debate and work together to achieve that vision for the future as we are dealing with the problems of today and our infrastructure needs for today, but also do it in a fiscally responsible way. I think that is what the two sides, especially in the Senate, are looking at.

I still haven't gotten an indication, specifically, as it deals with some kind of reconciliation bill that may or may not come to the floor. Hopefully, it is not some attempt to raise taxes and do things that would undermine our economy, our competitiveness, and our ability to create more opportunities for people to achieve the American Dream by entering into the workforce and ultimately moving their way up and having their own opportunities as well, which would be undermined with higher taxes.

If that part of the equation gets brought in, clearly, that changes the dynamic. But, hopefully, we stick to the traditional infrastructure needs that you and I would both agree need to be met. Hopefully, we can find a path to get there together. That is what we will be working toward in the week ahead.

Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman has nothing else, I am prepared to yield back.

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I don't have anything else. I thank the gentleman for allowing me to stand in here today.

I say to him that I would hope that as we go forward with this discussion, we will look at this whole issue as the title of the bill indicates: Invest in America. When we make investments, financial investments, the money may leave our coffers, but it comes back sometimes tenfold.

So there is a big difference between raising taxes and making investments. Mr. SCALISE. Hopefully, we can keep that difference in mind.

I appreciate the gentleman filling in, and we will see the gentleman from Maryland back soon enough and maybe even moving a little faster than before. I am not going to challenge him to a race because he would defeat me in that.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from South Carolina, and I yield back the balance of my time.

RECOMMITTING ON JUNETEENTH

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, on June 19, 1865, freedom finally came for the last enslaved African Americans in the United States when Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas, more than 2 years after President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation.

Today, 156 years later, President Biden will be signing a law to make Juneteenth a new Federal holiday. It is a cause for celebration. It should also serve as an occasion for learning and for this country to reflect on our history and recommit to doing the vital work to ensure that the lasting effects of slavery, bigotry, and racism are replaced with hope, dignity, and equality for all.

We can start with the Senate passing the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, legislation to reform policing and address systemic racism and bias within law enforcement, and finally making the John Lewis Voting Rights Act a law, passing it.

Today, we celebrate this historic designation of Juneteenth as a Federal holiday. Tomorrow, we get back to work.

BIDEN INFLATION

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the hidden tax that is plaguing hardworking Americans. This hidden tax is inflation.

Under President Biden, we have seen the largest spike in 13 years, with consumer prices surging 5 percent in May. Core inflation rose at its fastest pace since 1992.

American families are being forced to pay more for the products that they need. Gasoline is 56.2 percent more expensive today than 12 months ago. Transportation services have increased 11.2 percent. Together, food and energy prices have increased 3.8 percent. Even used cars and truck prices have increased 29.7 percent.

Yet, Democrats rammed through a trillion-dollar package that is crushing small businesses and hurting hardworking American families by incentivizing Americans to stay at home and not get back to work. We are currently down 7.6 million jobs from our pre-pandemic levels. Our inflation is rising because of President Biden's far-left tax-and-spend proposals.

Americans cannot afford the Biden inflation tax. We know wasteful government spending will not solve this crisis, no matter how many times President Biden and the Democrats propose it.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ANITA EHLERS

(Mr. CASTEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of Anita Ehlers, a constituent member of the Barrington, Illinois, community I represent and, more importantly, a friend.

I never knew Anita when she didn't have cancer. But for a long time, I didn't know that she did. She just never let it define who she was.

I knew her as a wonderfully kind, hardworking woman who was committed to making the world a better place.

Our Speaker often reminds us: "We don't agonize. We organize." Every time she says it, I see Anita's face in my head.

I never saw her feel sorry for herself. Every time I was with her, it seemed like all the thoughts in her head were on how to make the world a little better for everybody else: her husband, Gregg; her daughters, Julia and Lindsay; her friends and neighbors; me and all the folks she was motivating.

As a women's marcher, a climate protector, an ally for the LBGT community, a universal health coverage champion, a union member, a teacher, and a lung cancer support advocate, she never agonized. She organized.

The world, and our district, is a sadder place without her. But I take inspiration because she always made our community a better place.

May we all find the strength to follow her example, to make the world around us a little easier for everybody else, no matter the adversity that we may personally face.

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PREPARATIONS TO EVACUATE AFGHAN INTERPRETERS

(Mr. MEIJER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MEIJER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the dire situation of our interpreters in Afghanistan, where we are over halfway through our planned withdrawal. Meanwhile, almost 20,000 Afghans who worked with U.S. forces are anxiously awaiting special immigrant visa approval, a process that can take years. Making matters worse, our Kabul Embassy suspended visa operations last week due to a surge in COVID cases.

Mr. Speaker, President Biden must immediately start preparations to evacuate those Afghans to Guam to safely await visa approval. My colleagues and I on the Honoring our Promises Working Group urged the administration to do so 2 weeks ago, but we have yet to hear back. This is unacceptable.

President Biden ended the remain in Mexico for economic migrants but insists on a remain in Afghanistan policy

for Afghans who risked their lives to help American forces. While they wait, the Taliban are hunting them down. Dozens have already been killed while bureaucrats dither.

We cannot abandon our Afghan allies to die. We must get them to Guam.

ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE AND CLEAN ENERGY

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

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, we cannot unravel infrastructure from climate. As we consider bold new investments in America's infrastructure, our choices will shape our climate future for better or worse.

Failing to address climate pollution and clean energy in our infrastructure work will force future generations of Americans to cover a blank check. And we are already passing on grave and growing costs for our past failures to act.

But let me put this another way: seizing opportunities to tackle climate change in our infrastructure work will help us build legislation that makes America cleaner, safer, and more competitive as a Nation. It will save countless lives and create millions of good American jobs.

If we make climate a priority, our workers will miss fewer days on the job, and our kids will miss fewer days at school. Our local budgets will suffer less strain. Our infrastructure dollars will go farther. The things we build will last longer.

Climate is a growing threat that demands urgent, bold action. And doing nothing about it is doing something, it is condemning the United States to become a weaker, sicker, and poorer Nation. This is our path to choose. Do we allow America to further decline or choose a more sustainable, prosperous, and just future? To me, the decision is clear: Let's move forward.

CRISIS AT THE BORDER

(Ms. HERRELL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. HERRELL. Mr. Speaker, this week I received a letter and these photos, in fact, more photos than just this, from a constituent. The photos were taken on his ranch at 5 a.m. earlier this week from a game camera about 15 miles north of the border.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from Russell Johnson dated June 13, 2021, and I would like to read a few excerpts from the letter.

"When President Biden signed the proclamation ending border wall construction, we saw a dramatic increase in illegal foot traffic through our ranch."

I can no longer allow my children to play outside unless an adult is with them to mon-

itor the areas around them. People who have dropped out of groups crossing have stopped at my house wanting to use the phone, WiFi, and call their smuggler. This is very concerning, as often my wife is at home alone with our children, and I am hours away working on the ranch. These people are desperate. And it is only a matter of time before someone gets hurt.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the border in New Mexico is not like the other borders in cities around El Paso or the ports of entry, here there is a huge difference.

JUNE 13, 2021.

REPRESENTATIVE HERRELL. My name is Russell Johnson. I am a fourth-generation cattle rancher in southern Luna County. I ranch along side my wife, two children, my father, and my mother. Our ranch borders the international boundary with Mexico for a little over 8 miles. My family has ranched on this same piece of land since 1918. What we are experiencing on the border today is not only a risk to my family, but our state and this nation.

When President Biden signed the proclamation ending border wall construction, we saw a dramatic increase in illegal foot traffic through our ranch. There now exists a gap in the wall that separates the United States from Mexico on our ranch. It is approximately 3/4-mile wide along with a border monument access gate that was not installed leaving a gap about 12 feet wide. Not only did President Biden's proclamation end the construction of the physical barrier, but it also stopped all other infrastructure and technology that was to go with it. Improved access roads for Border Patrol, lighting, sensor technology and camera systems were all part of the project that was abruptly ended. The situation at the border has progressively worsened because of this decision. Talking with local Border Patrol Agents, group size in our area has gone from four to six people in a group, to now being upwards of twenty. This is all crossing and passing through not only my property, but our homes and business.

I can no longer allow my children to play outside unless an adult is with them to monitor the areas around them. People who have dropped out of groups crossing have stopped at my house wanting to use the phone or have access to my Wi-Fi to call their smuggler. This is very concerning as often my wife is at home alone with our children and I am hours away working on the ranch. These people are desperate. It's only a matter of time before our home is broken into.

The increase in traffic is also affecting our business. Much of southern New Mexico is suffering a D4 drought. We are having to supplement our cattle to get to the monsoon season. This hardship is being compounded by the people crossing the border illegally. Currently, we have decent natural grasses in the pasture bordering Mexico. Our cattle are not utilizing this rangeland properly because they are constantly getting spooked by the people crossing. This is pushing them into drier areas with not enough suitable feed for them to consume. The cattle are also susceptible to contracting stress induced illnesses like Pasteurella Pneumonia from constantly being run off. We have experienced this before under similar border conditions. If not treated quickly, cattle can die within 48 hours. We are experiencing this not only on parts of the ranch that border Mexico, but further north as well.

Our day-to-day operations have been negatively impacted. We now try to work in pairs at a minimum. With no cellphone service in our area, it is safer to work with someone with you, so you have somebody to watch your back. This slows our work progress

down and increases the length of time it takes to get tasks down.

On June 4, 2021, my father and I encountered four groups of illegal immigrants on our ranch totaling well over 30 individuals. Border Patrol was able to apprehend all four groups, but they told me something that I found very troubling. They said that there were only eight agents in the field that evening. Deming Border Patrol Station is responsible for the area we live in. The station's area of responsibility includes well over 60 miles of border. Eight agents were expected to cover all of that during their shift. This does not make for a very secure border. Encountering groups crossing and a lack of manpower in the field is becoming the norm. The Patrol Agent in Charge at the Deming Border Patrol Station told us that they are averaging 650 apprehensions a week. These are apprehensions, they do not include the people that are successfully making their illegal entry.

It is important to note that we do not have unaccompanied minors or family groups crossing through our area. They are all young, adult males in good physical shape. All the people I have encountered are wearing full camouflage, to include face coverings and carpet or sponge booties on their feet. These people are not turning themselves in, they do not want to be caught.

Unfortunately, this is not the first time we have experienced issues regarding the border. What differs this time from others is that our government is not trying to do anything to resolve the issue. I feel like as a citizen of this country, I do not matter in the eyes of our government. The State of Texas has declared a state of emergency in many if not all its counties that border Mexico. Texas is doing this because the Federal Government is not addressing the issue. Enough pressure will be put on the Texas border that New Mexico will see an even larger increase in illegal traffic as it will be pushed west. This bothers me greatly.

I am writing you today to make you aware of the situation on the border in our area and to ask for help. Border Patrol manpower is strained, and our local law enforcement is stretched thin. Ideally, the border wall and all infrastructure and technology need completed. In the meantime, we desperately need more boots on the ground to help with this surge in illegal traffic. We also need better cellphone coverage in these remote areas. Not being able to call for law enforcement or emergency service is a huge safety concern. Last, but certainly not least, we need help getting this administration to address the border crisis. Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Respectfully,

RUSSELL JOHNSON.

HONORING WILLIAM ALLEN PULLUM

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

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of William Allen Pullum.

Navarre is a community in my district in Florida that is one of the fastest growing. It is vibrant, full of warfighters, workers, and lovely people. Bill Pullum is the father of Navarre.

He was born in 1947 and lived most of his life in this community. He joined the Army in 1967 as an Army helicopter