

about the failures that led up to the disastrous Afghanistan withdrawal. This is an issue that cannot be swept under the rug and forgotten. Unfortunately, this administration has already decided to move on and look the other way.

Thirteen patriots lost their lives just a few short weeks ago, and countless Americans who wanted to leave were left behind. The whole world watched this crisis grow, and America's strengths and leadership were called into question by our closest allies. This crisis should have never unfolded the way it did.

Now is the time for answers, Madam Speaker. The American people demand them and the world expects them.

REAL COST OF INFLATION

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, American families are feeling the immense strain that has been caused by President Biden's economic crisis. From the gas pumps to the grocery store, prices for even the most basic commodities are skyrocketing to obscene levels.

The cost of gasoline is up almost 43 percent. The cost of beef is up almost 12 percent. The cost of propane is up almost 23 percent. Even the prices of used cars are up almost 45 percent.

Madam Speaker, increased spending by the Federal Government is not a remedy to solve this crisis, nor is a \$3.5 trillion spending bill that will cripple the American economy even further. Congress must get its fiscal house in order.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) for 5 minutes.

Ms. PLASKETT. Madam Speaker, last week, the Ways and Means Committee on which I sit, along with numerous other committees in this House, moved forward toward completing our work to achieve President Biden's and the American people's vision to build back better.

The legislation contains economic development initiatives that I have long championed to create good-paying jobs, while lowering costs and cutting taxes for American families, not American wealthy. This is the kind of legislation that makes America great. This is the kind of legislation that assures the American people that we have not abandoned them in their time of need. To remain the greatest Nation, we must support the most vulnerable portion of America.

Importantly, for my district, this bill contains specific measures for the much-needed economic recovery of the U.S. territories, which have been severely tried in recent years. It fixes longstanding fiscal cliffs related to rebate on Federal excise taxes on distilled spirits production in the territories, our rum cover over. The cover over has been a part of the funda-

mental tax relationship between the United States and its island territories before there was even an income tax. This bill would repeal the cap that has been imposed on the program since 1984.

In addition, we are continuing to expand the federally funded Child Tax Credit, including reimbursing the Islands' government who pay out the costs for providing the credit. The credit, as expanded in the American Rescue Plan, would be continued for additional 4 years.

This child tax cut has cut child poverty by 50 percent, 50 percent. Cutting child poverty by the child tax cut makes economic sense.

Under the Annie E. Casey Foundation study, America has lost \$500 billion a year in lost production due to children who have lived in poverty most of their life because of hunger, leading to loss of jobs, school dropouts, prison, all of these things will now have a way for these children to come out.

Furthermore, we are extending the changes made to the Earned Income Tax Credit in the American Rescue Plan. We increase the value of the Earned Income Tax Credit for workers with no qualifying dependents, and we do that on a permanent basis in Build Back Better.

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In addition, we are providing lookback provisions that are necessary for individuals. This important part of the earned income tax credit is premised on the idea that if a taxpayer's earned income was less in a given year than it is in the prior year, the taxpayer may elect to use their prior year's earned income in computing the EITC. That is, this is a 1-year lookback. This will provide stability to taxpayers who have experienced economic shocks in any given year, the same way we do for businesses.

This legislation provides much-needed relief to the U.S. territories from the GILTI tax that was supposed to apply to foreign jurisdictions. Since 2017, there have been significant concerns about the application of the GILTI tax to sovereign territories of the United States, including the U.S. Virgin Islands as well as the other territories, flowing from the treatment of U.S. territories under the Internal Revenue Code.

I am pleased to see the additional accommodations to smaller-sized businesses and the economic activity that will allow jobs and incomes to flourish. For these employers, the possessions wage credit would be increased from 20 percent to 50 percent of eligible possessions wages and allocable fringe benefits for each employee. With these enhanced credits, the Ways and Means Committee acted to provide relief to service-based economies.

I am also excited about the proactive support for disaster resilience. We are providing tools to mitigate the impact

of natural disasters by providing incentives for upfront investments.

We are providing strong incentives to attract capital and promote jobs in communities that need it the most, significant resources for rural areas, Tribal communities, and underserved minority communities.

We have affordable housing to help reduce housing inequality and pathways to homeownership, which is about wealth creation in this country.

Democrats have heard the needs and desires of the American people, all American people—Democrats, Republicans, independents, rural, urban, small town, islands even. We are here to help you.

BIDEN'S BORDER CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss the crisis along our southwest border during the ongoing public health emergency.

Last year, the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General released a report titled "DHS Needs to Enhance Its COVID-19 Response at the Southwest Border." The DHS OIG findings highlight what Republicans have been saying for 7 months, that U.S. Customs and Border Protection does not conduct COVID-19 testing for migrants who enter CBP custody and is not required to do so.

Further, the report notes that without stronger COVID-19 prevention measures in place, DHS is putting its workforce, support staff, border communities, and all communities and migrants at greater risk of contracting the virus.

It is our responsibility in Congress to ensure that our frontline workforce, including the brave men and women of CBP, who put their lives on the line daily, are adequately protected.

More than 6 months ago, I introduced my first piece of legislation, the REACT Act, which would require the Department of Homeland Security to test all migrants illegally crossing our border who they plan to release into our communities. In March, I offered to bring the REACT Act to the floor for a vote, but it was rejected by the majority.

Simultaneously, we are seeing the majority prepare to spend \$3.5 trillion, mortgaging our children's and grandchildren's futures.

Let's be clear that none of the money in this tax-and-spend package would go to CBP. This is while the DHS OIG heard from CBP officials that they do not have the necessary resources to conduct COVID-19 testing. Yet, many on the other side remain unconcerned about the lack of testing along our southern border.

In August, more than 208,000 migrants were encountered along the southwest border. This means each day

approximately 6,700 individuals were encountered.

To put this in perspective, President Obama's Secretary of Homeland Security, Jeh Johnson, stated in his tenure that 1,000 apprehensions a day was considered a bad day. We are more than six times that now, and on top of it, we face a global pandemic.

We are currently watching a debacle unfold in Del Rio, Texas, where this weekend alone there were estimated to be approximately 15,000 migrants crossing the Rio Grande. This surge is overwhelming an already overburdened system, and the agents and officers of CBP need Congress to focus on this crisis.

While it is promising that CBP will be surging resources to the area, it remains extremely worrisome to me that, as the OIG found, CBP is not required to test these migrants. And I understand there is also a measles outbreak at Fort Bliss.

Moreover, we will continue to see the border crisis of varying scales until we institute policies that will deter illegal immigration.

Programs such as the Migrant Protection Protocols and Title 42 health restrictions should be utilized to stem the flow of illegal migration and help keep our communities safe during the pandemic.

Notably, the DHS OIG report also states that the "erosion of Title 42 authority has had a significant negative impact on CBP's COVID-19 mitigation measures and creates increased risk."

I encourage this administration to continue to implement these health restrictions for migrants crossing illegally, especially while we see new variants emerging.

As the former director of the Iowa Department of Public Health, I know we must ensure that any individuals the Biden administration insists on releasing into our communities do not have COVID-19 or other infectious diseases. In fact, the Biden administration is recognizing the need for COVID-19 testing and vaccinations for another group of individuals, those who are being paroled in from Afghanistan.

I cannot comprehend how we can vaccinate those individuals for not only COVID-19 but also measles, mumps, rubella, polio, and any other age-appropriate vaccinations that are required by the CDC but not those coming across our border illegally.

It is clear that this administration is creating a double standard not only for U.S. citizens and migrants but also for individuals they are bringing into this country.

If I may, I will also add a boisterous happy birthday to my husband, Curt.

RECOGNIZING KMPH TELEVISION'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a significant mile-

stone for one of the local news stations in my hometown and district in Fresno, California. KMPH Television is celebrating 50 years of TV programming and broadcast news excellence.

First taking the air in 1971, by the Pappas family, KMPH launched its news department 7 years later, serving as a vital source of information for viewers across the Central Valley.

It has not been an easy time for journalists in the last decade throughout our country. Nearly one-fourth of America's newspapers have shuttered their operations, and a significant portion of print and TV journalists, sadly, have lost their jobs. This leaves many smaller stations with fewer reporters to inform the public on what is happening in their communities. Getting local news is so critical to having an informed public.

KMPH is no stranger to these challenges, but it continues to thrive, make a difference, and inform the public.

A free press, as we all know, is the cornerstone of our democracy. Local news plays an integral role in shaping America, keeping people informed, and allowing them to be active in participatory democracy.

During a time of disinformation—sadly, these days—in social media, I think supporting local journalism has never been more critical.

Fifty years of public service is worth celebrating. Congratulations to KMPH in Fresno for 50 years of informing the public.

CELEBRATING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, to honor the cultures, history, and achievements of the Hispanic community, both in my district and across the country, for generations.

Throughout the last year, every segment of our society has been impacted by the COVID pandemic. Certainly, Hispanic Americans have felt this impact as well, but they have worked hard to do their part.

Many of them are essential workers who have to be on their job every day, like the farmworkers, some of the hardest working people you will ever meet in your life, putting food on America's dinner table every night. Some are healthcare workers—doctors, nurses, technicians, first responders—and they risk their lives every day doing their jobs and putting their families at risk.

Every day, the Hispanic-American community's quest for the American Dream has impacted our communities. They are living the American Dream of immigrants past and immigrants present.

There are examples such as the Fresno Area Hispanic Foundation, where over 320 female small business owners have participated in the Latinpreneur and Womanpreneur programs to grow their small businesses, creating jobs and creating vital economic activity.

Other individuals historically have played a role and have been barrier-

breakers, like our valley's own Coach Tom Flores, son of migrant workers in the San Joaquin Valley. He spent 30 years in the NFL, as the first Hispanic quarterback and then coaching and becoming the first Hispanic Super Bowl champion. Just a month ago, Coach Flores was inducted into the NFL Hall of Fame for these achievements.

We have so many others who have made a difference, such as my dear friend Joseph Castro from Hanford, California, who is today chancellor of the California State University System, the largest public university system in America. We also have Juan Sanchez Munoz, who is chancellor of UC Merced, one of the newest universities in America, making a difference. In addition, my neighbor, Dr. Saul Jimenez-Sandoval, is the newest president of Fresno State University. Go Dogs.

All of these individuals have played a role. All have unique stories and careers. They have helped to educate and create new opportunities, and they serve as a role model for future leaders. But we must not forget that many in our Hispanic community live in fear of attaining these important goals.

Over the past few years, I have met with DACA students across my district to hear their stories and discuss the need for immigration reform. For them, America is the only country they have really known, and so immigration reform is so critical.

As we commemorate this month, let us not forget that they are counting on Congress to bring about comprehensive immigration reform.

As a proud member of the Hispanic Caucus, I work with my colleagues every day to ensure the promise of America is accessible to the 62 million Hispanics living across the country.

MILITARY NEEDS LARGER PAY INCREASE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. GARCIA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARCIA of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak on an important facet of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022. While I am pleased that the NDAA bill delivers good top-line and procurement financial support for our Nation's defense capabilities, the bill is not perfect.

Specifically, I want to share my frustration with the bill's failure to properly increase our Nation's military pay, specifically for our enlisted personnel. The 2.7 percent pay increase for our military servicemembers is simply not enough. Throughout today, during the debate over the NDAA, we will hear Members from both sides of the aisle talk about the 2.7 percent, almost touting this.

I want to put this in perspective. For the average junior enlisted personnel member, this translates to roughly \$1.80 a day more for their service. This