

from the bill, trimming back the total level of FY22 NDAA to no more than the amount requested by the President.

I want to thank my cosponsors, starting with Congresswoman JACOBS, who was so kind to manage this amendment on the floor yesterday, for her tremendous leadership. I also thank my co-chair of the Defense Spending Reduction Caucus, Mr. POCAN, as well as Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ for working together to bring this amendment to the floor. I also thank Chairman SMITH and Mr. MCGOVERN for their support in helping to make this very important amendment in order.

The President's budget request is one of the largest in American history. For years now, the United States has been peerless in its military spending, exceeding the total spending of the next 11 countries combined. We have numerous glaring examples of waste, fraud, and abuse within our defense establishment. Our 20-year experience in Afghanistan is a stark example where the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction identified billions of dollars—mind you, billions of dollars—wasted or outright stolen over our time there. The taxpayers deserve better.

Yet, Congress insists on piling more money into the Pentagon than our military leaders even ask for, despite DOD routinely returning unspent balances to the Treasury.

Enough is enough. Americans are demanding that Congress rebalance our priorities and invest in the biggest challenges America faces. We face imminent threats from the COVID pandemic, climate change, domestic terrorism, growing economic inequality, and systemic racial and ethnic inequities.

While I personally support a much larger reduction in Pentagon spending, we need to draw the line somewhere. This amendment is a good place to start. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment, to send the message that Congress won't endorse constant inflation of the Pentagon budget.

Also, let me just cite amendment No. 40, offered again this year by Mr. POCAN and myself, for a 10 percent cut. I thank our colleague, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, for her bold leadership and for managing this amendment during the floor debate.

Mr. Speaker, the House stands again poised to pour three-quarters of a trillion dollars into a defense establishment that is unauditably, unaccountable, and does little to answer the biggest threats to the safety and welfare of our people.

The Pentagon is the only Federal department that has never passed an audit. I worked to get a requirement that DOD pass an audit written into permanent law a couple of years ago, with the help of Chairman SMITH and my colleague, Dr. BURGESS. Yet, still, the Pentagon says it won't be able to pass an audit for almost another decade.

It is not hard to find places to cut at the Pentagon. Earlier this year, a bi-

partisan group of organizations identified \$80 billion in savings that could be achieved just by implementing some efficiencies and eliminating obsolete weapons, weapons like Cold War-era bombs and missiles designed and built in the last century that are totally unsuited for the challenges of this century.

We see tremendous costs of this runaway spending, not only in the missing priorities, like public health, that are left unfunded, but in a way of thinking that militarizes every single problem in our society and turns peaceful protesters into targets for weapons of war.

Let me just say, this modest reduction that we are proposing, it won't compromise our national security, and it won't take a dollar from our troops. In fact, it will put more resources into enhancing the quality of life for our troops. It will also allow us to reinvest in healthcare, schools, and infrastructure.

This amendment will be a first step in rebalancing our priorities to build a safe, peaceful, prosperous world at home and abroad. I urge my colleagues to join me and to vote "yes" on this amendment. Let's start shifting our budget back to things that matter for most of our people.

AMERICANS FEEL BETRAYED BY BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, the American people are outraged, and they have every right to be. I am outraged with them.

All they have seen thus far in this administration is the buck being passed and both a President and his administration that refuse to uphold the basic tenets of leadership. This administration has ruined, mishandled, and dissembled every issue it has touched.

Americans are fearful that the country that they love and respect is being run into the ground at an alarming speed. Americans deserve answers, and our allies across the world deserve them as well.

Mr. Speaker, Americans feel betrayed. They feel that they have been betrayed by their own government. That feeling of betrayal was extremely palpable when Americans were stranded in Afghanistan because of an arbitrary deadline from the Taliban that this administration caved to.

In the following days, there were no answers, only speculation as to how many Americans were still left in Afghanistan who wanted to leave. Even now, as this administration grapples with how to respond to the Taliban's takeover, you would be hard-pressed to find real answers.

In a so-called classified briefing yesterday, Members got no concrete answers. It was a pitiful—I am saying "pitiful"—display of willful ignorance and incompetence.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at the past 8 months of the Biden administration, that incompetence is everywhere: the fall of Afghanistan, our open borders, skyrocketing inflation, reckless spending, record levels of unemployment and unfilled jobs, growing national security threats.

Refusing to respect the rule of law may be the worst, Mr. Speaker. These are just a few of the crises that have grown exponentially as the days go by.

Mr. Speaker, there is a common thread that you find in each of these circumstances, and it is that acceptance of the situation and accountability are virtually nonexistent.

Mr. Speaker, it is downright shameful that America has been taken down this rocky and unsettling path, and I fear we may never be able to fully recover. President Biden and his administration cannot simply sweep every new crisis under the rug and move on, but based on what has happened thus far, I suspect we will see more of the same.

The American people deserve better than abdicated leadership and a consistent failure to uphold our values.

DO BETTER FOR HAITI

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, as the Member of Congress who represents the Virgin Islands, the only congressional office within the English-speaking Caribbean, the plight of my Haitian brothers and sisters is very close—not just the ones presently enduring egregious and unfair treatment at the U.S.-Mexico border, but our brothers and sisters in the nation of Haiti itself.

The crisis unfolding before our eyes at the border is woefully symbolic of our Nation's inconsistent and superficial response to the reoccurring calamities in Haiti specifically and the Caribbean generally.

The nation of Haiti faces a tremendous, ongoing crisis: the recent natural disasters, including a major earthquake, tropical storms, and hurricanes; the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic; health insecurity; the assassination of a Prime Minister and the accompanying political instability; gang violence; along with large-scale deterioration of infrastructure; and poverty.

As we watch our fellow human beings seeking a better life, we need to ask ourselves: Do they deserve the dignity of listening to their story, understanding their desperation, and working to find sustainable, long-term solutions to the problems that cause tens of thousands of people to leave their country, live in abject and hostile poverty in South America, and make the dangerous trek to try to come to America?

I believe, and I think some of you do as well, that our Haitian neighbors deserve that, and that, in some ways, we owe them that, and that it is even in our own self-interests.

We must remember that Haitians fought with us in the American Revolution. They sent troops to be at our side. Then, in 1825, 20 years after they received their own independence, the United States agreed with France that they, as a new independent nation, should be forced to pay back the slave owners of France, who, they believed, needed reparations for lost income from slave labor. Until almost 1940—something, the people of Haiti have been paying that money back. In today's dollars, that would be over \$20 billion that this small island nation has paid to the people of France for their freedom.

Imagine if we had been forced to pay England for our own independence.

America has significant trade agreements and economic support with our neighbors to the north and the south, Canada and Mexico. However, when it comes to our third border, the Caribbean, that becomes an absolute afterthought, if they are thought of at all.

America wants these nations to be stable and support them at multinational forums but lacks the forethought to engage them as partners in the first instance. We intervene in political instability without meaningful engagement in civil society.

Hurricane relief and support for resilience, vaccination support, support for trade and educational alternative energy partnerships, infrastructure investments, those are the things that Americans should be engaged in at the first instance so we do not have what we have at the border happening now.

China, of course, is all through the Caribbean, giving lasting and meaningful investments there and demanding support from the Caribbean nations at the U.N., the Organization of American States, et cetera.

It is well-researched fact that rural infrastructure investments can lead to higher productivity, employment, and economic opportunities. Solid infrastructure powers business, encourages trade, provides much-needed protection for countries from the unpredictability of a natural environment, all things that Haiti is missing to date.

Substantively, the U.S. has neglected to develop meaningful, substantive trade relationships in Haiti and the larger Caribbean that could help them and help us. We need to do better.

WORSENING BORDER CRISIS

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

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, the collapse of our southern border now poses a mortal danger to our country. No civilization has ever survived the magnitude of mass migration that this administration is not only accommodating but is encouraging.

When Donald Trump left office, we had operational control of our borders. The border wall was nearing comple-

tion. Court-ordered deportations were finally being enforced. The Migrant Protection Protocols negotiated with Mexico reduced the number of fraudulent asylum claims to a trickle.

All that Biden needed to do was to continue these policies. Instead, he reversed them on his first day in office. He ordered the border wall to be abandoned, leaving construction gaps that make it useless. He ordered ICE to cease enforcing the law. He reversed the remain in Mexico policy. And he sent a clear and unmistakable message heard around the world: America is now a nation without borders. And nations without borders aren't around very long.

The numbers are staggering. In July, Customs and Border Patrol encountered 212,000 foreign nationals illegally entering our country. That is the entire population of Birmingham, Alabama, in a month. In August, another 209,000, which is Des Moines, Iowa.

There have been, already, 1½ million such encounters this year, and the Gallup organization warns us there are 42 million people living in poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean who intend to come here if they can. And they are.

Almost overnight last week, 15,000 Haitian nationals illegally crossed the border and set up camp in Del Rio, Texas. It is reported that DHS is tracking an additional 40,000 to 60,000 Haitian migrants between Colombia and the U.S. border. Contrary to claims by the administration, only a fraction of them have been returned to Haiti. It appears the vast majority are being rapidly and furtively processed into our communities.

□ 1030

There is no denying the fact that this is a deliberate policy by this administration to fundamentally change the economy, politics, culture, customs, and institutions of the American Republic.

Democrats on the Judiciary Committee just voted to grant amnesty, permanent legal residence, and a fast track to citizenship for between 8 and 10 million foreign nationals who have already illegally entered our country, defied our laws, thumbed their noses at our sovereignty, and are demanding to stay and are expecting American taxpayers to continue to support them.

Eight to 10 million, we need to understand what that means. Eight million is the entire population—every man, woman, and child—living in the States of Alaska, Maine, Delaware, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Rhode Island, Montana, and Vermont combined.

This is at a time when real family earnings are declining, crime is increasing, homelessness is rampant, and mounting debt is killing the American Dream of a better future for our children.

Is it any wonder our borders are overwhelmed? Ask the migrants why they

are coming. Every one of them will tell you it is because of Joe Biden's promise of admission, amnesty, and citizenship.

That is why we are seeing this tragic and shocking trafficking of young children, and it is going to continue until we secure our border and start enforcing our immigration laws, which are already among the most liberal in the world.

We are told we need to legalize those who illegally took Americans' jobs as essential workers during the pandemic. The fact is, 45 percent of the entire workforce is considered essential by the government. That is hardly an exclusive group. What the Democrats are really saying is that if you are part of the 55 percent of Americans they don't consider essential and you lost your job during their leftist lockdowns, you will be pushed aside for those who violated our laws, broke the rules, and now compete in the job market that you are trying to get back into, while using your money to do it.

Please, someone, explain to me: How are American workers helped by flooding the labor market with another wave of illegal immigration? How are our children, who have been robbed of an entire year of their educations, helped by filling their classrooms with non-English-speaking classmates? How are our communities made safer by making it harder to deport criminal illegal aliens and gang members? How are our hospitals made more accessible by overwhelming emergency rooms with illegal immigrants demanding care?

Mr. Speaker, people are asking me every day: How could this have happened to our country? And the answer is simple. If you voted for the Democrats, this is what you voted for. And if you are surprised, you weren't paying attention.

HONORING THE LIFE OF EMILY DEROCCO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. STEVENS) for 5 minutes.

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of my dear friend, Emily Stover DeRocco, a generous spirit and dedicated public servant who inspired others to discover their purpose and to follow their dreams.

Known for getting things done, Emily headed to Washington after graduating from Penn State University, determined to find a role working in the Federal Government, hoping to make a difference in the lives of everyday Americans.

As the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employment and Training in the George W. Bush administration, Emily was instrumental in redesigning our country's workforce development programs, particularly in strategically realigning education and economic development initiatives with the needs of