

Governors, State agriculture officials, and of course, a lot of farm family stories.

In January of this year, David was the recipient of the Gerald W. Reichard Impact Award, given annually to someone who has had a significant overall impact on the Pennsylvania Farm Show.

Dave continues to use his platform for agriculture advocacy, highlighting the important work of farmers and ranchers in Pennsylvania and across the country.

Thank you, Dave, for your important work, and thank you for being a voice of agriculture.

HONORING THE FREEDOM RIDERS

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of the anniversary of this important day in American history, November 1, 1965. On that day, the Interstate Commerce Commission ruled that segregation on interstate buses and facilities was illegal. This ruling came after months of protests and arrests of the Freedom Riders on public transit.

The Freedom Riders, made up of Black and White, male and female, young and old, united to show the Nation that we are all equal. I had the honor of serving in Congress alongside one of the original Freedom Riders, my good friend and our colleague, the late Congressman John Lewis.

To honor his legacy and commitment to ending racial segregation, I reintroduced H.R. 1348, to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the Freedom Riders in recognition of their unique contribution to civil rights.

I strongly encourage my congressional colleagues to cosponsor H.R. 1348. This year marks the 65th anniversary of the Freedom Riders, and it is past time that we recognize their courage and contributions.

80,000 NEW IRS AGENTS

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

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, over the weekend I attended a University of Wisconsin football game, and for awhile I sat high in the second deck overlooking the campus and the beautiful Lake Mendota.

As I stood there looking at over 80,000 people, I wondered what was going on in different people's minds. Some people were looking at beautiful Lake Mendota. Some people were looking at the beautiful college buildings: Vilas Hall and Van Vleck Hall. Other people were looking down on the football game.

As I looked at the 80,000 people, I realized that some people looking at 80,000 people said: Wouldn't it be great

if we hired all 80,000 people to be new IRS agents?

Please, don't let this country become East Germany. Vote "no."

Mr. Speaker, I hope we all vote "no" on the reconciliation bill.

\$450,000 PER PERSON TO ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in actually complete outrage at the unbelievable consideration that the Biden administration is putting forward—get this—awarding \$450,000 per person to illegal immigrants that have broken our laws in this country.

\$450,000. How is it even rational that someone who took an illegal action in order to get to our soil, how can that lead to an outcome where the perpetrator would receive a \$450,000 payday?

There are American citizens whose families don't even make half a million dollars in 10 years. The President doesn't even make \$450,000 a year.

We have already seen that illegal immigrants use children basically as shields—not even their own children—to avoid deportation in order to come across the border.

Democrats in Congress are trying their best to give illegal immigrants citizenship, and the White House wants to give them a very large check.

When I see proposals like this, I have to ask: Whose side are they on? It certainly doesn't look like this administration is on the side of the hard-working American citizens who are trying to make ends meet, put their kids through school, pay their bills, when they hand out \$450,000 checks to people who came here illegally.

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CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KAHELE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I wish a good evening to all of my colleagues and certainly members of the Congressional Black Caucus. It is my privilege to be part of the Special Order series of the Congressional Black Caucus as a coanchor with Congressman TORRES from New York, and we thank him for his leadership. We thank, in particular, the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, JOYCE BEATTY, who has been an enormous leader on any number of issues that are crucial to the American people and to African Americans.

The one thing I say about the Congressional Black Caucus representing millions and millions of Americans is that we represent a diverse population

of Americans. I am very proud to, as well, represent those African-American descendants of freed slaves.

In fact, we rise today to emphasize the cruciality of the Build Back Better Act for moving the Nation forward and particularly moving forward those whom the Congressional Black Caucus represents. So I am very pleased this evening to be joined by my outstanding colleagues, who will include Congresswoman ADAMS from North Carolina, Congresswoman BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN from New Jersey, Congressman DWIGHT EVANS from Pennsylvania, and Congressman STEVE HORSFORD from Nevada. There are others, such as Congresswoman GWEN MOORE from the great State of Wisconsin. Other Members may come.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, let me be very clear and refute a statement that I just recently heard on the floor. Nothing is ignorant in the Build Back Better bill and/or the bipartisan infrastructure bill. In fact, ignorance is stamped out by these bills. One, they are fully paid for as we are working the final edges of that, and, number two, they are doing things that are long overdue for America.

Who are we as President Biden stands at the G20 and now at the climate change conference? Who are we? We are leaders of the free world. In fact, we are the leader.

Although there are debates on the status of Russia and the competitive nature of China, all that has a basis in facts. But at the same time, as these facts are present, the United States continues to grow and to move and to ensure opportunity for its citizens. It is not our creed to randomly snatch people off the street and lock them up. It is not our focus to ensure that voices are not heard or that people of different religions are treated differently, arrested, isolated, and brutalized even. It is not our basic creed to enact laws that would help us take very important proprietary information from others.

We are a democracy, and we are aided by the laws of that principle. So I take no back seat to whether or not Russia and China are competitive or are proposed world powers. What I say is that the United States has all the elements of continuing her posture of leadership, and one of those elements will be the successful passage of the Build Back Better Act and BIF, the bipartisanship infrastructure bill. This is the kind of legislation that is not seen even amongst our European friends of late nor of China or Russia.

We are standing on the precipice of history, and I am very grateful for the

leadership of the Congressional Black Caucus that has been at the forefront of these matters. Again, working with so many of our colleagues, we lead as full committee chairs having input into this bill.

Let me very quickly indicate that we are strongly supporting the \$1.75 billion Build Back Better Act conceived and advanced by the President and House Democrats. We are grateful that we have had moments of negotiations with our other caucuses. Those caucuses are likewise ensuring that the t's are crossed and the i's are dotted.

Mr. Speaker, what is wrong with that? When we finally bring a bill, we want to make sure that it is vetted, and that is what so many of our members of the CBC were able to do, to be part of the vetting.

It is also important in 2021, this 21st century, that we go big. It is often said that the Federal budget is an expression of the Nation's values and that the investments made to build back better are, in fact, a clear declaration of congressional Democrats, of the Congressional Black Caucus, to ensuring that our government, our economy, and our systems work for the people.

We have always been the voice of the vulnerable. We have always been the conscience of the Congress. So these are long-overdue investments.

The Build Back Better Act makes transformative investments, as our chairwoman has often said. We need to continue growing our economy and lower costs for working families. This \$1.75 trillion—which, by the way, I refute the statement of ignorance because the statement was ignorant because they were speaking of \$3.5 trillion, which was paid for, but we have come to a conclusion and a compromise of \$1.75 trillion.

Are the American people worth this? Are vulnerable communities worth this? Are children who suffer from lead pipes and water from those pipes worth it?

The Congressional Black Caucus feels it is the case. That is why we have supported the improvement in education, healthcare, and childcare. Childcare, in particular, will particularly help those of our community who have for too long either gone without childcare and suffered or paid more than half of their income.

Childcare is an important element of our work, and so I have the Gingerbread Childcare Center husband and wife who made the sacrifice to help vulnerable parents have childcare, parents who had to leave in the middle of the night, people who worked at night, essential workers, parents who worked for a period of time and, of course, did not have the kind of childcare that the Gingerbread—a wonderful daycare—allowed us to have.

We hope that these resources will help these kinds of entities in our community: \$40 billion in education to specifically improve Pell grants and, as well, to work with historically Black

colleges. I know we will hear that from my colleague, but it is extremely important that we have never left our HBCUs. They have been at the forefront of funding since President Biden has come into office. Through the years of the Congressional Black Caucus, and the voices of our members joined with our chairwoman of the HBCU Caucus, Congresswoman ADAMS, we have them included again in this legislation.

I will be discussing as we go forward healthcare, which is extremely important. We are excited about getting aid to those in the 12 States, including Texas, South Carolina, and North Carolina, among others, that did not opt in to the Affordable Care Act-expanded Medicaid. We left so many families along the highway of despair. Thank goodness we found a way to bring them now under the Affordable Care Act, to give them subsidies.

Help is on the way, Houston. Help is on the way, Texas, with the highest number of uninsured, 766,000. Now, with Build Back Better, we will have a pathway for them to get healthcare. I can hear the noise of shouting now down in Houston, Texas, and I can hear the noise of helping families with children have healthcare, which they did not.

We will talk about that more extensively and, as well, childcare, as I have mentioned, to be able to ensure not only childcare with only 7 percent of your income but, again, universal and free preschool for all 3- and 4-year-olds.

That is something to say to China, Russia, and others, that America recognizes what its priority is, and it is our children.

You will hear, Mr. Speaker, just a long litany of how lives will be helped, how we will rebuild families, home care, giving dignity to those essential workers, taking care of people in the latter part of their lives, ensuring dignity and income but also ensuring the opportunity for these individuals to be able to be cared for at home.

I will be discussing further the affordable housing that is very important. Then, of course, is a major element of all of this, as the President stands in front of the tens upon tens of countries, leading on climate change, for which we gave him a standing ovation when he left for his European meetings.

Mr. Speaker, you will hear more about this as we go forward this evening. I am delighted that the Congressional Black Caucus played such an instrumental role in dealing with the Federal Medicaid problem and solving childcare, HBCUs, climate change, and dealing with maternal issues for African-American women and many others.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS).

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Texas for her stellar leadership, for coanchoring tonight, and for all the support that she has continued to give, and the leadership of the CBC.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to speak about the importance of passing the Build Back Better Act, legislation nothing short of transformational for Black America.

It extends the child care tax credit for a year, cutting child poverty in half. In North Carolina, that is a lifeline for hundreds of thousands of children who go to bed hungry every night.

It puts \$150 billion toward affordable housing, which has been described as the single largest and most comprehensive investment in affordable housing in history. In Charlotte and so many other communities across the country, that is real progress on our affordable housing crisis and real relief for over half a million Americans who don't have a roof over their heads.

As the chair of the CBC HBCU Caucus and cofounder of the Congressional Bipartisan HBCU Caucus, I am proud to say that this package provides approximately \$10 billion specifically for historically Black colleges and universities and other minority-serving institutions, including \$3 billion for research and development grants at these institutions and \$6 billion for increased Pell grants and institutional support to lower the cost of college.

Universal childcare and pre-K will prepare children to receive the education that they need to succeed in school and be admitted to college.

As the cofounder and co-chair of the Black Maternal Health Caucus with Representative UNDERWOOD, I am also proud to say that the Build Back Better Act includes all eligible provisions of our Omnibus legislation and permanently expands yearlong postpartum Medicaid and CHIP coverage in every State.

The maternal health and morbidity crisis in this country is unacceptable, but the Build Back Better Act gets us closer to the day when every parent who enters the maternity ward and every child born in America makes it home safe.

Finally, I would like to take a point of personal privilege to recognize the hard work of our Congressional Black Caucus chair, JOYCE BEATTY, and all the members and committee chairs on this legislation.

I believe that promises made must be promised kept, and this package keeps our promise to all Americans. I implore my colleagues to pass the Build Back Better Act and the bipartisan infrastructure framework together. This is Our Power, Our Message.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from North Carolina for her words. Again, I emphasize her commitment, dedication, and work on historically Black colleges, and she is absolutely right: \$10 billion. But more importantly, that is layered upon the dollars out of the American Rescue Act, out of the CARES Act, and the debt under President Joe Biden that has been effectively worked on in this congressional session. We know

that we are doing better by our students because we have done better by them as it relates to education.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN), who chairs the Subcommittee on Transportation and Maritime Security of the Committee on Homeland Security and has been committed to improving the lives of young African-American women and, of course, those dealing with mental health issues as well.

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Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for spearheading this Special Order hour and for giving me an opportunity to share a few of my remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today optimistic, optimistic that our country is on the verge of taking a historic step forward for all of our communities. The Build Back Better Act is a once-in-a-generation investment in our country as a whole and in Black Americans, specifically. For too long, our country's institutions have been apathetic and even adversarial toward Black people. Four hundred years of slavery, Jim Crow, mass incarceration, and other forms of systemic violence have trapped Black Americans in a vicious cycle from which it can be nearly impossible to break.

The Build Back Better Act will not instantly remedy four centuries of that pain and hardship, but it is a crucial starting point. Through revitalizing infrastructure and funding essential social services, the President's agenda will set the next generation of Black Americans up for success.

Building back better means directly confronting the Black mental health crisis. This bill would fund universal childcare and pre-K, allowing Black mothers to return to the workforce while giving Black children the early childhood care that they need.

Building back better means giving those same Black children safe places to grow up, to learn, and to thrive. We will do that by making the single-largest housing investment in our Nation's history.

Building back better means ensuring those very same children have long, successful lives. That is why the bill invests billions of dollars into historically Black colleges and universities. This is new money on top of our annual funding of HBCUs.

Many of us in this Chamber today, myself included, wanted more out of the Build Back Better Act. No, this bill is not perfect, and much more work will remain to be done after its passage. This does not change the fact, however, that the Build Back Better Act represents monumental progress for our country; progress for everyday Americans; progress for elder Americans; progress for children in America; progress for working Americans; and, yes, progress for African Americans and other minorities.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my wonderful colleagues to support the Build Back Better Act.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman very much for recognizing that this will be transformative, but as well, that it will do and improve in areas that we have not done in the history of the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I am now delighted to yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. EVANS), from Philadelphia, who has been instrumental in dealing with issues of taxation and the empowerment of small businesses.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to first thank my colleague from the great State of Texas for yielding. Since I have been here, I have watched her relentless passion for Black people, and she has not let anybody stand in the way, and I am proud to stand with her and also the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, Chairwoman BEATTY. She, too, has led this Caucus, and I am honored to be here just to add my voice to this discussion this evening.

President Biden's Build Back Better framework would bring down costs that have held back families in Pennsylvania for decades. It would do this by cutting taxes and making childcare, home care, education, healthcare, and housing more affordable.

Let me repeat that, Mr. Speaker. President Biden's Build Back Better framework would bring down the costs that have held back families in Pennsylvania for decades. It would do this by cutting taxes and making childcare, home care, education, healthcare, and housing more affordable. These investments will provide new learning opportunities for children, help parents—and especially working parents—make ends meet, and it positions the economy for a stronger growth for years to come.

As the Congresswoman said from the great State of Texas: This is transformational. And that is why I am happy to be a part of this discussion. The framework will create good-paying jobs for Pennsylvanians, combat climate change, give our kids cleaner air and water, and make America the leader in global innovation and 21st century manufacturing, which means jobs and opportunities, which means a sense of hope and optimism.

Mr. Speaker, this is a moment for all of us and we must not sit back. And the Congressional Black Caucus, by what is taking place here, is demonstrating that it is there. As the late John Lewis used to say: If you see something, do something. And the Congressional Black Caucus is following that lead.

We all recognize, as the late John Lewis used to say: If you think things haven't changed, just walk in my shoes.

I want to focus tonight on childcare, which is so vital to our families and putting our economy back on track. It is a major reason why many Americans have not been able to go back to work.

In Pennsylvania, the average yearly cost of childcare centers for a toddler is over \$11,000. That means a Pennsylvania family with two young children, on average, spends 22 percent of their income on childcare for 1 year.

The lack of affordable options also contributes to the 15 percent gender gap in workforce participation between mothers and fathers; 15 percent. That is outrageous. That should not be accepted.

The Build Back Better framework is the way to go. President Biden has shown the kind of leadership and vision that is necessary. That is why the Congressional Black Caucus stands so proudly to join this effort with the rest of our colleagues who are ready to lead.

This is just that kind of moment. We want to be at the right place at the right time. The building back framework would enable Pennsylvanians to provide access to childcare for more than 737,000 young children ages 0 to 5 per year from families earning under 2.5 times the State median income. I want to repeat that. The building back framework would enable Pennsylvania to provide access to childcare for more than 700,000 young children ages 0 to 5 per year from families earning under 2.5 times the median income, and it would ensure these families would pay no more than 7 percent of their income on high-quality childcare.

This is something that is extremely important. This is something, when the President talks about building back better, it puts us all in the right position. It is something that needs to happen. It is something that is long overdue. We in the Congressional Black Caucus are prepared to join with the President and to send a message that building back better is in the interest of America.

The President realizes that. He understood a long time ago about the needs that we have. So I compliment him in joining with our chairperson and joining with our colleague from the great State of Texas and their leadership, and all of us joining with him tonight to show that we are prepared to help lead this battle; that no one can do it by themselves, but we need to be prepared.

We made a promise to build back better after the pandemic and this framework would do just that. Mr. Speaker, this is an opportunity for all of us. This is an opportunity for us to stand tall, to raise the issue about building back better. We all recognize this. This entire package, Build Back Better and the infrastructure package together, will make a huge difference in our economy.

It is something that we all have worked on and we all understand the importance of it. So I share with you as one member of this Caucus, proudly of the Congressional Black Caucus, proudly of Pennsylvania, proudly a citizen of the United States, that I am ready for this. And I thank my colleague SHEILA JACKSON LEE for her leadership and all that she has done.

As I have watched her, even though she hasn't noticed it, she has been in the forefront. She hasn't missed a fight, and I am glad to be a part of every effort.

So with the Congressional Black Caucus I stand proudly on the President's Building Back Better framework, and I am ready to vote for it.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for recognizing that a vital part of the lives of families is childcare.

As a member of the Ways and Means Committee, I know that he was extremely engaged in this very vital aspect of the President's Build Back Better, and, again, we thank the wisdom of the President of the United States, President Biden and Vice President HARRIS, for their wisdom about helping American families.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HORSFORD), the first vice-chair of the Congressional Black Caucus and someone who worked extensively on work training issues, extensively on healthcare, and of course, on issues like childcare, as well.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my coanchor, my distinguished colleague Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE for her tremendous leadership and for anchoring this Special Order hour, and, of course, our chairwoman, JOYCE BEATTY, for her tremendous leadership in leading the Congressional Black Caucus, which represents more than 17 million Black constituents across this great country. We represent not only Black Americans, but all Americans, diverse Americans. And what those Americans have been telling me in my district back home in Nevada's Fourth District, it is time for us to build back better and to do it in a more equitable and inclusive way.

Tonight, we are here to bring attention to the fact that we are standing at a crossroads of history. With the bipartisan infrastructure deal and the Build Back Better Act, Congress has the opportunity to finally rebuild our economy to deliver huge tax cuts to the middle class and to lower the cost of living for families on everything from childcare to healthcare.

The question is: Will our colleagues on the other side of the aisle work with us to deliver these important investments on behalf of the American people? Now, we have seen transformative legislation like this before when Congress worked to rebuild the American society in the wake of the Great Depression, but never, and I mean never, have people of color benefited like they could under the Build Back Better Act.

I think it is our majority whip, JIM CLYBURN, who has talked about the history of these other measures and how they actually left entire communities out. They left women out. They left communities of color out, and we are still dealing with the systemic issues of being left out of those policies for far too long.

So I want to again thank our leadership because it wasn't just this bill and the drafting of this bill and, yes, President Biden wrote this bill, he wrote it with the support of his team at the White House, but with a whole lot of good input from colleagues over here in the Capitol, including here in the Congressional Black Caucus.

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I know that there are colleagues of mine who have been working on key elements of this bill for a very long time. I know that they, like myself, are ready to act on behalf of the American people.

So I look forward to having a little bit of a colloquy with my colleague from Wisconsin. I believe that it is so important, Mr. Speaker, that we talk about what is in this bill. For far too long, people have been focused about a top-line number, about the process, about the personalities here on Capitol Hill and whether certain factions are with the bill or working on the bill. With all due respect, I want to talk about policy and the policy that affects people, the people in my district, in Nevada's Fourth District, and the people all across this country.

Why? Because the Build Back Better Act will cut childcare costs. For families that are eligible under this bill, they won't pay more than 7 percent of their household income to cover childcare, something that women and communities of color desperately need as we talk about the workforce shortage and the inequities that are in our workforce.

What sense does it make when someone who has to work—I will give you an example—Ms. Rosetta, who is a constituent of mine, is a home care worker. I had a roundtable with her and some other home care workers. She shared with me that when she started her job several years ago, she got paid \$9.50 an hour. Today, she makes just over \$10 an hour. Think about that.

For several years, this woman, who is a home care worker, who goes into elderly citizens' homes to take care of them, to make sure that they are fed, that they are bathed, that literally she changes their diapers, she is their companion, she hasn't been given a raise of more than 50 cents over the course of several years. That is unconscionable.

Under the Build Back Better Act, we are actually investing in home care workers, not only to help make that profession what it should be, an honorable one that pays them what they are worth, but also equips them with the support that they need for their own families. Why is it okay for them to take care of other people's families and then not even have the resources and the means to take care of their own?

It also gives every child a head start with universal pre-K for 3- and 4-year-olds. Mr. Speaker, we have talked a lot about how we help young people get the start they need in life, and we know that by investing in their early

success, it improves academic skill attainment, allowing them to read at an early age. Reading is essential to every other subject that they have to learn. It will ensure that they improve their graduation rates, which improves their life chances of success.

To my colleagues on the other side, when you say that we are spending too much in this package, are we spending too much for that home care worker, for Rosetta, and so many other people like her? Are we spending too much to give working families the support they need to be able to afford childcare? Are we spending too much so that every child in our country has a good start through universal prekindergarten? These are but just a few of the benefits.

Now, before I go on and I yield to my colleague here, I want to talk about one other important element. We have spent a lot of time on the Build Back Better Act, but I am also for the bipartisan infrastructure deal. Why? Yes, it is going to create millions of good-paying, union jobs. Yeah, I have no problem saying "union" here in this body, because it is the unions that helped build the middle class. If we are going to build this country back better, we need to do it with unions at the center of it.

Not only does it do that, it expands broadband access, providing broadband connectivity in our households in rural communities and in urban areas.

My district covers 52,000 square miles. I have parts of Las Vegas and North Las Vegas that need broadband, but I have six rural communities throughout Nevada, many of them that do not have adequate broadband. In fact, it is a broadband desert throughout certain parts of my rural communities. They need the investment.

It also makes the largest Federal investment in public transit in history. Mr. Speaker, maybe more Members of Congress should have to ride the bus, and they would understand the investments that are in this bipartisan infrastructure bill.

Yet, the minority leader on the other side is literally trying to whip votes against this bipartisan infrastructure bill, a bill that 19 Senate Republicans voted for, along with every Democrat. Now, it is our turn to vote for it, and they won't work with us to deliver the largest investment in public transit in history?

You have constituents that rely on public transit. That is the only way some veterans can get to their doctors' appointments. Seniors, college students, working people. This has direct implications on the climate crisis as well. When people have to stand outside for hours in order to catch a bus, that affects their exposure to everything from heat to snow in Wisconsin. We don't have that in Vegas.

Finally, it will remove lead from the water our children and other vulnerable populations drink. These are just three of the very important provisions that are in the bipartisan infrastructure deal.

I am ready to vote for these bills, Mr. Speaker. I wish we could schedule the vote tomorrow, because these are investments that people in Nevada's Fourth District are depending on. They sent me to Congress to solve problems and to make their lives better. These two bills do that, and they do it in very significant and meaningful ways. In fact, it is probably the largest investment in people in a generation, and we have a chance to do it. It is the Congressional Black Caucus, among others, that are leading.

I want to yield to my colleague, Congresswoman MOORE. Let me ask you, because I know as a member of the Ways and Means Committee, you have been a champion on the racial equity. You have been a champion for the poor, particularly women, women of color, who have been disproportionately affected by this pandemic and its recession on our economy. So what is it in this bill that makes you so excited to vote for it, and how will other communities benefit, beyond just some of the things that I have touched on?

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman so very, very much for that question. It really has been a joy working with him on the Ways and Means Committee. It has been an education, and it has also been an opportunity to do those things that he has indicated that are close to my heart, and that is to create some equities for women and children.

I want to just thank Representative SHEILA JACKSON LEE for anchoring this extremely important conversation with the American people today.

One of the things that has been disturbing me about this entire debate is that people seem to really want to make some sort of bright-line demarcation or differentiation between the bipartisan infrastructure bill—which will create economic opportunities, get rid of those darned lead pipes, expand broadband, create good union jobs, help create some great jobs for guys—and the Build Back Better initiative, as if that is some sort of welfare, a giveaway. Social spending is what it is referred to, a safety net.

So what I wanted to seek from you, a clarification from you, Mr. HORSFORD, particularly since you were appointed by the Committee on Ways and Means, along with our colleagues, Representatives SEWELL and GOMEZ, to look at our racial equity issue. Of course, we know that African Americans and Latinos are more likely to be poor, have a greater wealth gap, and lack of educational opportunities, so that when we think that we are investing in their improvement, that somehow it is welfare.

But I would sort of want you to take up the argument where you left it with regard to some of the economic problems that we are experiencing. There are major complaints in our country about a slowdown in economic growth.

What good is it to just grow the economy when only the people at the top get it and it doesn't, excuse me, trickle down to Rosetta, who is making \$10.25 an hour doing the hardest work on earth there is?

How does the earned income tax credit—I mean, we were taxing, before we changed this policy, to allow single, hardworking, essential workers that brought us food during the pandemic, stocked the shelves, we were taxing them into poverty. They had tax liability before the earned income tax credit expansion.

Going to work with no healthcare, no health insurance, being unable to afford it, not having childcare, as you mentioned. Expanded Pell grants.

Please explain how the Build Back Better plan really improves and buoys the economic platform upon which the country can improve. The workforce development initiatives that are in here, I was wondering if you could elucidate the connection between that and our economy and sort of diffuse this notion that it is simply a safety net and welfare.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Wisconsin makes a very valid point.

I heard you over the weekend on one of the news outlets making the same point. Both of these bills are economic packages. I really resent, in fact, some of the inferences that have been made during this debate that somehow providing economic support for people to benefit and to fully participate in our economy is somehow an entitlement program.

The child tax credit, for example. You talked about the earned income tax credit. I will talk about the child tax credit. This is a tax program. It is not an entitlement program. Just like we give tax cuts to the very wealthy and the big corporations—that is what the Republicans did when they were in the majority. They spent the majority of their time trying to figure out how to provide 83 percent of the benefits to the top 1 percent and a tax cut that some of the businesses did not even ask for, as much as they got.

Now, Democrats are in charge, and what have we done? We started with the American Rescue Plan. In that, we provided a tax cut for middle-class families, the child tax credit, which actually has already lifted about 50 percent of children out of poverty, higher rates for Black, Latino, and Native American children out of poverty.

Now, there was a debate a couple of weeks ago that we now need to put a work requirement, means test, and we need to change the threshold to make people with lower incomes eligible and those with higher incomes—like \$90,000 is enough to not receive a tax credit. I am glad that President Biden rejected those ideas. But it was the Congressional Black Caucus that stood up and said no, because this is an economic package, and we need provide economic supports to families.

The other part that you so ably noted is what are some of the barriers that women face in the workforce. You talked about this in our committee: childcare, healthcare, transportation. These are the basics that people need, particularly women. Who was the hardest hit during this pandemic and recession? Women, particularly women of color, Black women, Latinas, and Native American women. So if we are going to build back better, we need to do it in a way that is intentional in a way of helping them and making sure that they're supported.

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I just want to share one story. Keeonn, who is a constituent of mine, is a young father in my district. He wrote to me about how he is using that child tax credit, which is a tax cut, and the advance payment that we provided, that \$300 a month. You know what he is using that money for? To buy healthy food for his daughter.

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Excellent.

Mr. HORSFORD. And he said it may be only \$300, but in the end, it is help that we are most grateful for. That is what this is about.

When the Republicans gave the tax cut to the very wealthy, some of those corporations just went back and bought more stocks for themselves, made themselves wealthier, gave their CEOs bigger bonuses, didn't pay their workers more in wages, didn't expand healthcare, didn't provide childcare, didn't make their workers feel valued. And now because of that, many workers today are having a hard time.

But yet Democrats, through the Congressional Black Caucus, are standing up, and we are pushing back, and that is what the Build Back Better Act and the bipartisan infrastructure bill is all about. I yield.

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. It is going to be great. Madam anchor, I don't know how much time we have, but I just want to say, I want to join Mr. HORSFORD in saying that I am really enthusiastic about voting for both of these bills, because I do think that it is going to create a brand-new environment for all of us where we will have workforce development training for these new technologies on climate and battery storage.

I am so proud of the African Americans who have been chairs of these committees, like BOBBY SCOTT and EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, MAXINE WATERS who put \$150 billion in for housing. As was indicated, these things are going to enable workers to truly participate in the economy. It is going to help companies, and we are going to build back better.

I yield back to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me thank both Mr. HORSFORD and Ms. MOORE for one of the important colloquies that I have heard on the floor of this body, and that is to be able to speak to people who are

working hard every day, who are single parents, who work with their minds and their hands.

I am glad to hear that we did not limit who would be able to receive these benefits, and we also crafted the vitality and the vigorous efforts of the Congressional Black Caucus.

As I close, Mr. Speaker, I would like to just reiterate what Members, including the leadership of our chair, Chairwoman JOYCE BEATTY, Congresswoman ADAMS, Congresswoman WATSON COLEMAN, Congressman EVANS, obviously Mr. HORSFORD and Ms. MOORE, what they all have said, if I might. And that is, let me reiterate that each piece of Build Back Better is a piece that is vital for the lives of Americans and African Americans.

For example, \$550 more in Pell grants for more than 5 million students. Then HBCUs, again, \$10 billion. Seniors who have never had hearing aids, only 30 percent of seniors over the age of 70 who could benefit from hearing aids have ever had them. Medicare in this Build Back Better will include that extra benefit. Many of us have seen the caricatures of our seniors on television and elsewhere trying to hear. That is not anything that is funny, but it has been made light of. I want to give every senior an opportunity to hear.

At the same time, I want to emphasize the importance of childcare. We are telling the story. Only 26.8 percent of Black 3- to 4-year-old children are enrolled in publicly funded preschool, with the average cost of preschool for those without access \$8,600. We are going to stop it with this.

We are not going to be the Trump trillion-dollar tax cut to the top 1 percent and putting a deep dive into our deficit. We are going to put a deep investment into the American people, particularly those people of color.

I think it is extremely important that we talk about children and healthcare.

Mr. Speaker, how much time do we have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman has about 8 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. This is about children getting access to healthcare but, Mr. Speaker, there are many children that don't have access to healthcare. In those States where families were not able to access the Affordable Care Act—and there is something called Children's Health Insurance Program, and that does provide for some aspect of care—we had the Federal Medicaid concept, and so Build Back Better now is going to put all of those people under the Affordable Care Act, and that is going to give the family access to healthcare, which makes a sizeable difference. I think it is extremely important that we do that, to be able to provide family healthcare.

Now, I heard our Members be very truthful. We still want to get Medicare reduction on prescription drugs, a system that would allow that. We still want family paid leave, and somebody

said that that was continuing to be negotiated. No, Mr. Speaker, it is working under the umbrella and framework of President Biden's agenda, and we want to just make sure that all of his agenda, within the context of being paid for, gets recognized. We want these families to receive the kind of resources that are necessary.

My colleagues talked about the child tax cut. I would like to call it that. I would just like to be sure that we realize that if this plan is implemented, it may impact 17 million low-wage employees, such as hospitality workers and childcare providers, a framework of a tax cut that would help children. They are people who work important jobs but receive low pay, and this would get nearly 6 million people out of poverty with this kind of cut. This is a crucial contribution.

Let me finish by letting you know what we have certainly gone through in Texas. Infrastructure is extremely important. Part of that is housing. During the pandemic, these are the kinds of signs we saw: "My landlord is calling, and I must pay or I will be evicted."

Now, we have the American Rescue Plan and the CARES Act, but \$150 billion will be in for housing, improving the infrastructure of public housing. That hasn't been done in decades; 50 years I am told. And we will get that done. That is what is important about the BIF bill, the infrastructure bill that will have broadband. The very places where those people live, take the lead out of the pipes.

And then, of course, for those of us who live in hurricane alley, our friends in Louisiana with Hurricane Ida, my constituents with Hurricane Harvey, and the number of hurricanes that have crossed the United States during 2017, one after another. We will have in that infrastructure bill a worthy response to the failing infrastructure of this Nation.

We won't have to worry about what people say about Russia and China or any other country. We will be enormously competitive, even to the point of NASA. No one has even expressed their interest in that. They will have a space here to be able to keep us competitive in space exploration.

It will be extremely important that we have the opportunity to stop violence with our community violence investment, \$2.5 billion.

I am delighted to say this is the work of the Congressional Black Caucus. They put their hands around all of it, for our constituents and the American people. What Mr. HORSFORD has been speaking of is that he is proud to give a listing. That is what I did, I did a roll call of just what is going to be helped with Build Back Better and with BIF.

I am delighted to stand here with the vice chair, and I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I want to laud her and the members of the Congressional Black Caucus for

all of the tremendous work on behalf of our families, on behalf of children, on behalf of communities.

I want to just point out one additional thing that Ms. JACKSON LEE has worked on as the chair of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security in the Judiciary Committee and for her tremendous leadership on this. In her capacity on the Judiciary Committee, last year the United States saw the highest increase in gun homicides since national record-keeping began. That was in 2020. And, sadly, we are still on track to see that number continue to increase this year.

This violence, Mr. Speaker, falls disproportionately on young Black men. Even though we make up only 6 percent of the U.S. population, we account for about 50 percent of gun homicide victims. Now, those statistics aren't just numbers. They are lives. And they are lives that every one of us should be held to account for.

For me, as a Black man, raising three children with my wife—two sons and a daughter—it hits me very directly because this is what we worry about every single day when our children leave our homes, because these are our friends, they are our children.

I am proud, Mr. Speaker, that the Congressional Black Caucus made this issue a priority, and we went to President Biden and to Vice President HARRIS, and we talked to them about the need to stop the onslaught of deaths. And he listened. He listened, and he included \$5 billion of funding and a bill that I am proud to have sponsored, along with my colleagues, the Break the Cycle of Violence Act, which funds community-based violence intervention programs to save lives.

Now, this is proven to work. These are community-based programs and partnerships with faith-based, community-based organizations to provide mental health and wellness, job training and placement, and intervention programs so that when we pass the Build Back Better Act, it will include \$5 billion of funding over 8 years and an additional amount of funding specifically for workforce development and placement.

For months now we have negotiated in good faith. We have worked with our colleagues. We have listened. Now it is time for us to move forward. No more delays. No more excuses about process, no more focusing on personalities here in Washington. Let's focus on the people and the policy that will benefit them and their lives.

Four years ago, when the Republicans were in control of the White House, the House, and the Senate, they used their majority to pass tax cuts for the wealthiest 1 percent and the biggest corporations in our country. Today, Democrats are in the majority, and our priority is to deliver for the people.

I am proud to work with my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus and the House Democrats to deliver this historic package. We are

going to get it done. I yield back to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, we are excited about this violence emphasis. As I conclude my remarks, let me pay tribute to deputies in my district who were shot by an AR-15. We pray for them, their families, and we should understand that violence has to end.

At the same time, let's take the words of John Robert Lewis, who sat with us on this floor for more than 27 years, and in his last life he said to all of us, the Congressional Black Caucus, that is what we are going to do, carry on. We are going to carry on to make sure that we bring transformative—transformative—legislation, not only to the American people but to African Americans and people of color to change their lives forever. That is what Build Back is, and that is what the bipartisan bill is. We will work to make sure we cross the T's and dot the I's. Carry on.

Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the Committees on the Judiciary, on Homeland Security, and on the Budget, and the Congressional Black Caucus, I am pleased to co-anchor this Congressional Black Caucus Special Order with my colleague, the distinguished gentleman from New York, Congressman RITCHIE TORRES.

I thank the Chair of the CBC, Congresswoman BEATTY of Ohio, for organizing this Special Order to discuss the reasons why the CBC strongly supports the \$1.75 billion Build Back Better Act conceived and advanced by President Biden and House Democrats to support visionary and transformative investments in the health, well-being, and financial security of America's workers and families.

Over the next hour, several of our colleagues will share their perspectives on why it is essential that we "go big" in building back better to our nation and all of its people have the opportunities and resources to compete and win in the changing global economy of the 21st century.

Mr. Speaker, it is often said that the federal budget is an expression of the nation's values and the investments made to Build America Back Better are a clear declaration of congressional Democrats' commitment to ensuring that our government, our economy, and our systems work For The People.

Mr. Speaker, these long-overdue investments in America's future will be felt in every corner of the country and across every sector of American life, building on the success of the American Rescue Plan, accommodating historic infrastructure investments in the legislative pipeline, and addressing longstanding deficits in our communities by ending an era of chronic underinvestment so we can emerge from our current crises a stronger, more equitable nation.

Mr. Speaker, the bipartisan action we took in February 2021 when we passed the American Rescue Plan was a giant step in the right direction, but it was a targeted response to the immediate and urgent public health and economic crises; it was not a long-term solution to many of the pressing challenges facing our nation that have built up over decades of disinvestment in our nation and its people in every region and sector of the country.

We simply can no longer afford the costs of neglect and inaction; the time to act is now.

The Build Back Better Act makes the transformative investments that we need to continue growing our economy, lower costs for working families, and position the United States as a global leader in innovation and the jobs of the future.

This \$1.75 trillion gross investment will build on the successes of the American Rescue Plan and set our nation on a path of fiscal responsibility and broadly shared prosperity for generations to come.

The Build Back Better Act will provide resources to improve our education, health, and child care systems, invest in clean energy and sustainability, address the housing crisis, and more; all while setting America up to compete and win in the decades ahead.

The Build Back Better Act is paid for by ensuring that the wealthy and big corporations are paying their fair share and Americans making less than \$400,000 a year will not see their taxes increase by a penny.

Let me repeat that: No American making less than \$400,000 a year will not see their taxes increase by a penny.

In sum, Mr. Speaker, the investments made by the Build Back Better Act will expand opportunity for all and build an economy powered by shared prosperity and inclusive growth.

No one is better prepared or more experienced to lead the American renaissance that will be produced by the investments made by the Build Back Better Act than President Biden, the architect of the American Rescue Plan and who as vice president during the Obama Administration oversaw the implementation of the Recovery Act, which saved millions of jobs and rescued our economy from the Great Recession the nation inherited from a previous Republican administration.

And let us not forget that President Obama also placed his confidence in his vice-president to oversee the rescue of the automotive industry, which he did so well that the American car industry fully recovered its status as the world leader.

Mr. Speaker, let me briefly highlight some of the key investments made by the Build Back Better Act.

The Build Back Better Act will provide two years of free pre-K and two years of free community college to ensure every student has the tools, resources, and opportunity to succeed in life.

It will also invest in our teachers and institutions that serve minority students and provide funding to give school buildings long-overdue infrastructure updates.

People lead happier, healthier, and more productive lives when they have had access to high-quality education and that is why the Build Back Better Act makes necessary investments to increase quality education by four years for all students at no cost to hard-working families.

The Build Back Better Act expands access to affordable, high-quality education beyond high school, which is increasingly important for economic growth and competitiveness in the 21st century.

Specifically, the Build Back Better Act will increase the maximum Pell Grant by \$550 for more the more than 5 million students enrolled in public and private, non-profit colleges and expand access to DREAMers.

It will also make historic investments in Historically Black Colleges and Universities

(HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and minority-serving institutions (MSIs) to build capacity, modernize research infrastructure, and provide financial aid to low income students.

The Build Back Better Act will help more people access quality training that leads to good, union, and middle-class jobs and will enable community colleges to train hundreds of thousands of students, create sector-based training opportunity with in-demand training for at least hundreds of thousands of workers, and invest in proven approaches like Registered Apprenticeships and programs to support underserved communities.

The Build Back Better Act will increase the Labor Department's annual spending on workforce development by 50 percent for each of the next 5 years.

The Build Back Better Act expands access to quality, affordable health care by strengthening the Medicare, Medicaid, and Affordable Care Act (ACA) Marketplace programs that millions of Americans already rely on.

It includes a major new expansion of Medicare benefits, adding a hearing benefit to the program for the very first time.

Only 30 percent of seniors over the age of 70 who could benefit from hearing aids have ever had them.

The Build Back Better Act strengthens the Affordable Care Act and reduces premiums for 9 million Americans who buy insurance through the Affordable Care Act Marketplace by an average of \$600 per person per year.

Just for example, a family of four earning \$80,000 per year would save nearly \$3,000 per year (or \$246 per month) on health insurance premiums and experts predict that more than 3 million people who would otherwise be uninsured will gain health insurance.

The Build Back Better Act closes the Medicaid coverage gap, leading 4 million uninsured people to gain coverage.

The Build Back Better Act will deliver health care coverage through Affordable Care Act premium tax credits to up to 4 million uninsured people in states that have locked them out of Medicaid.

A 40-year old in the coverage gap would have to pay \$450 per month for benchmark coverage—more than half of their income in many cases but thanks to the Build Back Better Act individuals would pay \$0 premiums, finally making health care affordable and accessible.

The Build Back Better Act strengthens the ACA by extending the enhanced Marketplace subsidies that were included in the American Rescue Plan.

It also provides an affordable coverage option for the more than two million Americans living in states that have not expanded Medicaid under the ACA and do not earn enough to qualify for Marketplace subsidies.

When the Build Back Better Act is fully implemented soon gone will be the terrible old days when too many Americans are forced to choose between medical care and putting food on the table or affording other necessities.

Mr. Speaker, approximately 3.9 million Black people were uninsured in 2019 before President Biden took office and even with the Affordable Care Act's premium subsidies, coverage under the ACA was too expensive for many families, and over 570,000 Black people fell into the Medicaid "coverage gap" and were locked out of coverage because their state refused to expand Medicaid.

The Build Back Better Act closes the Medicaid coverage gap while also lowering health care costs for those buying coverage through the ACA by extending the American Rescue Plan's lower premiums, which could save 360,000 Black people an average of \$50 per person per month.

With these changes, more than one in three uninsured Black people could gain coverage and with the addition of hearing coverage, more than 5.8 million Black people on Medicaid will benefit.

The Build Back Better Act will make an historic investment in maternal health, including for Black women, who die from complications related to pregnancy at three times the rate of white women.

Mr. Speaker, the cost of preschool in the United States exceeds \$8,600 per year on average, and for as long as we can remember, child care prices in the United States have risen faster than family incomes, yet the United States still invests 28 times less than its competitors on helping families afford high-quality care for toddlers.

The Build Back Better Act supports families in need of child care by providing access to safe, reliable, and high-quality care delivered by a well-trained child care workforce.

The Build Back Better Act will provide universal and free preschool for all 3- and 4-year-olds.

This is the largest expansion of universal and free education since states and communities across the country established public high school 100 years ago.

This is important because our nation is strongest when everyone can join the workforce and contribute to the economy.

That is why this investment is vital to so many millions—especially women—who are often forced to choose between working to support their family or caring for their family.

The Build Back Better Act will ensure that the vast majority of working American families of four earning less than \$300,000 per year will pay no more than 7 percent of their income on child care for children under 6.

Under the Build Back Better Act, parents who are working, looking for work, participating in an education or training program, and who are making under 2.5 times their states median income will receive support to cover the cost of quality care based on a sliding scale, capped at 7 percent of their income.

The Build Back Better Act will help states expand access to high-quality, affordable child care to about 20 million children per year—covering 9 out of 10 families across the country with young children.

For two parents with one toddler earning \$100,000 per year, the Build Back Better Act will produce more than \$5,000 in child care savings per year.

In addition, the Build Back Better Act promotes nutrition security to support children's health and help children reach their full potential by investing in nutrition security year-round.

The legislation will expand free school meals to 8.7 million children during the school year and provide a \$65 per child per month benefit to the families of 29 million children to purchase food during the summer.

The Build Back Better Act will deliver affordable, high-quality care for older Americans and people with disabilities in their homes, while supporting the workers who provide this care.

Right now, there are hundreds of thousands of older Americans and Americans with disabilities on waiting lists for home care services or struggling to afford the care they need, including more than 800,000 who are on state Medicaid waiting lists.

A family paying for home care costs out of pocket currently pays around \$5,800 per year for just four hours of home care per week.

The Build Back Better Act will permanently improve Medicaid coverage for home care services for seniors and people with disabilities, making the most transformative investment in access to home care in 40 years, when these services were first authorized for Medicaid.

The Build Back Better Act will improve the quality of caregiving jobs, which will, in turn, help to improve the quality of care provided to beneficiaries.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot emphasize enough how important it is that the Build Back Better Act will also reduce the cost of homebased care for the hundreds of thousands of older Black adults and Black people with disabilities who need it and are unable to access it.

Not to mention that investment in home care will raise wages for home care workers, 28 percent of whom are Black.

In the area of housing, the Build Back Better Act makes investments to ensure that Americans have access to safe and affordable housing by providing resources to increase housing vouchers and funding for tribal housing.

It also supports investments in programs that will help address our nation's housing crisis by increasing the supply of affordable homes for those in need and investing in historically underserved communities and those that have been previously left behind.

Specifically, the Build Back Better Act makes the single largest and most comprehensive investment in affordable housing in history and will enable the construction, rehabilitation, and improvement of more than 1 million affordable homes, boosting housing supply and reducing price pressures for renters and homeowners.

It will address the capital needs of the public housing stock in big cities and rural communities all across America and ensure it is not only safe and habitable but healthier and more energy efficient as well.

It will make a historic investment in rental assistance, expanding vouchers to hundreds of thousands of additional families.

And, perhaps even more importantly, the Build Back Better Act includes one of the largest investments in down payment assistance in history, enabling hundreds of thousands of first-generation homebuyers to purchase their first home and build wealth.

In short, Mr. Speaker, this legislation will create more equitable communities, through investing in community-led redevelopments projects in historically under-resourced neighborhoods and removing lead paint from hundreds of thousands of homes, as well as by incentivizing state and local zoning reforms that enable more families to reside in higher opportunity neighborhoods.

The Build Back Better Act will spur and empower comprehensive action to build an equitable clean energy economy with historic investments to transform and modernize the electricity sector, lower energy costs for Americans, improve air quality and public health,

create good-paying jobs, and strengthen U.S. competitiveness—all while putting our country on the pathway to 100 percent carbon-free electricity by 2035.

The Build Back Better Act extends and expands clean energy tax credits and supports clean electricity performance payments so utilities can accelerate progress toward a clean electric grid at no added cost to consumers.

The Build Back Better Act invests in clean energy, efficiency, electrification, and climate justice through grants, consumer rebates, and federal procurement of clean power and sustainable materials, and by incentivizing private sector development and investment.

Another exciting aspect of the Build Back Better Act, Mr. Speaker, is that it will drive economic opportunities, environmental conservation, and climate resilience—especially in underserved and disadvantaged communities—including through a new Civilian Climate Corps.

Mr. Speaker, the Build Back Better Act includes a \$100 billion investment to reform our broken immigration system—and does it consistent with the Senate's reconciliation rules—as well as to reduce backlogs, expand legal representation, and make the asylum system and border processing more efficient and humane.

Mr. Speaker, immigrants eligible for such protection are an integral part of Texas's social fabric.

Texas is home to 386,300 immigrants who are eligible for protection, 112,000 of whom reside in Harris County.

These individuals live with 845,300 family members and among those family members, 178,700 are U.S.-born citizen children.

These persons in Texas who are eligible for protection under the bill arrived in the United States at the average age of 8 and on average have lived in the United States since 1996.

They own 43,500 homes in Texas and pay \$340,500,000 in annual mortgage payments and contribute \$2,234,800,000 in federal taxes and \$1,265,200,000 in state and local taxes each year.

Annually, these households generate \$10,519,000,000 in spending power in Texas and help power the national economy.

The expansion of the Child Tax Credit (CTC) enacted in the American Rescue Plan has already benefitted nearly 66 million children, put money in the pockets of millions of hard-working parents and guardians, and is expected to help cut child poverty by more than half.

The Build Back Better Act not only extends this meaningful tax cut, but it also extends the expanded Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the expanded Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit, which help families make ends meet and put food on the table, reduce child poverty, and lessen the burden on hard-working Americans so they can provide a better future for America's children.

Mr. Speaker, 22.1 percent of Black people fall below the poverty line, struggling to pay expenses like food, rent, health care, and transportation for their families.

By extending the Child Tax Credit, the Build Back Better Act provides a major tax cut to nearly 3 million Black people and cuts the Black poverty rate by 34.3 percent, which will help the 85 percent of Black women who are either sole or co-breadwinners for their families.

By permanently extending the American Rescue Plan's increase to the Earned-Income Tax Credit from \$543 to \$1,502, the Build Back Better Act will benefit roughly 2.8 million Black low-wage workers, including cashiers, cooks, delivery drivers, food preparation workers, and child care providers.

To put it all in perspective, Mr. Speaker, we have before us a once in a century opportunity to make gigantic progress in making ours a more perfect union, and to do it in a single bound with enactment of the Build Back Better Act, the most transformative legislation passed by this Congress since the Great Society and the New Deal.

I would urge my Republican colleagues to heed the words of Republican Governor Jim Justice of West Virginia who said colorfully earlier this year:

At this point in time in this nation, we need to go big. We need to quit counting the egg-sucking legs on the cows and count the cows and just move. And move forward and move right now.

The same sentiment was expressed more eloquently by Abraham Lincoln in 1862 when he memorably wrote:

The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew and act anew. We must disenthrall ourselves, and then we shall save our country.

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

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me begin by thanking my good friend and Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, Congresswoman BEATTY, for hosting this Special Order Hour and to Congresswoman JACKSON LEE and Congressman TORRES for anchoring it.

Mr. Speaker, this is a consequential moment in our nation's history.

On the tail end of a once-in-a-century pandemic—one that has resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths, record unemployment rates, and that has left our economy counting the costs—we are in desperate need of substantive relief in all aspects of our society. We need bold action, from bold leadership, in order to deliver bold results—and that's what we have in President Biden's Build Back Better agenda. This agenda is a real opportunity to make historic, transformative investments in projects and programs that are supported by an overwhelming majority of the American people.

As a Senior Member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I fought to include several provisions in this agenda through the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act that would greatly benefit communities not only in my district, but across the country. These include funding for a program that provides federal dollars to reconnect and revitalize communities historically harmed and marginalized by the construction of the Interstate Highway System; language to ensure prompt payment and sufficient payments to minority and disadvantaged subcontractors; and legislation to establish an electric grid resilience program for states like Texas to weatherize their power grids. Each of these measures—though different in nature and purpose—will collectively contribute to the rebuilding of our economy by creating more good-paying, equitable job opportunities.

And as Chairwoman of the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee, I am steadfastly committed to strengthening our nation's research and innovation capabilities through the Build Back Better Act—both to ensure our continued international competitiveness and the wellbeing of our citizens here at home. I believe that investments in research and development now will pay untold dividends for the future health and prosperity of our nation, which is why we put resources in this bill that will help us address the climate crisis, rebuild after this pandemic, promote innovation, and renew and repair our research infrastructure. It also makes an unprecedented investment in the National Science Foundation, tapping into the diverse talent and institutions from across our nation. We need a STEM workforce that represents the rich diversity of America—because we cannot continue to lead in science and technology if we do not tap into all the brainpower our nation has to offer. To make sure of this, we included a provision that provides resources to support research capacity building at our nation's minority-serving institutions and invests in research, scholarships, and fellowships across all STEM disciplines.

Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Black Caucus has been and will continue to be at the forefront of these negotiations. Fifty-seven members—and six committee chairs—strong, our presence at the table, on behalf of our diverse constituencies, remains steadfast and will ultimately serve as the driving force behind our work For the People.

□ 2045

ISSUES OF THE DAY

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, in recent days, I have been doing some research. In fact, one of the things I was looking at is the average income over the last couple of decades going back to 1991, and this was average annual wage according to the Social Security Administration, so maybe somebody would take issue with their accuracy. But according to their numbers, during the Clinton administration, the average American's income went up each year about \$1,000 a year. So over President Clinton's 8 years in office, the average income went up about \$8,000 over those 8 years.

Under President Bush, it was a little more than \$1,000 a year during his 8 years.

But during the Obama administration it was between a \$7,000 and \$8,000 increase during the Obama administration.

Then during the 4 years of the Trump administration, the average income went up about \$2,000 a year. It was between \$7,000 and \$8,000 for the 4 years, a dramatic increase.

But I was shocked, as I was looking at different numbers, to find that the net worth for Black households in

America during the 8 years of the Obama administration went down by 30 percent, on average. During the Trump administration, it didn't go down. It went up significantly.

As I look at what is being proposed in the Build Back Better program, and I see this administration having canceled the Keystone XL pipeline, which certainly was going to, and has, caused an escalation in fuel prices and energy prices, and of course, President Biden released the penalties that had been put on the Russian natural gas pipeline, so it is doing great now, and took off some of the penalties on Iran—anyway, we have seen the price of energy going up significantly.

It brought back to mind yet again the Honorable John Dingell's comment. He was looking forward to pushing through, in essence, a socialized medicine program through the committee he was chair of in 2009 and 2010, but he was famously asked about the cap-and-trade bill. He responded that the cap-and-trade bill is not only a tax, but it is a great big tax.

He explained before that when you raise the price of energy, you are not hurting the billionaires, the megawealthy. It is an inconvenience to them when you raise the price of energy, be it electricity, propane, natural gas, coal, whatever it is. It is an inconvenience to the very wealthy, but to those who are on fixed incomes, those who are scraping by working so hard every week and just getting by, if you increase the price of gasoline, electricity, energy, you just devastate those households. It is not just a little tax to them. It is devastating.

The inflation that comes with an upward explosion of the price of fuel and energy, but especially fuel, as this administration has done, it inflates the price of everything. There is just not much of anything, unless you are buying from some pickup truck or some roadside kiosk—otherwise, you are having to pay a lot of extra energy costs, whether it is for the ingredients of something you are buying or whether it is the product getting to market. But usually, it is all of the above. The energy prices inflate costs of everything, basically.

That is what has happened to the working poor in America. That is what has happened to seniors on fixed incomes. They are being devastated as prices continue to skyrocket, with no end in sight.

On a trip some years back during the Obama administration, some of us went to Germany, and we met with some of their energy leaders. In one meeting, the driver of our little van was from Berlin, and he sat in and listened. I was talking to him privately after the meeting, and he said I hear all these rich people talking about how great our green energy is in Germany, but I have had to go from having one job to having three jobs, hardly ever getting to see my family, so they could brag about our green energy. But it is