with every day to make their business work and the effects of mandates. I appreciate his comments.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLER), who has a great personal story himself. I look forward to his remarks and his concerns about this monstrosity of a bill, socialist reconciliation bill.

Mr. KELLER. Madam Speaker, I thank Ranking Member LUETKEMEYER for having this Special Order. At a time when we should be doing everything we can to help small businesses thrive and strengthen America's workforce, President Biden's radical socialist agenda is driving a wedge between job creators and the workforce.

Drawing upon 25 years of experience in private industry, working in a factory, later managing that factory, I understand the challenges that our businesses face and what it means to get up every day, go to work, and support a family.

President Biden and House Democrats aren't looking out for American families. If they were, they would not be working to increase the tax rates for small business owners or dumping more than a trillion dollars into the economy. That will only worsen the inflation we have seen and the supply chain crisis.

This build back better scheme is a farce. It is simply out of control. Whoever controls more of an individual's money and how they earn it controls more of their actions. That should be the person who earns it, not the government.

When you look at these tax policies, when you look at inflation, when you look at the fact that this administration has taken us away from energy independence, people are spending more for groceries, they are spending more for fuel, they are going to spend more to heat their homes, and that is controlling more of their money because of these poor policies. The best thing government can do is get out of the way and return economic independence to the American people.

I thank the ranking member for having this Special Order and allowing us to point out that we believe in the American people. They built the greatest economy the world has ever seen. They built the greatest nation on the face of the Earth, and I just wish that President Biden, when he talks about being frustrated with American citizens, would get half as frustrated with China and Russia and the Taliban.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. I thank the gentleman for his insightful remarks. I really appreciate his comments. Pouring more money into the economy just adds to inflation. If we go back and look at the comments by the CBO when they scored the bill back in February, a $1.9 trillion bill, they said we didn't need it, that we would have 5 percent growth by the end of this year if we did nothing. And yet we spent $1.9 trillion and look at what has happened. We have runaway inflation going on right now, and we want more money to be spent again. This is nuts.

Government control. I appreciate his comments with regard to that. This is about government control. It is about controlling the economy and controlling individuals and controlling businesses. Again, it is about the belief that the other side seems to believe in the goodness and greatness of government, and we believe in the goodness and greatness of our people. I certainly appreciate his comments with regard to that and reminding us of those salient facts.

Madam Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 9 minutes.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Thank you very much. I shouldn't be too long. We have rolled this around quite a bit, and we have hit on the high points, but I do want to make a few closing remarks.

The American people deserve better than this. We are here to be able to help them, not to harm them. We are here to be able to lift them up and empower them instead of take power away. We are here to give them hope, not destroy hope. You do all these things on the positive side, I think, by empowering them and letting them be who they are rather than take that away from them and try from the government side to control what they are doing and who they want to be.

I have the opportunity with one of the positions that I hold here in Congress to meet with a lot of foreign finance ministers from around the world, and it is always interesting to talk to them because they are very jealous of what we have. We have something most countries in the world don't have, and that is economic freedom. The freedom to be able to go somewhere tomorrow; if you want to change jobs, go change jobs. If you want to start a new business tomorrow, go start a new business. If you want to start another one next week, start another new business next week. Most places in the world you can't do that, and that is a huge difference. That economic freedom, that entrepreneurial spirit that we have in this country makes us different from everybody else.

This monstrosity of a socialist reconciliation bill is a dagger in the heart to the entrepreneurs and the small business people in this country who have built this country. The big businesses, where did they start from? They started as a small business. They didn't start as a big, major business to begin with. They started in somebody's garage or in a university research lab somewhere or as an idea that somebody scratches on the back of a napkin in a restaurant somewhere. These people, the entrepreneurs who are willing to put their ideas on the table, their money, and their beliefs and risk everything to make this work.

This bill that we are talking about this evening is a dagger in the heart to those people who are willing to take those kinds of risks and drive our country forward and provide the jobs.

As a reminder, when we unleashed the power of the people with the tax cut bill of 2017, we wound up before the pandemic of having 1.2 million more jobs in this country than we had people to fill them. The first time in history that we had those sorts of job openings for people to apply for.

The fundamentals are still there if we don't destroy them, and that is the key. This bill will destroy those fundamentals. Add to that the uncertainty that a lot of our good friends and small businesses that drive this country are concerned about, the taxes will be the burden that will have to be overcome, and probably will drive a lot of them out of business.

They are very concerned about the direction of this administration. They seem to believe, again, in the goodness and greatness of government. Our side believes in the goodness and greatness of our people, and we want to empower them and continue to protect them and work with them.

Madam Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to be here this evening and for allowing us to have this Special Order. I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1845

INVESTING IN THE UNITED STATES

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, we are here tonight to talk about these amazing bills coming up having to do with our investment in the United States of America, both in the bipartisan infrastructure bill and the Build Back Better Act.

These two bills taken together will create millions of American jobs rebuilding our infrastructure and building clean energy technology to combat climate change. Together, the Build Back Better Act and the infrastructure package are expected to create 2 million jobs a year on average. They will reward work by cutting taxes for working families and lowering costs on the things that keep folks up late at night, like healthcare, childcare, and home care for aging relatives.

We are going to pay for that investment and those investments in our Nation and in working families by making sure that the ultra-wealthy and the corporations pay their fair share.

The Build Back Better Act will not add to the deficit, and no one making less than $400,000 a year will pay a penny more in taxes. That is the promise that President Joe Biden made, and we intend to keep it.

Now, Madam Speaker, we have here Representative BRIAN HIGGINS of Buffalo. He is a ninth-term Member from western New York, and prior to serving in Congress, Representative HIGGINS was a history and economics instructor at SUNY Buffalo State College. Representative HIGGINS also served in local and State elected office. Congressman HIGGINS has been a fierce advocate of stronger regional and national economic policies.

Congressman HIGGINS currently serves on the Ways and Means and Budget Committees. Congressman HIGGINS is also the Democratic chair of the House Northern Border Caucus. Congressman HIGGINS is the chair of the House Cancer Caucus, and he is a House lead on the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS).

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I was listening intently to the other side extolling the virtues of nothing but a cynical assessment of the American economy when the American economy, in fact, needs investment.

A couple of facts I want to clear up here, if the United States economy had grown at the increased rates seen under Democrats since 1933, the average income of Americans would be more than double than it currently is today.

Economic growth since 1933: 4.6 percent under Democrats; 2.4 percent under Republicans.

Annual jobs increases since 1933: Under Democrats, 2.8 percent; under Republicans, 1 percent.

Since 1962, Democrats created 21 million more jobs than Republicans.

Ten of 11 of the United States recessions between 1953 and 2000 began under Republicans administrations.

George Bush I, a Republican, created a $300-billion deficit. William Clinton, a Democrat, wiped out the entire deficit and left the next administration, Bush II, with a $300-billion surplus. Bush II turned that into a $1.3-trillion deficit. Obama, a Democratic President, cut that deficit to $600 billion.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I have been listening to our colleagues across the aisle complaining about so-called socialist tax increases that we have in store.

Does the gentleman know what the top marginal tax rate under the Eisenhower administration was?

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. That would be 91 percent.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Ninety-one percent under the Republican Eisenhower administration during the 1950s.

And what happened to that 91 percent, if the gentleman knows?

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. It was reduced to 77 percent under a Democratic administration, under John F. Kennedy.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. We are talking about the top marginal tax rate, which is in the 30s right now. Am I correct in that?

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. That is right, sir.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. You can continue.

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Well, I think the point that is being made here is, despite perceptions to the contrary and the assertions of those who have now left perhaps because they can't defend this, clearly the American economy performs much more efficiently, much more effectively under Democratic administrations.

That is why the Build Back Better program invests not in wars that don't create any new roads and bridges in America, that don't pull any kids out of poverty, that don't provide childcare and child tax credits. Complete waste of money. Brown University just came out with a study that said Americans paid $6.2 trillion in the past two decades in three Middle East wars.

The Build Back Better program invests in America by rebuilding America, by investing in young America so that they become safer, have better nutrition, and have more economic activity at a very young age.

Every single study points to the same conclusion, that if you invest in kids, the child tax credit, pre-K, childcare, you produce a more productive citizen. University studies show that for every dollar that you spend, you produce in long-term economic benefits $7 to $8.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I want to talk about a few things. I want to talk about jobs, tax cuts, and lower costs for American families.

First, jobs. Together, under the Biden administration, we have already created nearly 5 million jobs this year. Growth is up. Wages are up. And unemployment right now is down below 5 percent.

Together with Build Back Better, the bipartisan infrastructure bill will create millions more jobs, good-paying jobs, American jobs, union jobs, jobs that cannot be outsourced, cannot be offshored.

This infrastructure package makes the largest Federal investment in public transit ever. It is the largest Federal investment in passenger rail since the creation of Amtrak.

In Pennsylvania alone, the State will be opened up to over 3 million people with access to Amtrak. In northeastern Pennsylvania, Amtrak has assessed that adding a line to reach northeastern Pennsylvania will add $87 million a year in additional economic activity in Pennsylvania.

These are amazing, smart investments, investments that we have to make in our country if we expect to compete with Europe, with China, with Russian, places that are investing in their infrastructure.

We are talking about the largest investment in clean drinking water and wastewater infrastructure in American history. This is how we avoid catastrophes like what happened in Flint, Michigan, where little kids got brain damage from drinking lead-tainted water from pipes that hadn't been replaced in over 100 years.

This infrastructure investment will ensure that every American has access to reliable high-speed internet. This is the kind of investment that the Federal Government knows how to make. This is the kind of effort that we have succeeded at before because we have seen it.

Eighty years ago, it was the Rural Electrification Act, which brought electricity to places in America that did not have it and would not have it today if the government hadn't brought that into effect. The Rural Electrification Act did essentially the same thing with electricity that we intend to do with broadband internet access.

We can't leave people behind. That is what we do if we continue on the same path we are on.

This infrastructure bill helps us tackle, maybe most importantly, the climate crisis by making the largest investment in clean energy transmission and electric vehicle infrastructure in history. Build Back Better will work with the infrastructure package to make even more investments in electric vehicles and other clean energy technology to combat climate change while making our economy more competitive.

Rebuilding our infrastructure means rebuilding our middle class. It means jobs, jobs, jobs, and more jobs.

Before I move on to tax cuts, I would like to recognize a fellow Member from Pennsylvania, Congresswoman MARY GAY SCANLON. MARY GAY SCANLON is a second-term Member representing Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District. In Congress, Representative SCANLON has continued her work as a lifelong advocate for children and families.

Representative SCANLON currently serves on the House Judiciary Committee and the House Rules Committee. She is vice chair of the House Committee on House Administration.

Congresswoman SCANLON and her husband, Mark, have three adult children. They currently reside in Swarthmore with a lot of pets.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. SCANLON).

Ms. SCANLON. Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman CARTWRIGHT for yielding, and I thank him for outlining some of the many benefits to climate in this bill because for my adult children and so many of the college students in my district, their number one issue is finally taking meaningful action to address climate change.

But these bills do so much more than that. After more than 50 years of failed trickle-down economics and unfulfilled promises to prioritize our Nation's infrastructure, the last administration decided to punt on infrastructure and double down on giveaways to the rich by passing yet another tax cut for the ultra-wealthy. What did that get us? Widening income inequality, a shrinking middle class, crumbling roads and bridges, and increased corporate welfare.

For too long, America's economic policy has revolved around support for the rich and powerful rather than working people. With President Biden, we are ready to change that.

I am proud to be part of a Congress that is prioritizing the American people.

In partnership with the Biden administration, Democrats in Congress have set out to offer the greatest potential for American families and American small businesses to achieve prosperity and the American Dream in half a century. We need both the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Build Back Better Act to meet that potential and deliver a fairer, more balanced economy that works for all Americans.

After too many infrastructure weeks to count, Congress will soon deliver an infrastructure bill to the President's desk that creates economic opportunity for all Americans in the 21st century and beyond.

My district, Pennsylvania's Fifth, is home to Philadelphia's airport, port, and rail yard; miles and miles of interstate highways and passenger rail lines; and regional commuter and light-rail lines that link Philadelphia and its suburbs. Our infrastructure is aging, heavily used, and, in many cases, beyond its usable lifespan. Anyone who has been stuck in traffic or a pothole on the Schuylkill Expressway, the Blue Route, or I–95 knows how important an infrastructure bill is to our region.

State and local governments in Pennsylvania and across the country simply don't have enough money to meet basic maintenance needs, much less to invest in modernization, expansion, or other improvements to our national infrastructure. That is precisely why the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act is so critical for my district and our national economy.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will fix our ailing roads and bridges and fund improvements to other critical infrastructure at our port and airport. These upgrades are essential to maintain our region's position as a logistics hub on the East Coast and to ensure America's competitiveness in a global economy.

America can't engage in international trade if it can't get goods in and out of the country or across the country due to crumbling infrastructure and related backlogs in processing.

□ 1900

The COVID pandemic brought into sharp focus how essential the internet is for Americans to work or find employment, to participate in remote learning, to access healthcare, to stay connected with friends and family, and to carry out any number of basic activities in the 21st century. Yet, millions of Americans live in areas where there is no broadband infrastructure, or they can't afford it.

Our infrastructure bill will expand broadband access for millions of Americans, including many of my constituents. In addition to investing in broadband infrastructure, the bill will also lower prices for internet service and create a permanent program to help more low-income households access the internet.

Much like the Federal Government's efforts to provide electricity to every American nearly a 100 years ago, this effort will be transformative. It will drastically improve the ability for all Americans, no matter where they live or their income level, to access services and opportunities that are essential to modern life.

Another aspect of the infrastructure bill that is important for my district is the funding it provides for climate resiliency, particularly flooding. Communities like Eastwick, and economic engines like the Philadelphia airport, are especially vulnerable to climate change. We have seen the damage done by flooding, hurricanes, and even—astonishingly, in southeastern Pennsylvania—tornadoes.

Sadly, these extreme weather events are only getting worse. Funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will make our communities safer and our infrastructure more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

But fixing our Nation's physical infrastructure can only take us so far. The bipartisan infrastructure bill creates jobs that will provide new opportunities and reduce costs for many Americans, but it won't change the calculus for the working mom or dad who can't find adequate childcare for their kid. It won't improve our schools or prepare for the future, and it won't reduce the spiraling cost of prescription drugs.

All of these factors are holding back families from fully participating in our economy, and in turn, preventing them from buying homes and building wealth for retirement. Without addressing the failings of our ''human infrastructure,'' a majority of Americans—particularly women and people of color—will continue to be held back. That is why we need universal pre-K, better access to affordable childcare, a dependable system of care for our seniors, and investments in higher education and workforce training.

The Build Back Better Act will lower the cost of things that keep families up at night, while also delivering a massive tax cut for the middle class through the expanded child tax credit and the earned income tax credit—giving the middle class more breathing room. That is what my constituents need.

Already this year, through the American Rescue Plan that we passed in March, we have seen the child tax credit benefit 126,000 children in my district alone. That is 76,000 families who got extra help for essentials like childcare, food, and diapers—much less paying for school clothes, extracurricular sports, or putting something aside for college.

By making the most significant investment in children and caregiving in generations, we are helping individual families and the country as a whole. Because people—particularly women—can get back to work when they know that their family members are cared for. And ensuring access to quality daycare and preschool sets children up for success, making them more likely to graduate, pursue higher education, hold jobs, pay taxes, and have higher earnings.

In addition to increasing the maximum for Pell grant awards, the Build Back Better Act expands opportunities for Americans to participate in job training programs that prepare them for careers in fast-growing sectors. This bill is going to help the working people in PA–05 and across the country.

It will help families like the one I met in Media—a mom who was beaming about her son's good-paying, new job at the Philadelphia shipyard, which he got after completing the Maritime Career Development Program at Delaware County Community College. It will help low-income workers in my district who work two or more jobs every day but still can't make ends meet.

It will help families that struggle to pay for the prescription drugs that keep them alive without forcing them to choose between forgoing medication or housing or heat or food. And the best part, the Build Back Better bill is paid for by making those at the top pay their fair share for a change.

Madam Speaker, 17 Noble Prize-winning economists recently wrote in support of this legislation, ''Because this agenda invests in long-term economic capacity and will enhance the ability of more Americans to participate productively in the economy, it will ease longer-term inflationary pressures.''

We have the chance to set a new path that creates real, sustained economic growth and benefits everyone, not just multimillionaires and real estate developers. It is time to get this done for the American people.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman.

I appreciate that you mentioned potholes, and you don't have to be from Pennsylvania to understand the scourge of potholes. I will say that in my hometown of Scranton, there was a study done about how much it costs car owners every year to play the pothole slalom every year and hope that you don't damage your car. They do damage their cars, and it costs on average $1,400 a year for car owners to drive over these rough roads.

It is something that only the government can do, fix the roads, pave the roads, fix the bridges. Thank you for mentioning that.

In fact, I would be remiss if I did not mention, the Susquehanna River flows through northeastern Pennsylvania and it bisects the two towns of Pittston and West Pittston. And there are only two bridges over the Susquehanna at Pittston to West Pittston, and one of them is out right now. It is out because it is really old; it hasn't been maintained properly because the money wasn't there, the investment wasn't made, and we didn't get the job done. This is exactly why we have to make these investments.

Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her time this evening.

Ms. SCANLON. Madam Speaker, I have heard of other States that have that problem. I heard Kentucky has a bridge that is out right now that is desperately in need of repair.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I want to go back on the question of infrastructure for a moment.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS), our colleague from Buffalo.

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, my two colleagues from Pennsylvania were very clear about the component parts of this plan and the good things that they do for individuals, but they also do good things for our Nation as a whole.

Madam Speaker, the conservative economist from Moody's Analytics, Mark Zandi, did an analysis of the 2017 corporate tax cut. He said that for every dollar that you gave away, you could expect to recapture 32 cents. That is a loss in investment of 67 percent.

On infrastructure, the conservative economist says that for every dollar that you spend on infrastructure, you produce $1.60 in economic activity. The gain on investment on infrastructure is 60 percent. So it is beyond the bricks and mortar of infrastructure. It is also the good that that does for the growth in the economy.

I would leave you with this: The oil age isn't going to end because we run out of oil. The oil age is going to end because we find a better way than the internal combustible engine, something that is quieter, cleaner, and eventually cheaper. And guess what? This bill, the Build Back Better, the infrastructure bill, has money to provide charging stations to facilitate the making and the using of electric vehicles, ending this Nation's addiction to foreign oil.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS), for his time here this evening.

Madam Speaker, we have talked about creating jobs, and Build Back Better is about creating jobs. It is also about helping workers keep more of their hard-earned paychecks by cutting taxes for the middle class. Thanks to the American Rescue Plan, the child tax credit's monthly tax cuts are already helping parents put gas in the car or pay for childcare so they can go to work and help fuel our economy.

The latest data analyzed by the JEC found that these tax cuts are generating more than $19 billion in spending in local economies each month throughout our Nation. The data are clear: When working families keep more of their hard-earned money, that is more money pumping into local businesses and supporting even more jobs. That is why we are working to continue those tax cuts and more through the Build Back Better Act.

Democrats passed the child tax credit and the American Rescue Plan without a single Republican vote. That is right. Every single Republican voted against more money in the pockets of hard-working families.

Now, it is Democrats who are working to extend the child tax credit. This contrast could not be clearer. When Democrats control the Congress, we cut taxes for working people. When Republicans control the Congress, they cut taxes for millionaires and billionaires and corporations. And they leave middle-class families out to dry.

Madam Speaker, we are joined tonight by an esteemed colleague, Representative PAUL TONKO of the Capital District of New York. He is a six-term Member of Congress from Upstate New York and a lifelong public servant. Throughout his career, he has been a strong fighter for the environment and sustainable energy, and he currently serves as the cochair for the Sustainable Energy and Environmental Coalition Caucus and a member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Representative TONKO is a longstanding champion for the working class by advancing policies that create jobs, provide economic opportunity, and ensure that senior citizens are able to retire with dignity.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT), and thank him for leading us in tonight's discussion on both physical and human infrastructure.

Let me start by extending my comments toward the child tax credit that you made mention of in your last comments. The data now are available from July and August. As we all know, families received their first check in July, and what a bit of welcome relief. And as we look at where those dollars went, 47 percent, from July and August payments—those are the data available currently—47 percent went to put food on the table; 28 percent went toward utilities, including broadband.

So we are talking about kids doing their homework. We are talking about parents having an opportunity to reach the outside world. Middle-income America to have cottage industries up and running. So 75 percent of that tax cut went to food and utilities, and other incidentals absorb the remaining amount of payments. Now, that is a staggering statistic. That should tell us something about the value added of this tax cut.

Madam Speaker, as Representative CARTWRIGHT indicated, there is a stark contrast between Republican leadership in the House and Democratic leadership in the House. When the majority was run by the Republicans, they joined the former President in providing a tax cut for the 1 percent of the highest wealth in the country. This reaches across the spectrum of middle-income communities and those looking to ascend to the middle class.

The statistic that I find most heartwarming is that one-half of children living in poverty in our country, one-half of those children, will be lifted out of poverty with this child tax credit. That is a moral standard that we should all embrace.

If you want to really see a comeback in our economy, we support those families, middle-income families, those looking to ascend to the middle income. Those are the families that need the shot in the arm. And it is going to happen by further extending that tax program.

So our heart is with children. Our heart is with those children who need early education, three- and four-year-olds that will be able to have advantages, too. The programs that will provide, not only educational training, but cognitive skill development, cognitive awareness, social awareness that will drive the factors that lead to a productive life.

□ 1915

And so many times education experts will cite the availability of early education as the big factor in determining the outcome of a person's work career and the dollars that individual brings home; so that is very important.

Access to quality childcare. So many families are not rejoining the workforce because they don't have access to healthcare. And if the schools are in this undecided state whether they are going to have virtually learning or in-classroom learning or part of each combined, they need the security of childcare.

So the human fabric, the human infrastructure that is part of the Build Back Better Act introduced and envisioned by this President, President Biden, is tremendously reinforcing to so many families across the country. Powerful information and powerful reinforcements that enable them to

dream their version of the American dream.

Now, when we talk about the physical infrastructure, I would be remiss if I didn't equate that to the 20th Congressional District of New York. My district hosts the eastern mouth of the Erie Canal. And the vision for infrastructure in really difficult economic times, by Governor DeWitt Clinton, was to connect the great ocean, the Atlantic, with the Great Lakes.

That inspired not only the development of New York as an entry port, and we now know what a metropolis it is, but it inspired the necklace of communities that were given birth to as mill towns; and then inspired a westward movement. That is infrastructure playing into our economic development into our future. It expanded the turf of this country. It gave so many people the opportunity to insert their skill set, their passion, their abilities into products that fed the quality of life around the world.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I request a colloquy with the gentleman from New York.

Is the gentleman trained as an engineer?

Mr. TONKO. Yes. Not a civil engineer, but mechanical and industrial.

But those engineers are powerful because they make the world spin. And that whole feat, today, if you were to visit the Erie Canal and see the lochs that were developed at a time when modern equipment and machinery wasn't available, it was not only an engineering feat, but a tremendous salute to the workers and the skill and the work ethic that they bore.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, the gentleman was discussing the necklace of communities that followed the Erie Canal. Earlier on this evening I was talking about how Amtrak assessed that restoring passenger rail in northeastern Pennsylvania would result in about $87 million per year of additional economic activity along the line.

Mr. TONKO. Absolutely.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Does that hold water?

Mr. TONKO. Absolutely. And as we invest in rail, we increase ridership if you are getting from A to B in a quicker time period than you would if you were traveling by car. It makes common sense and economic sense. From rail to broadband—I have communities in my district that are unserved or underserved with broadband services.

Today, this is about doctors reading x-rays, children doing their homework, cottage industries launching and staying in business. This is an important bit of modern-day infrastructure. It is akin to the Rural Electrification Act of the 1930s, in the last century.

We have a history that speaks to us boldly about what infrastructure meant. The Rural Electrification Act made America buzz with economic activity; provided economic justice by reaching every corner of this country, which broadband will do.

Let me just mention this, and I will close with this for now. I chair the Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change reporting to the Energy and Commerce Committee. Under our umbrella falls the responsibility for the Safe Drinking Water Act.

The drinking water infrastructure in this Build Back Better effort, and infrastructure in general, is about making certain no children drink out of lead-infested pipes. 10,000 pipes in this country that are feeding and serving homes. There is no way children and families should be drinking water that has lead in it: we know that it is a permanent damage, irreversible; and we know that it is about social and economic justice.

We also provide for more dollars in the SRF, the State Revolving Funds, which 50 capitals across the country receive in terms of the Federal downpayment for water infrastructure. I was in county government back when I started my career, and we had much more of a partnership with Washington.

Today, we are getting on average maybe 4 to 5 percent of all projects that are drinking water-based as a Federal share. Come on, we can do much better than that. If we don't, the issue doesn't go away, and local property taxpayers have to pick up that burden. It is a regressive tax.

So for many, many reasons, we are on board here with a plan that really speaks to the definitive times in which we reside. We now are living in a moment of history where we need to reengage, reengineer our skill sets, our resources, to advance an innovation economy; and to do that, we need a 21st century toolkit and the Build Back Better Act and the infrastructure act, they do it. It is a good downpayment. We are going to still have more work to do.

The President has a vision; it is bold. But we know that leaders in the past, Governor DeWitt Clinton, President Eisenhower, President Franklin Roosevelt, President Teddy Roosevelt with parks, setting aside lands for park development, these were giants in their times.

We have a giant now calling on Congress to help bring the vision into clear view and tether it into the communities across this country.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. It is true, isn't it, that the Build Back Better Act and the bricks and mortar infrastructure act, they work together, they dovetail to achieve the visions you are talking about?

Mr. TONKO. Worker training, worker retraining, apprenticeship programs, skills development, childcare, so that families can comfortably go to work and know that their children are in good stead. We have many households that are headed by single-parent moms. We have many households that have both members of the household, couples, having full-time jobs.

It is a different economy. These are different times. We need to adjust. We need to invest in America and into her people, and that is what this measure is about.

I am also involved with the offshore wind industry. And making certain that my district, hundreds of miles away from any offshore wind project, is going to have many jobs because we are going to be building foundations. We are going to be building tower components. We are going to be building the ancillary pieces that are a part of it. We may be building some of the turbine blades that are then installed in the offshore capacity along the eastern network where everyone is going to prosper from this. And we are going to clean the environment, which is a demand of the generations behind us and those yet to be born.

They have the right to demand clean air; to have made clean the air they breathe; and make safe the water they drink. It is a mission that is justified, and we need to be part of that justification.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I thank Representative TONKO. We have an engineer on his toes here this evening who has picked up on a lot of the points that have been made previously.

For example, Representative MARY GAY SCANLON and Representative TONKO both brought up the similarity between expanding broadband internet access to all of the rural places and all the nooks and crannies and hollers in this country. The similarity between doing that and enacting the Rural Electrification Act 80 years ago by President Franklin Roosevelt, if we hadn't done that so many people would have been left behind, literally, in the dark.

If we don't do this, we are going to leave Americans behind in the quest for knowledge and keeping up in the modern economy by use of high-speed broadband internet.

Another thing Representative TONKO just mentioned, Madam Speaker, is about filling jobs. I represent northeastern Pennsylvania, and I talk to employers a lot, employers of manufacturing jobs, employers of retail and restaurant jobs, and the lament has been constant. With manufacturing jobs, it predated the pandemic, it was that we can't find people trained-up to do our work. We can't find people who know how to run CNC machines, the modern version of the lathe, to manufacture parts in their businesses.

The Build Back Better Act includes a lot of money for workforce development. It is a big favor being done for employers, for companies that do manufacturing work; but it goes beyond that. As Representative TONKO just mentioned, there are so many families, single-parent families, where either the mom or the dad, probably predominantly the mom, is home watching kids and doesn't have options for childcare or for pre-K that would enable them to go out and go back to

work. That is what we are seeing right now after the pandemic.

In fact, we have Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, in my district, and the chief executive officer of the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Commerce did a survey and touched on the very point Representative TONKO just made. The survey showed that of the people who took themselves out of the workforce because of the pandemic, in restaurant and retail jobs, of those people, 54 percent of those who have not gone back have not gone back because they are watching kids at home because of the scarcity of options for childcare.

Remember, when you are working in a restaurant or retail, if you are bussing tables, you are not making enough money to hire a nanny. You are not making enough money to get the top option in daycare. That is why the Build Back Better Act comes in handy.

What it does is—above all, remember this—it does a favor for those small businesses, those employers that are trying to fill those jobs that are open and are going begging for people to come fill them. The Build Back Better plan, by establishing universal pre-K and also beefing up childcare options, gives those parents the ability to go back to work and fill those jobs and power our economy.

What do you think, Representative TONKO?

Mr. TONKO. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. TONKO. Representative CARTWRIGHT mentioned, Madam Speaker, the strength of manufacturing and growing our manufacturing jobs. The pandemic alerted us to a supply chain crisis. The Build Back Better Act speaks to addressing the shortages that we had for manufacturing. Supply shortages. That is critical.

We also combined the efforts for manufacturing to be more profitable and provide more jobs by addressing retrofitting manufacturing, so it is energy-smarter as an outcome.

Now, we know we have a very robust plan, a goal that is very robust by the year 2050 to have net-zero greenhouse gas emissions. If we are going to achieve that, we have to reach to every sector of the economy in order to attain those goals; so we need to look to manufacturing.

Retrofitting manufacturing, making certain it is energy-smart, making certain it can compete in a global marketplace with all the tools at their fingertips is an important standard that is established in the Build Back Better Act.

So the President says we are at an inflection point. I couldn't agree more. We are now in a focus mode where we are going to determine the best outcomes by combining legislation and resources that will speak to the most forceful, sharpest competitive edge for our business community, for our manufacturing base to address our supply chain, to hold down energy costs, reduce costs, reduce the tax burden on households, and provide a vision that will get us to where we need to be.

It is about time that we had this sort of leadership; not just reducing programs, cutting down government, not seeing the effectiveness of sound government. Now we have a leader who understands the public-private partnership—business working with government—to address the needs of those businesses, their workers, worker training, and having the resources to be robustly competitive so that we grow a more fair, more just, more robust, and a more sustainable economy. It is a powerful opportunity.

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Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I thank Representative TONKO. The gentleman has repeated the word ''competitive'' about three times just now, and I couldn't think of a more appropriate word because, Madam Speaker, it is a tough world out there. We Americans may think the world owes us a living, but it doesn't. We have to get out there and compete. Our businesses have to compete, and our people have to compete.

We have to be at the top of our game to win and keep those jobs and make sure they don't go to Europe or Russia or China. Those countries are investing in themselves. They are building fast railroads; they are building their roads and bridges; and they are investing in high-speed internet—all of these things. As a result, we had better be at the top of our game.

That is what we do with the Build Back Better Act and these infrastructure investments.

Now, I have talked about jobs and tax cuts, but cutting costs for American families has to be covered as well. As Representative TONKO mentioned, this bill will save most families more than half their spending on childcare and deliver free pre-K for every 3- and 4-year-old in America, as we talked about. That will free up moms and dads to go to work. It will also provide money for senior care.

There are a lot of folks at home who can't leave the house because they are taking care of an elder at home. That is another thing that these bills help.

Just think about what it means to a working family in northeastern Pennsylvania or anywhere else in this country that they can be freed up to go back to work and fill jobs that are going begging right now. It means parents can go to work and fuel our economy knowing their kids or their elderly parents are taken care of. That is good for our entire economy.

Now, we know that eldercare and childcare isn't the only thing keeping parents up late at night. It is about making ends meet and making sure they can afford good healthcare coverage. These bills beef up the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to the point where we almost have universal healthcare in this country. That is so good because it keeps our hospitals afloat.

Madam Speaker, do you know what happened in Pennsylvania before we got the expansion of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act? We started losing rural hospitals. Madam Speaker, it is no longer a theoretical thing. When your hospital isn't there because it went under, your actual healthcare suffered, not your coverage. Your chances of making it if you had a heart attack or a stroke go way, way down if the local hospitals are not financially sound and robust.

This will lower healthcare costs by strengthening the Affordable Care Act. It is a very important part of this bill.

Madam Speaker, maybe the most important thing that people miss about these bills that we are working on right now: The Build Back Better Act is paid for. It is fully paid for by making sure that the ultra-wealthy and corporations pay their fair share. It will not add to the deficit, and no one making less than $400,000 a year will pay a penny more in taxes. In fact, working families are going to see their taxes cut because Build Back Better rewards work and not wealth.

This contrast is worth repeating, Madam Speaker. When Democrats control the Congress, we cut taxes for working people. When Republicans do, they cut taxes for millionaires and corporations. No more.

As the President often says, for far too long, this economy has worked great for those at the top while hard-working Americans who built this country have been cut out of the deal. Democrats are dealing working people back into the deal by building an economy that gives them a fair shot. We are going to make sure it is paid for by asking the ultra-wealthy to pay their fair share. It is only right.

Madam Speaker, it is so important that we pass these bills. Representative TONKO has spent some considerable time talking about the importance of rebuilding, maintaining, and expanding our bricks-and-mortar infrastructure. That is so important. These are assets that were passed down to us from the Greatest Generation.

Who are we to think that we don't have to maintain them, take care of them, expand them, make them better, and make them work for a modern economy and all the needs that American workers and businesses have to stay competitive in the world?

I say let's pass these bills, let's get the job done, and let's fulfill the vision for the American workers, the American people, and our entire Nation.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. Madam Speaker, I will also cite the fact that some of the greatest looking institutional buildings in our districts are from the FDR era: libraries that speak significantly to the cityscapes, institutional settings, schools that really laid out an

image of importance to children of how great education is. We have been taught by generations before us that there should be a commitment to people across this country, especially children, to invest in our tomorrows.

How dare we just pass by and cut everything and not help build?

We are hurting ourselves by not investing in those resources that will get us to a stronger economy, research money that will be part of the $555 billion that is part of the investment in climate change, the response to climate change. It is much stronger than that, but there in the Build Back Better Act is the opportunity to advance that effort.

Now, that will include a number of jobs in the trades, installing a lot of the renewable energy and innovative concepts, retrofitting manufacturing and the like. But then there are going to be the white collar jobs as engineers and planners go to work on investing in the newness of discovery. That will come with many people working in labs and research centers who will get us to a stronger outcome.

Where there is no vision, the people shall perish. We learn that when we open our Book. That should speak to us. It is important for us to have a boldness of vision that will take an investment but certainly render lucrative dividends for the people in this moment and those generations that will follow us.

Let them look 100 years from now at this moment and say they got it; they invested; they received great assets from those before them; and they saw that they had to do likewise and contribute to the tomorrows that that group will enjoy 100 years out and beyond.

This is our moment to really shine.

The gentleman talked about the fact that this effort is paid for. That is a good balance that we bring into the House. We tell people that we balanced it so that there is a payment mechanism for all that we choose to do. That was not the case with the huge tax cut of 2016. They expected a trickle-down and that it would pay for itself.

What did we see happening to the deficit? It bloated from that tax cut.

Then, Madam Speaker, you will hear debate on this floor about raising the debt ceiling so that America can pay her bills. What was their message? They want this money so they can spend more.

No, we are paying the dollars off that you incurred as bills when you were President and you were the Republican leadership in this House. That is paying for bills that came from the last several years. This payment mechanism will make certain we go forward with an investment in America that is paid for and that will reach the great many of us, the great middle-income community.

The strength of America lies in her middle class, and the strength of the middle class lies in union jobs, which is part of this package. Thanks to our partners in unionized labor, union labor, they have worked with us to develop a blueprint for a sounder tomorrow.

Let's get aboard. Let's get this done. Let's go forward and show people that America is strong and that she is at her best when she embraces that pioneer spirit that I saw when I mentioned the Erie Canal. There has always been that pioneer spirit within us. It is part of our DNA.

How dare we deny it as we come together in this crucial moment where we are asked to come up with a response to a global economy, where it is not the U.S. running the entire economy of the world, where we have to compete and compete effectively, and where we give the people of this country the dignity of work where they can earn a great and fair check so they can support their families, pay for the roof over their head, set some money aside, and enable their children to enjoy that future set-aside?

That is what this is about. This is speaking to America, her families, and those in need. It will result in a stronger and healthier workforce and one that has a sense of hope. If we can deliver the commodity of hope to the doorsteps of Americans, we will have achieved.

So, Madam Speaker, I thank President Biden; I thank the leadership in the House; and I thank Representative CARTWRIGHT for leading us this evening in this great discussion.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman TONKO for his comments.

Madam Speaker, you can tell when you get Congressman TONKO, a guy from Amsterdam, New York, revved up about the Erie Canal, he is going to give you a good speech. A good speech is what we need to be doing right now because we have to have people understand the importance of passing the infrastructure bill and the Build Back Better Act, and passing them together because they fulfill the vision not only of President Biden but a vision that we have all been waiting for for the longest time.

Representative TONKO and I have been serving our entire time in Congress—for me, 9 years; for the gentleman, 13 years—waiting for infrastructure to happen.

Representative MARY GAY SCANLON spoke earlier tonight about all the infrastructure weeks we had under the past administration. We had infrastructure week after infrastructure week. She said that as a joke because it never happened. We just labeled weeks ''infrastructure week,'' and nobody did anything about it under the Republican administration.

We are here to say President Biden and the current Democratic majority in the House are going to deliver for the people on the vision of infrastructure and making our economy and our American people competitive on the world stage.

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

HONORING AMERICA'S BELOVED VETERANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BERGMAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. BERGMAN. Madam Speaker, I am proud and honored to host today's Special Order in light of Veterans Day being just around the corner on November 11.

Here in D.C. and back home in Michigan, I stay closely connected with all my fellow veterans, and I can tell you this: From the Afghanistan debacle to lingering backlogs at the VA, it has not been an easy year for veterans and their families.

But I want to remind you all, veterans, you are not alone. We are here with you; we are listening; and we are working through the difficult times to get things done. You are going to hear today from many of my colleagues who not only share this feeling but want to remind you that we are working every day on your behalf, not for any political reason but because we strive to thank you and honor you for your service to our Nation.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST), who is my friend, colleague, and fellow marine.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. General BERGMAN is doing a great job.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to join my friends and fellow veterans here today to honor the generations of men and women who have served this great Nation. From the Greatest Generation of veterans to the youngest generation of veterans, we are undeniably lucky to have men and women who are willing to lay down their lives for others.

This Veterans Day comes exactly 2 months after the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 terror attacks.

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In that sense, it is an even more poignant reminder than usual of the sacrifices veterans have made so that we can be free. For 20 years, soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, guardsmen, reservists, and Special Forces units, in and around Afghanistan prevented another terrorist attack on the homeland. For 20 years, they made the world safer. For 20 years, they gave the Afghanistan people a taste of freedom; the freedom for Afghan women and girls to pursue education and a career; the freedom to play sports, the freedom to be Christian; the freedom to live without oppression and terror.

Like generations of veterans before them, they spent days, months, and years thousands of miles from home. They missed births, birthdays, weddings, funerals, anniversaries and holidays. They protected those they will