

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent Bryan and his family in our Nation's capital.

God bless Bryan, my dear friend. Congrats, and go West Texas.

BUILD BACK BETTER ACT

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

Ms. ESCOBAR. Mr. Speaker, Congressional Democrats have been focused on working with President Biden to deliver long overdue investments for the American people and for our future.

We started earlier this year with the American Jobs Act, which got critical resources, including vaccines, into our communities and put money in people's pockets. We helped struggling businesses and schools, and we did so much more.

Now, we are on the cusp of passing two bills that will enormously improve the lives of all Americans, the Build Back Better Act and the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. These two bills together will rebuild America's aging and failing infrastructure, create jobs, cut taxes and lower costs for families, protect and recognize the contributions of immigrants, tackle the climate crisis, and so much more.

Mr. Speaker, my district of El Paso, Texas, has long suffered from chronic poverty due to lack of access to many resources and economic opportunities.

On healthcare, my State of Texas has the highest rate of uninsured residents in the Nation. In my community of El Paso, a quarter of my residents have absolutely no health insurance whatsoever.

On climate, El Paso has seen the second highest increase in average temperatures over the past 45 years with the number of 100-degree days predicted to double.

On family care, nearly half of the people, 48 percent of the people, live in a childcare desert with no access to childcare whatsoever.

On education, in my State of Texas your education and the amount of money invested in K-12 kids depends on your ZIP Code and where you live.

The historic investments that we will be making with both of these bills will strengthen healthcare access to Texas families by expanding Medicare coverage for those who have been denied. They will protect our communities from the consequences of the climate crisis by helping us lower emissions, advancing a clean energy economy, and advancing environmental justice.

These bills will support families with the child tax credit, which will benefit 173,000 children in El Paso alone, in addition to the investments in childcare, home healthcare, paid family and medical leave, workforce development, and universal pre-K, which is probably the best predictor for school success and for kids who end up going to college.

My community needs that. My kids in El Paso deserve that.

Americans everywhere need this health and support, and they need it now. These investments are fully paid for. They will not add to the deficit, and because these expenditures represent less than one percent of our GDP over the next decade, and because they are paid for in part by making corporations and the wealthiest Americans pay their fair share, the Build Back Better Act will not increase inflation.

I am so proud to have played a role in crafting these bills. I am so proud to advance them and ensure that they uplift El Paso families, improve our economy, and help save our planet.

RECOGNIZING BILL WOMACK, WORLD WAR II HERO

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

Mr. PFLUGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in advance of Veterans Day, to take a moment for our country, to take a moment and to thank those who have served. You are going to see some faces on here, and I am just going to highlight five individuals from my district in West Texas, amongst the thousands who have offered to serve. Many of these are part of the Greatest Generation and this is the greatest country in the world, and it is because of their sacrifices.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a World War II hero, Mr. Bill Womack of Midland, Texas, who celebrated his 100th birthday this year. Mr. Womack joined the National Guard immediately after graduating high school. And after the Pearl Harbor bombing, Mr. Womack became an artilleryman stationed in North Africa and Europe.

Bill is one of the legendary Texas Liberators, a group of 488 Texans who fought against the Nazi regime to liberate Jewish prisoners. He was among the group of heroes who first breached the concentration camp, Dachau, and helped bring World War II prisoners to safety.

Countless lives were saved because of the efforts and the selflessness of Mr. Womack.

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RECOGNIZING PHIL GEORGE

Mr. PFLUGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight a hero of mine, Mr. Phil George, of San Angelo, Texas, a distinguished veteran and university basketball coach.

Mr. George is a legend in my hometown of San Angelo. He is a veteran of not only World War II and Korea, but also of Vietnam where he spent years as an incredibly talented fighter pilot.

When our Nation called, he answered, multiple times. I cannot overstate the sacrifices that he made both professionally and also in his community after his service in the military. Not only is he a hero, but he is also a mentor to so many.

He leaves a legacy in San Angelo to this day of the selfless ability to lead others, to motivate others, to a life of service. His stories are incredible. His faith in God is palpable, and his love for his late wife, Toddy, and his entire family, are inspiring.

In addition to his record of service, he has an incredible record as a basketball coach and athletic director at Angelo State University.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. George for his service to this Nation.

RECOGNIZING MAYNARD SCHWERTNER

Mr. PFLUGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mr. Maynard Schwertner, a Vietnam veteran who spent his entire life in the service of this country, both in Vietnam and back at home.

As a well driller in Vietnam, Mr. Schwertner spent his time providing clean water for civilians and the military. Back at home, Mr. Schwertner has dedicated his life to serving fellow veterans, and that includes helping establish Vietnam veterans chapters, memorials, and support groups in San Angelo, Texas. He is a distinguished member of the community who lives a life dedicated to supporting our Nation and our Armed Forces.

RECOGNIZING GILBERTO TORRES

Mr. PFLUGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mr. Gilberto Torres for his service in World War II. Gilberto was part of the second wave of the D-day invasion of Normandy, the legendary amphibious invasion that turned the tide of the war and led the allies to liberate Europe.

Tragically, when trekking through war-torn Europe, Gilberto was fired upon and struck by enemy machine guns. He survived his injuries and was honorably discharged, but not before earning many medals for his heroism and his bravery, including the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star Medal, and many more. He is in his 90s today and he hopes to visit Normandy. I hope he can do that.

RECOGNIZING J.L. STEVENS

Mr. PFLUGER. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Mr. J.L. Stevens, a west Texan, a World War II veteran who also took part in both the Normandy invasion on D-day and the invasion of Okinawa.

His service to this country was inspired at the age of 17 as he enlisted in the Navy with the desire to follow in the footsteps of his brother. Stevens' sacrifice helped create a safer world for his two daughters, his six grandchildren, and his 12 great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for us to recognize the service of all of these servicemembers as we approach Veterans Day. These are just a few stories, among many, bipartisan in all of our districts. My hope is that this country can look to the service of these, many of whom are part of the greatest generation, and we can realize that this is the greatest country in the world, but it is not without sacrifice.

It is these folks and it is their families' sacrifice who brought us together. Once again, I believe that going forward, veterans just like these will continue to bring us together. It is my challenge to everybody in this body and all across the United States that we recognize our veterans' service and their families' sacrifices as we approach Veterans Day.

BUILD BACK BETTER AGENDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, we stand on a precipice in which shortly we are about to deliver truly a once-in-a-generation piece of legislation; action that will lower the everyday costs that burden working families in my district in Pennsylvania and throughout the Nation—from healthcare to childcare and more—and fully paid for by making corporations and the richest 1/10 of 1 percent pay their fair share.

Here is what it does: First, lower healthcare costs: negotiating lower drug costs for seniors; halting Big Pharma's outrageous price hikes well above inflation; and expanding the Affordable Care Act to make coverage more affordable for those who buy their own insurance.

Second, lower childcare and family care costs: expanding the basic promise of free schooling in America for the first time in a century with universal preschool for all 3- and 4-year-olds. This is so critical. In my State, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, only 16 percent of 3- and 4-year-olds have access to universal pre-K. It also will slash families' childcare costs; extend the landmark Biden Child Tax Credit, which has helped reduce child poverty in this country this year by 50 percent; and will expand access to affordable home care for older adults and those with disabilities.

Third, we are talking about the largest investment to combat the climate crisis in our Nation's history: cutting pollution; reducing energy costs; creating good-paying jobs with a transformational investment to ensure America leads the worldwide clean energy economy.

Why would we want China to take the lead on that? They are already investing a ton of money in clean energy. It is time for the United States to catch up and take the lead. We are the number one country, but in order to remain the number one country, we have to get with it when it comes to where the jobs will be in this century.

The Build Back Better Act lowers costs and fights inflation because—and I hope everyone hears this—it is fully 100 percent paid for. Not one person who makes under \$400,000 a year will pay one extra dime in taxes, not one. In fact, many, especially those families with children, will see their taxes go down.

Mr. Speaker, I want to paraphrase—and I hope I have the quote exactly right; I am going on memory. I remember when I was growing up in Pennsylvania some decades ago in the 1980s, our Governor was Bob Casey, Sr., a legendary figure in Pennsylvania politics.

He once said: What did you do when you had the power? That is a question that will be asked of all public servants. What did you do to help people when you had the power? That is what the Build Back Better Act is about, answering that question; delivering in all of these measures that I just cited.

Once this passes the House, passes the Senate, and is signed into law, it will truly be the most important domestic bill in my lifetime. It will help ordinary people, from the Second Congressional District of Pennsylvania, to all 435 congressional districts in this Nation. Working families deserve it.

Look at how hard it is today to achieve the American Dream. We know, based on statistics, that working families and middle class families are struggling out there. Yes, the unemployment rate is coming down. We are in such a better position right now than where we were a year ago. Every single statistic supports that. It is not enough. We need to build back and we need to build back better.

TRILLIONS OF DOLLARS REMAIN UNSPENT

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

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, right now, as our country continues to suffer from the negative effects of the Democrats' previous reckless spending spree, it is clear that we do not yet need another reckless spending bill that would further balloon our debt and raise all inflation without actually addressing the issues that we are currently facing.

Congress has already appropriated trillions of dollars that has not yet been spent. Again, trillions of dollars remain unspent. Instead of passing yet another trillion-dollar spending bill, of which only 10 percent would actually go to true infrastructure, we can repurpose those earlier funds to meet the needs of our communities.

I am proud to be joining my colleagues as a cosponsor of legislation that would use the money that Congress has already approved to truly help the communities that we serve; legislation that has already been passed by our colleagues in the Senate.

Now is not the time to waste money on taxpayer-funded kickbacks to green energy companies or spend \$50 million to monitor coastal erosion. We need to fund infrastructure improvements that our communities need. We need to do so without mortgaging our children's future.

We were elected to be responsible stewards of the taxpayers' dollars, and

passing the Green New Deal dressed up as infrastructure is not the way forward.

BUILD BACK BETTER AGENDA

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

Ms. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the urgent need to pass the Build Back Better agenda, a transformational package that will help individuals and working families across North Carolina.

This bold legislation will bring down the high costs that have held families back for decades by making childcare, home care, education, healthcare, and housing more affordable. This is a package for the people—all the people—and it spans generations, providing support to infants, students, working adults, and older Americans.

Right now, the average annual cost for a child in North Carolina to attend a childcare center is nearly \$9,000. The average North Carolina family with two young children spends more than 20 percent of their annual income on childcare. That is unacceptable. For kids to thrive and for parents to excel in the workplace, we need quality, affordable childcare.

I have a constituent from Cary, North Carolina, named Katy, she works at a nonprofit and has a 1-year-old child. She told me this:

Becoming a mom has opened my eyes to how broken our Nation's childcare system is.

We felt lucky to find a spot for my child at a high-quality childcare program, but the cost was shocking. We pay more than \$800 a month for my son's care.

At the same time, the director and teachers at my son's program likely don't make a living wage.

They're doing one of the most important jobs in the world, helping raise the next generation. Why aren't they compensated fairly?

Childcare providers shouldn't have to work second jobs on the weekends to feed their families, but many do.

At the same time, parents can't shoulder the burden.

In fact, the extremely high cost of childcare is a major factor for my family as we decide to have a second child.

Katy's story is so common. If we claim to value our children and our families, we need to stop turning a blind eye to the exploding costs of childcare. We can do better.

That is why the Build Back Better Act will provide universal pre-K for all 3- and 4-year-olds and limit childcare costs for working families to no more than 7 percent of their income.

Mr. Speaker, we also need to do more for our seniors and their loved ones. Every American should be able to look forward to a comfortable, secure retirement. Our seniors should not have to worry about financially burdening their children and their grandchildren.

In my family, my father-in-law wanted to stay in the home he loved, and he did until he was 98 years old. We found