

I got this job only 7 years ago. At the time, 47,000 people a year died of drug overdoses. By comparison, in 12 years during the Vietnam war, 57,000 people died. And every politician was supposed to talk about it. Now we shoot up from 47,000 to 100,000 people, and President Biden can't even bring himself to talk about fentanyl, the drug responsible for most of those deaths.

I don't know why he wouldn't talk about fentanyl. My guess is because overwhelmingly it is coming across the southern border, and he doesn't want to do anything about the southern border. However, I would hope in the future, President Biden would meet with law enforcement around the country, find out what it is like to have to tell the parents or siblings or children of the people who have died that their relative has died. That is a horrible thing.

And I think to gloss over the 100,000 deaths we have every year in this country—twice the number of people who died in the 12 years in Vietnam—was I thought very callous. But, again, I would encourage President Biden to ask members of his administration to get out and about a little bit, talk to relatives of people who have died of drug overdoses, particularly fentanyl, and maybe it will cause him to devote a little bit more time on that in next year's State of the Union address when he realizes what a horrible situation we have.

There are many other things that I don't think were addressed accurately or in depth during the State of the Union address that should have been.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. GROTHMAN. That was well said. There is lot. We know you can go all night because there was a lot to complain about.

Madam Speaker, tonight you have heard the response of so many of my Republican colleagues to the lackluster State of the Union address that was held here last evening. Perhaps the most glaring problem with his speech is that the President tried to ignore the fact that it is his lack of leadership that is what has created this dangerous situation that we are all in right now. All the crises you have heard about, the American people know the facts.

I grew up in the seventies and eighties. I was a child of the Reagan era, and we remember in the Cold War he reminded us we maintain the peace through our strength. What he communicated to us so clearly is weakness invites aggression. We have projected weakness on the world stage, and it is inviting Russian aggression. We pray and hope that we do not get a similar aggression from our other adversaries like China, North Korea, Iran, and the rest.

The only thing holding back terrorists and tyrants and dictators and rogue operators around the globe is their perception of a strong America. That is what we stand for. We wish we could have heard that from the President in a more honest tone last night, but we didn't get it.

So we are here. We are going to continue to work on this side of the aisle to fix these problems, and we look forward to the election cycle this fall where we believe the fortunes around here are going to change pretty substantially.

Madam Speaker, I thank my colleagues for being here tonight, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

CONGRESS MUST UNIFY AND STAND FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, last evening the President of the United States was strong, and he was clear to stay away from divisive rhetoric. But do my friends on the other side of the aisle realize that anything that has not been accomplished is because they have been obstructionists?

The Wall Street Journal says that the President and his American Rescue Plan has led to less damage, and it is the biggest and best recovery, at least in the past 50 years. It has had the least economic impact in terms of long-term unemployment, weak labor markers, inexperienced workers, evictions and foreclosures. President Biden's American Rescue Plan has led to less of that than any recovery in the last 50 years.

We know that in Ukraine it is a disaster. People are dying. It is Putin's war, but the President has brought NATO together.

And, yes, if we could pass Build Back Better, which they have obstructed, we would be able to have childcare for all of America.

So I wanted to just, for this one moment, get on the floor to say in all that they have said, why don't they take the call of the President? Let's unify and stand for the American people. Stop complaining, and let's get to work. President Biden called us to work as a strong America.

FULL EQUALITY FOR PUERTO RICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Puerto Rico (Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, I rise today joined by a good group of colleagues and legislators here in the House to commemorate the 105th anniversary of granting U.S. citizenship to the people of Puerto Rico and to reaffirm our commitment to full equality for the island's two million Americans, which can only be achieved through statehood.

Many people will ask how long has Puerto Rico been part of the United States? Before the Spanish-American War, Puerto Rico was part of Spain. After the Spanish-American War we became a possession, a territory of the United States in 1898.

In 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt called on Congress to confer American citizenship to Puerto Ricans. Legislation was introduced to that effect between 1912 and 1913, which was supported by President William Howard Taft and then the Wilson administration. President Wilson had even campaigned in 1912 on a promise to ensure U.S. citizenship for Puerto Ricans.

On this day, March 2nd, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Jones-Shafroth Act, which extended statutory U.S. citizenship to the residents of the island.

The Jones-Shafroth Act would not be the last time Congress acted on a question of citizenship. In 1940, the Nationality Act conferred birthright citizenship to persons born in Puerto Rico.

The signing of the 1917 law cemented our relationship as an integral part of the United States.

For 150 years, Puerto Ricans have been proud American citizens, and we have contributed greatly to this country in every field of endeavor. We even have Supreme Court judges, a lot of entrepreneurs, and many others in many areas. We proudly uphold and defend the ideals that define our Nation, including more than 235,000 Puerto Ricans who have honorably served in the U.S. Armed Forces fighting side-by-side with our fellow citizens from the States.

Yet, despite our contributions, despite a longstanding commitment to the values that come with being an American citizen, the reality is that we are still not equal. That is the reality of Puerto Ricans every day. And then you have 3.2 million Americans living on the island and more than 5 million living on the mainland. That tells you that because of the current territorial status, Americans in Puerto Rico lack full voting representation in this Congress.

For example, I can represent people on this floor, but I cannot vote here for any measure that affects my island.

□ 1845

I do the job of at least four Members of Congress. We do not have Senators that can be the voice of Puerto Rico because they are not elected on the island. Yet, we need to apply all Federal laws to the island but without having a say or a vote on each of them.

Our people cannot vote for our President, our Commander in Chief, and we have no say in the Federal decision-making process, which impacts every aspect of our lives.

Even though we are U.S. citizens and the Federal Government can and often does treat the island unequally under Federal laws and programs, and while it is true that Congress could pass legislation today to address some of those disparities, it is similarly true that any future Congress could undo such efforts.

When you revise our Constitution, specifically, the territorial clause of the U.S. Constitution, Article IV, Section 3, it says specifically that: "The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States."

Yet, we are the most powerful Nation on Earth still having a colony in the Caribbean for more than 105 years.

That is the reason. Because we are a territory, we will be always at Congress' mercy. As a territory, we will never truly enjoy the same rights and responsibilities as our fellow citizens in the States.

Only statehood can guarantee our full equality as U.S. citizens. That is why the people of Puerto Rico have voted to reject the current territorial status, not once, not twice, three times in a row. To be admitted as a State of the Union, most recently in November 2020 when a clear majority, an absolute majority of the people, 73 percent of the people who voted in that election, of those 73 percent of the people who voted, 53 percent voted for statehood. That is an absolute majority.

You don't have any delegates. You don't have any mail. This is direct votes, in-person votes of the people of the island asking for statehood. Even statehood got more votes than any politician on the island. Statehood got more votes than any political party on the island. That means that is the biggest consensus ever on the island, three times in a row.

As we commemorate the 105th anniversary of our American citizenship, it is crucial that Congress act to end Puerto Rico's undemocratic territorial status and to respond to a vote for equality through statehood.

I am proud to have partnered with Congressman DARREN SOTO, our brother from Florida, to introduce bipartisan legislation to achieve this using H.R. 1522, the Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act, that will make a formal offer of statehood.

Never before has Congress even asked the people of Puerto Rico whether we want to continue as a territorial colonial status or we want to achieve statehood or independence.

This will be the first time ever this question will be made to the people on the island coming from Congress in a binding process—same thing happened in Hawaii, same thing happened in

Alaska. They were asked the simple question: Do you want to become a State of the Union, yes or no?

That same question was a referendum we held locally in Puerto Rico by the local laws with that majority.

To say that, this bill will make a formal offer of statehood, outlining a clear process to enable the island's admission into the Union, should it be ratified by Puerto Rican voters in a federally sponsored yes-or-no referendum.

Having said that, I think it is time. It is long overdue that we resolve the Puerto Rican unfinished democracy business.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOTO), our main sponsor on the Democrat side.

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, I thank the Resident Commissioner.

Madam Speaker, here is my partner in equality in the Resident Commissioner JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. And she is not the only one. Florida is in the House tonight in support of you—Representative DEMINGS, Representative WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Representative SALAZAR. We are all here to support our brothers and sisters back in my family's native island.

This is a little bit about history today, 105 years of citizenship. You know, I checked on ancestry.com, and the roots of my family back in Puerto Rico go back way further than they could ever tell—on the Soto side and on the Casanova side—with a few coming in the mid-1800s from the Canary Islands, but the rest back further than you can uncover through the internet.

When Teddy Roosevelt comes up on that San Juan Hill and you have the Spanish-American War, my relatives, my ancestors, were already there for an unknown and distant amount of time.

I also see Representative WILD. Representative WILD, thank you for being here as well from Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania is in the House.

When I think about the turn of the 20th century, my ancestors, some of whom I got to meet, like my great-grandmother, Altagracia Casanova, who still farmed by the time I was a little kid in Sabana Hoyos in Puerto Rico, they became citizens by statute. Then my great-grandparents, they had draft cards. They went and served in World War I. The first shots of World War I were fired off the coast of San Juan as the Germans attempted to enter the Caribbean.

From there, we saw my grandparents stationed in places in the Caribbean in South America during World War II. We know of the great, famed Borinqueneers serving in all of those wars together, as well as Korea.

This citizenship has been earned, encouraged, and in blood, in contributions in science and art and manufacturing and in so many other ways that have made this such a great United States of America.

But it is the recent history that I am most concerned about. After the 936 ex-

emption ended, my family moved to central Florida from Puerto Rico. They were worried about the economic climate. They moved to central Florida for economic opportunity. My family up north, where I was raised, we soon followed and found ourselves in central Florida.

We don't want people to have to be forced to relocate because they are worried about economic prosperity. That is already in our family history as well.

Then you look at after that recession coming in, then PROMESA, austerity measures, that would never happen to a State. The types of cuts to government, the type of attack on sovereignty was terrible. We have many pensioners who served as civil servants in Puerto Rico who now live in central Florida, places like Representative DEMINGS' and my districts and, I have no doubt, in south Florida and WASSERMAN SCHULTZ' and SALAZAR's districts as well. So it affects us directly and indirectly.

Then we see, on top of that, Hurricane Maria. What devastation, the highest death toll of any natural disaster in modern American history. We see how important it is to have representation and how important it is to have fair treatment.

Then it has been the latest battles over these last couple of years. You and I have fought together, along with our allies here, on everything from food assistance to Medicaid to finally getting Puerto Rico treated equally in the American Rescue Plan, to finally getting the people of Puerto Rico treated equally in infrastructure.

But those battles will continue if we do not resolve the territorial status. That is why I was honored to co-introduce our bill, together with our friends, to admit Puerto Rico as a State, after a binding plebiscite, of course.

I feel very good about where we are headed, to a bipartisan vote on the floor and putting forward a bill that the Senators can vote for.

This is about making sure, as we see tyranny attacks of democracy versus autocracy in Ukraine and, frankly, in so many places around the Caribbean, Central and South America, this is where we can take a stand in the Caribbean for democracy and give our brothers and sisters back on the island the opportunity to forge your own destinies, and your Florida Rican brothers and sisters are with you.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, I say thank you to our main sponsor. I will say, I don't have the vote here in the House so I depend on all Members of the House to support Puerto Rico in many ways.

In that sense, I will be always grateful, DARREN, for your commitment and your help.

Madam Speaker, I recognize now a dear friend from Florida as well who is here.

Before recognizing her, I recognize a former Member of the House and current Governor of Puerto Rico. Pedro

Pierluisi is here on the floor of the House. Thank you, Governor, for supporting this.

Madam Speaker, this is a bipartisan issue. You won't find any other bill that will have bipartisan support. This is not a Republican issue. This is not a Democratic issue. This is the cost of equal rights. This is civil rights. This is democracy.

Madam Speaker, I cannot find a better person to speak about that than my good friend from Miami, Congresswoman SALAZAR.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. SALAZAR).

Ms. SALAZAR. Madam Speaker, I thank the Resident Commissioner.

Madam Speaker, for over 120 years, Puerto Rico, as we have said here, has enriched the United States with its culture and its people.

The beautiful island of Puerto Rico that I know so well is the jewel of the Caribbean. Millions of Americans have flocked to its beaches and rainforests to soak in the incredible natural beauty of the island of Puerto Rico.

With that background, 105 years ago, as we have heard before, Puerto Ricans became citizens of this great country, the United States. Puerto Ricans are true Americans and true patriots because over 35,000 of them currently serve in the United States Armed Forces.

Madam Speaker, 235,000 Puerto Ricans are veterans who have served alongside their fellow countrymen from the mainland, from the beaches of Normandy to the Mekong Delta. Its people, the Puerto Ricans, have made the ultimate sacrifice in the name of freedom and in the name of the United States of America.

I should say that Puerto Rico holds a very special place in my heart because after my parents fled Castro's Cuba, my family found refuge in San Juan, the capital of the island of Puerto Rico. Because of that decision, I spent a fantastic childhood in the island because we went to live in paradise in the 1960s.

It was in Puerto Rico where I first learned about American values. It was in Puerto Rico where I learned the meaning behind the American flag and the central value of freedom and liberty.

Puerto Ricans received the Cuban exile community with open arms. That is why today I take this opportunity from the floor of the United States Congress, as a Congresswoman for the city of Miami, the heart of the Cuban exile community in the United States. I thank the Puerto Ricans for their noble act of welcoming millions and millions of Cubans to the island and giving them the possibility of living in freedom, in peace, and living in paradise.

Puerto Ricans have welcomed people from around the world to visit paradise and the Caribbean on American soil, the best of both worlds. Today, Puerto Ricans are American ambassadors,

showing the beauty and diversity of our great country to the rest of the world.

For that reason, I thank my very good friend, mi amiga, Resident Commissioner JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, for her leadership on this floor. She is a relentless champion for the island's future, for what the island deserves, and for what we need to see for the future of Puerto Rico.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Thank you, Maria Elvira. You touched my heart with those words.

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

Ms. WILD. Madam Speaker, I am proud to rise today on behalf of the more than 80,000 Puerto Rican constituents who call my district, Pennsylvania's Greater Lehigh Valley, home.

My community would not be what it is without the contributions of the Puerto Rican community. The United States would not be what it is without the contributions of this community. Every aspect of our national legacy, our cultural and artistic heritage, our groundbreaking discoveries in science and technology, the dynamism of our economy, and the strength of our Armed Forces has been shaped indelibly by these fellow citizens.

□ 1900

And yet despite their service, residents of the island cannot vote for the Commander in Chief. They lack voting representation in Congress. And despite paying into programs like Medicare and Medicaid, they do not have equitable coverage under these programs.

I am here to deliver a clear message. As United States citizens, the people of Puerto Rico have the right to full representation in their government. This is a principle at the very core of our Nation's founding. It should not be controversial, and, in fact, it is widely accepted among Americans of both political parties.

In fact, my colleague who has gathered us all here today and who has introduced the Puerto Rico Statehood Admission Act is a Republican. Thank you for having me. Today, the 105th anniversary of the date when the people of Puerto Rico became United States citizens must mark the moment when we finally begin the work of passing legislation to give the people in Puerto Rico a long overdue voice and a vote in their future.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, I am proud to stand today with my friends and colleagues as we mark the 105th anniversary since United States citizenship was granted to the people of Puerto Rico. In many ways, today is a joyous day in recognition of the decades of activism undertaken by our Puerto Rican sisters and brothers.

Yet, amidst the celebration, it is also an acknowledgement that for too long we have treated Puerto Rico and her residents as second-class citizens with laws and policies that put them at a real disadvantage. The residents of Puerto Rico, more than 3 million strong, pay Federal taxes, are U.S. citizens with U.S. passports and U.S. currency, and they have long served bravely in our military, just ask any Borinqueneer who fought valiantly in the Korean war.

Yet, the people of Puerto Rico continue to be denied equal rights, including voting representation in the United States Congress. This inequality has real consequences. As we saw so vividly in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria, Puerto Rico faced injustices that no U.S. State would ever endure.

These inequities exist not only when it comes to recovery assistance, it can be seen in tax and Medicare inequities. Put simply, these disparities are un-American. A stronger political voice can help remedy that.

Today, I stand in solidarity with my colleagues in calling for what has been long overdue: statehood for Puerto Rico.

In 2020, Puerto Ricans voted overwhelmingly in support of statehood. The Puerto Rican people should be given a chance to cast a vote where those results will be respected. Now is the time for us to listen loudly and clearly to the calls from the Puerto Rican people. It is a matter of civil rights both on the island and in the greater diaspora.

Legislators on both sides of the aisle understand how crucial it is that we fully support this effort, and I am proud to work with my friend, JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, and was proud to work for many years with her predecessor, now Governor, Pedro Pierluisi. Today is proof of that.

Puerto Ricans have made their desire for statehood clear, and Congress must follow suit. I will continue fighting for statehood to ensure that every citizen's voice is heard and to give respect to the Puerto Rican people that is long overdue.

As we commemorate this 105th anniversary of citizenship for Puerto Ricans, let us remember that Puerto Rican statehood is a long overdue step toward equality and democracy for all. You cannot have true equality without full representation. We will be a better and stronger Nation when we include Puerto Rico as our 51st State.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize at this time and yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS).

Mrs. DEMINGS. Madam Speaker, we are a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, but our brothers and sisters, our fellow Americans on the island of Puerto Rico are not recognized as a government by the people. Puerto Rican Americans received citizenship 105 years ago today.

If we are going to truly be the land of the free, we must make good on America's promise to be a government of the people for all people. We need to be who we say we are. We need to be the country where every voice and every person matters. For over a century, the residents of Puerto Rico have been treated as second-class citizens within our country. It is un-American and it is unjust.

Second-class citizens not only in their vote, but also in healthcare, senior assistance, and the Child Tax Credit. This is wrong. Today, on the 105th anniversary of the citizenship for Puerto Rico, it is time for us to stand up, yet again, and declare that equal rights are an American value, and that fairness and justice are American values, and that the Americans on the island of Puerto Rico must have justice, must have fair treatment, and must have statehood.

We fought this year to ensure that the residents of Puerto Rico would start to receive equal treatment on Federal programs like Social Security, Medicare, and the Child Tax Credit. This fight is not over, and we are not giving up.

Yet, even with the weight of this fight for a century, I feel optimistic. In fact, I feel better than I ever have before. Puerto Ricans have spoken with a clear voice, with a fair and open vote, and demanded that it is time for full representation.

I am grateful for the leadership of Congresswoman GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN and Congressman SOTO on this issue, and I look forward to continuing the work in Congress until we get this done.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman has 5 minutes remaining.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, you heard many of the Members of Congress supporting this quest of Puerto Rico's civil rights and democracy rights to vote. Sometimes people forget the contributions people of Puerto Rico have made to this great Nation, contributions that we feel proud of, like the nine Puerto Rican Medal of Honor recipients: Private First Class Fernando Luis Garcia, Master Sergeant Juan Negron, Private Demensio Rivera, Private Miguel Armando Vera, Private First Class Carlos Lozada, Staff Sergeant Conde Falcon, Captain Euripides Rubio, Specialist Hector Santiago, Captain Humbert Roque, and I can speak about many others.

Historically, Puerto Rico has ranked among the top U.S. jurisdictions in terms of per capita military service. It is estimated that more than 18,000 Puerto Ricans served our Nation during World War I; 65,000 Puerto Ricans during World War II; 61,000 during the Korean war; 48,000 during the Vietnam war; 10,000 during the Gulf war, and 25,000 during Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Yet, just last

week we have 300 more that are already in Poland with the current situation in Ukraine. That is the patriotism Puerto Ricans feel about this Nation.

Why do all those soldiers never receive the same benefits from being in the military when they come back home? Why should they be treated differently with even programs that do not apply to them? And they cannot vote for the Commander in Chief? Even this Congress gave the Congressional Medal of Honor to our Borinqueneers, the 65th Regiment that fought in Korea, but yet they cannot vote for their Commander in Chief.

Over 1,200 U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico have died while serving, paying the ultimate sacrifice in defense of America's freedom, while lacking full voting representations and equality back home. Defending freedom, defending democracy around the world, but not having them back home.

Our island is proud and rich in the tradition of military service. Today, thousands of Puerto Ricans serve on Active Duty and Reserves and all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces. Approximately, 8,400 currently serve in the Puerto Rico Army National Guard, and since 9/11 they have carried out over 16,000 deployments, more than 34 States in the Union.

Over 90,000 American veterans call Puerto Rico home. Unfortunately, despite our military contributions and their honorable service on behalf of the Nation's ideals, the current territorial status hurts Puerto Rico's veterans and servicemembers. It denies them the representation in the Senate and in the House, and it denies them the right to vote for the President. It perpetuates the inequities of Federal laws and programs which are detrimental to veterans in terms of economic opportunity, health, security, and quality of life.

Statehood for Puerto Rico and congressional action to end the territorial status will benefit our veterans and the thousands of Puerto Ricans who currently serve in the U.S. Armed Forces. It will provide them real democracy through a vote and equal representation in Congress; through the ability to elect their Commander in Chief; and through a permanent union with their fellow citizens in the States.

This is the time to respond for Puerto Rico. This is the right of the island to become part of this great Nation, more than 105 years since being a territory. This is the time for Congress to act.

You have H.R. 1522, a bipartisan bill with more than 79 cosponsors, Republicans and Democrats, asking for statehood and equality. With that, statehood will address many of the inequities in the Federal law that currently hinder economic growth and progress in Puerto Rico.

Madam Speaker, we celebrate the U.S. citizenship for Puerto Rico, but we want statehood now.

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

CURRENT BORDER INSECURITY

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

Mr. DAVIDSON. Madam Speaker, I have requested this time to address part of the State of the Union that was not addressed last night. In fact, we saw that the President was so bold as to say that the border is secure and tout the fact that they have caught 2 million people at the border, as if that is success. That is what was said.

What wasn't said is what has been going on at the border for a long time and has been made worse by the policies that Joe Biden and his administration have put in place. Frankly, by the United States laws that he and his administration have ignored, and that Secretary Mayorkas enables every day that he leads the Department of Homeland Security down the wrong path for our country.

So, we are here to talk about, stop the cartels. We are introducing a bill called the Stop the Cartels Act. We spend so much time on the sympathetic cause of immigration and we conflate border security with immigration.

We can have an incredibly secure border regardless of our immigration policy, and border security is, in fact, national security. The cartels pose a serious threat to the United States of America. The products that they push in our communities have killed over 100,000 people.

□ 1915

This past year, the leading cause of death for 18 to 45 year olds is fatal overdoses. The drugs are bad, but now they are poisoned with fentanyl, and we are not taking the threat seriously. So the first portion of the Stop the Cartels Act will focus on gathering intelligence.

As we look at the country of Mexico, our southern neighbor, it controls the whole land portion of our southern border. That border is controlled by the cartels. I had Brandon Judd, the president of the Customs and Border Patrol Union, at a hearing that we had to have offsite because Speaker PELOSI won't have the hearing on the topic in any of our hearing rooms. She won't let the committees of jurisdiction deal with it, so Republicans are forced to go offsite to talk about this important topic.

When I asked him: Who controls the border? You or the cartels? Do the cartels control the border more than you?

He said: You are not putting words in my mouth. That is the exact point. The cartels control the border. We don't control the border.

I said: Why don't you control the border?

He said: Because of policies.

Do you need more resources?

That is a different topic. What we need is good policy. We had policies