

May he rest in peace.

Ms. STEFANIK. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. ZELDIN for his comments.

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

Mr. JACOBS of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Mike Long, one of our State's greatest political leaders.

Mr. Long served as chairman of the New York State Conservative Party for three decades.

An article in the New York Post that was recently written called Mike a working-class champion, and that he was. From the beginning of his career in politics, he believed Conservatives and Republicans must focus on what matters for working-class Americans. Mike's beliefs were as correct today as they were nearly 60 years ago when he began his career in public service.

I remember speaking with Mike for the first time when I was going to run for a special election for the New York State Senate several decades ago now. At that time, we were talking about his family, and Mike's son had just been in a near-fatal accident, run over by a New York City bus while he was riding a bicycle. His son Matt broke numerous bones and had countless surgeries as a result. But like his father, he had incredible grit and determination, and he not only recovered but continued to compete in triathlons and Ironman competitions.

Mike lived out his conservative principles. He was married to his wife, Eileen, for 59 years and had nine children, as was mentioned, and countless numbers of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Our State and Nation are a better place due to Mike Long's service and commitment to his principles.

May he rest in peace.

Ms. STEFANIK. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. JACOBS for his comments.

This is fitting because my colleague from Staten Island, who represents Staten Island and parts of Brooklyn, was the longtime representative at the State level and in Congress for Mike and Eileen Long.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. MALLIOTAKIS).

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleagues and everyone who spoke before me for recognizing the great achievements of a great man.

Mike Long was somebody who I was proud to represent as a State assembly member and then in Congress. He is somebody who truly believed in faith, freedom, the American Dream, and family.

As was mentioned, he had an amazing, beautiful family, who I am also very proud to serve, as I represent many of them. They are so dedicated to our community of Brooklyn, to our city of New York, to our State, and to our Nation. All the children contribute in one way or another to the community that we are so proud to call home.

Mike served and led by example for his family. He was not just a marine who served our country, willing to die for our country. He was also a member of the City Council of New York. He was a small business owner. He was also the chairman of the Conservative Party, which made such an impression and was so influential in our city and State politics for decades and still continues to be because of the leadership of Mike Long.

When I first ran for the assembly, I was so proud to have the banner of the Conservative Party and to have the support of somebody like Mike Long, who had so much integrity and was so passionate about what we believed in: that our country needs to be preserved, that we must preserve our freedoms and our liberties, that we must make sure we respect the taxpayer, that we make it easier for small businesses, and that we support individual freedoms and liberties.

In fact, it was the Conservative Party that was the margin of victory in my very first race, and so I owe a lot of my success to Michael Long and his initial support of me.

So, I thank Mike Long for all he has done for our community, for the delegation, for our city, and for our country. He will be missed.

I give my sincere condolences to his wife, Eileen, their nine children, their 25 grandchildren, and their four great-grandchildren. That just shows you how truly dedicated he was to his family. It is just a beautiful family. God bless them.

□ 1845

Ms. STEFANIK. Madam Speaker, as you heard from all the New York Republican Members of Congress, Mike's influence cannot be over emphasized. He has touched tens of thousands of lives over his decades of service and really his lifetime of service.

As many of our Members talked about, Mike Long was a man of principle. Mike was a man of faith, of freedom, of family, and he was a proud American.

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

ISSUES OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, for the remainder of this Special Order we will have a number of Republican Members from around the country who will come up and address the big issues of the day, the continued crises, not the least of which is our economic crisis here on the eve of the latest GDP numbers that we all anticipate will confirm that we have a recession, even though the administration apparently can't even define what "re-

cession" is. Instead of trying to fix the problems, they are trying to work on the definition of words.

Madam Speaker, I yield first to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLER).

Mr. KELLER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana.

Madam Speaker, I am FRED KELLER. My pronouns are he and him, and I am a man standing at the podium wearing a blue suit, demanding that border czar, KAMALA HARRIS, get serious about securing our southern border, rather than playing identity politics.

The number of illegal aliens crossing at our southern border has already surpassed last year's record of 1.7 million encounters. The U.S. Border Patrol confirmed in its latest report that there were over 200,000 encounters in June alone, the fourth consecutive month that encounters have been this high.

Border Patrol's report also revealed that 15,000 unaccompanied children were apprehended and released to sponsors without verification or documentation to ensure those sponsors are legal residents or U.S. citizens.

This loophole in the Biden administration's sponsor assessment process puts these children in danger by exposing them to illegal activity, human trafficking, and other dangers.

Yet, in the same month that this report was released, Secretary Mayorkas said that the border was secure. Meanwhile in Congress, Democrats refuse to hold a hearing on securing the southern border. In fact, Republicans on the Oversight Committee have requested a hearing on this issue, not just once, not just twice, but six times. Every request has been ignored by the Democrat majority on the committee.

Beyond their blatant detachment from reality, the Biden administration and House Democrats have made it clear they are unwilling to take action to secure our border and protect Americans.

With a new majority after the November elections, Republicans in Congress will tackle this issue head-on.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend; that was so well said. As we told Secretary Mayorkas in a Judiciary Committee hearing just a few months ago, clearly what he is doing is intentional, and I believe that he needs to dust off his résumé because we are going to have the majority soon, and there will be a reckoning for that.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. TIFFANY).

Mr. TIFFANY. Madam Speaker, I live in northern Wisconsin over 1,000 miles away from the southern border. Yet, the impacts of President Biden's open border are being felt right in our backyard.

A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to meet with the Sawyer County Sheriff's Office where they shared the local impacts that they are feeling from the Biden administration's open border, especially from illegal drugs.

Madam Speaker, 1.5 pounds of meth with a cartel stamp was recovered in Radisson, Wisconsin, a tiny little burg. Madam Speaker, ¼ pound of heroin with a cartel stamp was recovered in Sawyer County, and fentanyl drug busts have become a regular occurrence. There they are. Cartel stamps there. In many respects, they are running America at this point.

Madam Speaker, I agree with Mayor Adams of New York City and Mayor Bowser right here in Washington, D.C., that every State is now a border State.

Just look at those images. This is now all over the country poisoning Americans. These aren't overdoses, they are poisonings. They are deliberate at this point. While you in the mainstream media keep deflecting from the Biden-orchestrated crisis at the southern border, cartels are getting richer, and Americans are losing loved ones.

Last year, the U.S. saw a tsunami of overdose deaths, over 100,000 now dying annually. Fentanyl is now the leading cause of death of Americans from 18 to 45. In fact, in my home county of Oneida County way up in northern Wisconsin, the sheriff's office noted more people died from fentanyl overdoses than anything else for the first time in the history of the county.

Yet, despite the reality of these heartbreaking overdose facts, soft-on-crime States like California are releasing drug traffickers busted with 150,000 fentanyl pills on cashless bail. And to no one's surprise, they aren't showing up in court.

I stand before you today to plead for this body to do something, anything, to secure our southern border.

President Biden, Secretary Mayorkas, and this Democrat-controlled Congress has shattered the peace and quiet of too many American neighborhoods for far too long, leaving countless families who have lost a son or daughter as collateral damage.

What President Biden is doing on the border—or more accurately what he isn't doing—is not working. We do not have operational control of our southern border. Look at these images. Look at those images. The only people who have operational control are cartels.

It is time to finish the border wall and the failed policy of catch and release and designate the drug cartels as the terrorist organizations that they are.

This shouldn't be a political issue. This is a life-or-death situation for many Americans.

Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana for this Special Order, as we continue to view the degradation of society and the horrible images that we continue to see across America.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, the news is so staggering, and it is an incalculable amount of loss that Americans are experiencing. I love what the gentleman said: It is not overdoses now, it is poisoning. That is

exactly right. It is the leading cause of death of Americans aged 18 to 49.

Overdoses, these poisonings, are killing more people than cancer, car wrecks, and COVID, all of it. What are we going to do about it?

Mr. TIFFANY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin.

Mr. TIFFANY. Madam Speaker, Secretary Mayorkas has now been called a "liar" by the Border Patrol. The Border Patrol has said: You are not telling the American people the truth. We have seen it in the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Absolutely. I cannot wait for us to get control of the gavel again.

Madam Speaker, I yield next to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROSE).

Mr. ROSE. Madam Speaker, I thank the vice chairman for yielding time in this Special Order tonight.

Madam Speaker, June was the fourth consecutive month, as we have already heard, with more than 200,000 migrant encounters along our southern border. The total number of illegal immigrant apprehensions since this President took office now sits at more than 3.1 million. That is on top of more than 800,000 known got-aways.

It is costing lives. More than 100,000 Americans—many of them young Americans—died last year of drug overdoses. Those deaths were fueled by fentanyl that illegally came across our border.

Since last October, Border Patrol has seized more than 8,400 pounds of fentanyl. These are not just statistics. They are people, our fellow Americans. Their families are forever shattered. Yet, this administration continues to fight to end policies like title 42 and remain in Mexico, sending a clear message that our borders are open.

This administration is putting our economic security at risk, our national security at risk, and exacerbating a humanitarian crisis. A large and growing number of children with limited resources are being exploited by the cartels to dangerously run the streets or forced into prostitution.

Additionally, over 1,000 people have died along our border since President Biden took office—many while trying to enter our country illegally—attracted by the policies of this administration. Instead of taking bold action to combat this problem, the Department of Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas continues to claim our border is secure.

Texas Department of Public Safety Sergeant Marc Couch sees the humanitarian crisis every day along the Rio Grande Valley. He recently told Fox News that to say the border is secure is: "a misnomer of a statement that has no truth in it."

I agree. But I would like to put it a different way. Secretary Mayorkas' claim is grossly misleading. In fact, it is just flat wrong, so much so that it is

difficult to understand how he could in good faith believe what he is saying to the American people.

Madam Speaker, I usually end these speeches by urging the President to do better with regard to our border, but the reality is we know this administration has little or no appetite for securing our border and instead prefers to appeal to its far-left base.

It falls on Congress to hold the executive branch accountable when it fails to uphold our laws. So, I will close today by urging congressional Democrats to do their job, and as the House majority at least until January, join Republicans to hold this administration accountable.

Let's take a break from voting on messaging bills that have no chance of passing in the Senate. Let's find ways to come together and finally secure our border. This should be a top priority for both parties because open borders make every State a border State and put America at risk.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, that was so well said. The gentleman is right; every single State is a border State, and I know the good people of Tennessee are just as concerned as my friends in Louisiana and also in the State of Georgia.

Madam Speaker, I yield next to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN).

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, I appreciate Mr. JOHNSON's leadership here during this Special Order hour.

Madam Speaker, since President Biden took office, his administration has purposely and without remorse started a war on fossil fuels and American energy independence. This is destroying our economy, and it is creating a tremendous burden on the American people.

Biden's failed energy policies have led him to beg, of all places, Saudi Arabia to increase their global energy supply instead of unleashing our domestic oil and gas production.

This is insanity.

Let me tell you, when I am in my district, nobody asks me about climate change. But let me tell you, when I am filling up my car with gas, people come over to me who know me, and they say: "What are you going to do about this?" That is when I remind them that when Republicans held the majority, we unleashed the American economy and the power of the American energy and energy independence, and we did this for the first time since 1957.

And what happened? Gas was under \$3 a gallon, and we actually exceeded the Paris Climate Agreement targets for reducing emissions without even being subject to that agreement.

America wasn't just energy independent; we were energy dominant. We did it once; we can do it again. We don't need to beg other countries to produce more oil. We should be doing it right here in the United States where we produce energy more cleanly and efficiently than any place else in the world.

American oil and gas emits 30 percent fewer greenhouse gas emissions than other countries, especially Russia. Here is the bottom line: Oil and natural gas remain essential in delivering the baseload power necessary to sustain American homes, businesses, and livelihoods.

Madam Speaker, if we are serious about bringing energy prices down and delivering real relief to the American people, we must invest in American energy and reclaim our energy independence.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments, and he is right. The energy crisis is a direct result of policy choices. It could be reversed if Democrats would simply acknowledge their error, but I am afraid they won't.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, I think we need a little more talk about inflation. I know when we get home it is always the number one issue that is out there. I don't think there has been enough talk about how the inflation came about.

The inflation came about because of excessive spending. Every middle school student should know that if the Federal Government spends wildly more on the amount going out than the amount going in, the Federal Reserve has to, in essence, print the dollars to make those payments, and when the Federal Reserve prints more dollars, the value of the dollar drops, which is why we have these huge spending increases.

□ 1900

Now, I will make a couple of comments on them.

First of all, I think the numbers that we are supposed to talk about, the 9.1 increase in inflation, are woefully underrated. Here is the graph that all of us politicians are supposed to talk about.

Does anybody believe that the cost of shelter in the last 12 months has only gone up 5.6 percent? Where is the press? They ought to be making fun of that number.

When I talk to my landlords, when I talk to my builders, nobody thinks things have gone up only 5.6 percent in the last year. I think the cost of a new house has gone up 20 to 25 percent. I think the cost of rentals has gone up by 10 or 15 percent. It is way more than the 5.6 percent on this chart.

The same thing is true of automobiles. They tell us used automobiles have gone up by about 11.4 percent in the last year. Talk to your car dealers. They will laugh at the idea that used cars have only gone up by 11.4 percent in the last year.

Things are much worse than the numbers that are put out there by the Biden administration. Therefore, the American public is suffering a lot more than even this so-called record inflation increase of 9.1. It is much more than that.

But once we get done looking at that, let's look at the new spending bills that are coming out. Have people learned their lesson? All of a sudden, we are going to produce even on the relatively small part of the budget, this discretionary spending, which is the part we vote on around here? Are we going to do something to maybe have no increase there or 2 or 3 percent increase there? No.

When we look at the bills, some of which we passed last week, and they break up what I think the people at home would call the budget into a variety of different bills, military construction and veterans affairs, people want an 18 percent increase for the year beginning October 1; financial services and general government, 17 percent increase; the Department of the Interior and the environment, up 18 percent.

In other words, even after the horrific inflation, when we come back to the regular budget, this place has the pedal to the metal, trying to spend another huge amount.

I think the press ought to wake up and pay attention to both of these issues. I beg the press to talk to your local car dealers, to talk to your local landlords and see: Have we only had a 5.6 percent increase in shelter? Have we only had a 7.1 percent increase in used cars? No way. They are giving us numbers that are much lower than the reality.

The press ought to look at this, and rather than just sleepwalk through these budgets that get passed around here, we ought to be paying a little bit more attention to the sizable increases in these budgets, line by line, or the amount of inflation we have seen so far would be a drop in the bucket. Wake up, American press corps.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I have never seen my friend so animated.

It is time for that because it is an existential crisis to the country. Truly, when we asked the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff what the greatest threat to America is, they don't say China first. They say the national debt. It is just out of control.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS).

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, Congressman JOHNSON comes down here week in and week out and talks about not just the problems that face our great Nation but really the discussions that I want to bring tonight about families who sit at home, families who sit around before they perhaps watch TV or when they come home from church. They are talking about their lives, the lives of their children, and the things which concern them most.

I remember well just a few years ago when America had the greatest of times that it has perhaps ever had: a stock market reaching the highest levels; employment in America that was the highest level we had ever had; more

African Americans, more Hispanic, more women, more people at work with a growing economy; housing aplenty.

It was full of opportunity from an economic perspective that came as a result from what I think was discipline, discipline from Republicans who had been in the majority. Yes, I was one of those Republicans, and I had an opportunity to serve as chairman of the Committee on Rules for 6 years.

During those 6 years, 2013 to 2019, we held a disciplined view of the budget and of spending. We held a disciplined view that meant that we did not spend one penny more in discretionary spending than we did in 2008, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018.

It allowed the free enterprise system to grow. It allowed Americans the opportunity to not have government grabbing at them or overburdening their jobs. It meant that the free enterprise system with gasoline, with cars being built, with opportunity, with economic success was on the rise.

Madam Speaker, tonight, we will say to you that that changed. That changed on January 20, a year ago. This Trump boost that we had, this opportunity where Republicans were growing our economy, it all of a sudden changed on January 20, a full year and a half ago when President Biden came in and immediately did exactly what had been done by President Clinton, what had been done by President Obama, and that is a massive spending bill. None that was talked about during the election, but as soon as they got control, a massive spending bill.

This is virtually the same kind of policy that President Biden's favorite President, Jimmy Carter, had when I was in college that led to 18 percent interest rates. A whole generation of people that had to dig themselves out of paying too much for the day-to-day products that they needed.

We are back to that. We are back to that because of excessive government spending that started here in the House of Representatives. The Democratic Party tonight was on record asking us to please come and vote with them on more Big Government, more spending.

Well, the word is out that we are close to entering a recession. This is something that comes because Democrats have made inflation their friend. They have done the things for inflation that would have it roaring back to rob the American people not only of any gains they made under President Trump, but to rob them as they face their future, as our children are attempting to go to college, as they are planning for their future of retirement, but, more importantly, as they go to simply try to fill up their cars with gasoline, as they move forward to try to live their lives and make their families more successful.

Madam Speaker, this comes as a result of politics. It is politics, pure and simple. On the one hand, you had Republicans and President Trump working diligently to give people an opportunity for not just a job but a career,

not just to fill up their gas tank but to prepare them and their children for getting out and getting their own career.

No wonder almost three in five children are back living in their homes with their parents. They get through with college, and they come back. This is exactly, Congressman JOHNSON, what we saw when President Obama was President.

Our message tonight is one of hope and opportunity. Republicans will offer a vision, as we do on the floor here every day, about spending and the opportunity to balance out what the American people want and need. They want and need to do away with inflation. They want to go back to work. They don't want to be incented by this administration to get money but stay at home. They recognize that the President pushing the Fed to dump \$110 billion into the economy every single month simply means that we have more that we have to pay on interest.

Madam Speaker, I want you to know that Republicans are on the floor tonight to offer opportunity, and the most important thing we would say is this: Don't make friends with inflation. Don't do the things that this administration and this Secretary of the Treasury have done. Don't have Big Government programs. Don't incent people to come and break the law. By golly, don't spend the \$10 million on fake IDs that the Democratic Party calls secure IDs for people who come to this country so they could travel around.

Madam Speaker, people are weary. They are around their tables and talking, and they know that November is around the corner.

Congressman JOHNSON, I thank you for taking the time to come gather together every week with a message of hope and opportunity. Tonight, it is not just that. It is reality.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Great words, my friend. I am so thankful that you summarized again how ideas have consequences.

Madam Speaker, that is our concern. These are policy choices that have led to all this pain for families and individuals in all of our communities, and it just seems like madness to us. But our message is hopeful because we are going to turn the corner. We are going to lead this country in a new direction, and we are excited to relay that to people.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEUSER).

Mr. MEUSER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON), my good friend, the vice chair, for his leadership.

Madam Speaker, my constituents tend to say this phrase very often lately. They have had enough.

Madam Speaker, American families, seniors, and small business owners are struggling to keep up with skyrocketing inflation. That is not news

to anyone. Families are contending with high prices at the grocery store just to put food on their table and canceling summer vacations due to record-high gas prices. Small business owners are being squeezed with the increased prices of supplies, shipping costs, wages, you name it, while they are seeing reduced revenues from customers who are reducing their own spending, of course.

Our seniors, many living on fixed incomes, are struggling to maintain their basic quality of life, afford necessities, and the gasoline it takes to travel to their doctor appointments. But, Madam Speaker, you don't have to take my word for it.

This week, I asked my constituents how inflation has impacted their daily lives. In less than 24 hours, I received over 1,400 responses from seniors, from small business owners, from mothers and fathers from every corner of my district who are struggling to keep up with inflation.

A few examples: Michelle from Schuylkill County had to cancel necessary doctor appointments because she cannot afford the current price of gasoline.

Karl and his family from Carbon County had to cancel their vacation due to astronomical gas prices.

William from Carbon County has informed me that inflation has gotten so bad that he must choose between eating or whether to fill up a gas tank to attend his needed doctor appointments.

Rick, a small business owner from Luzerne County, has had to slow down his business expansion and is unable to hire new employees while also having to raise prices just to keep his business afloat.

Scott from Lebanon County has been unable to visit his elderly father due to inflation slashing into his savings.

These are actual responses from my constituents.

Today, Madam Speaker, I had small business owners and constituents from my district in for a small business roundtable. Some of their feedback on inflation included fighting the headwinds rather than extending any of their resources to grow their business, delaying growth and delaying projects and hiring.

One constituent who does construction stated that the recent T&I bill that was passed in this House will now create 30 percent less projects in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania because of the high level of inflation. That really hits home, to say the least.

Madam Speaker, I have to say that in only 18 months, my constituents are right. They have had enough.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, this is a great reminder that this is real pain for real people. This is not a game here. What we do affects the lives of all of our constituents, all Americans, and we have a responsibility to fix it.

Mr. MEUSER. We do. We can.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Thank you for highlighting that.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from the State of California (Mr. LAMALFA), a good friend of mine.

□ 1915

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Louisiana again for leading us here tonight and getting the message out to the American people that this doesn't have to be this way. What we are going through—what we are all going through—together, with the increased costs and with shortages is unnecessary.

This isn't caused by nature with a hurricane or a tornado or a fire or an earthquake or even a war, though some are trying to point to the actions by Putin and Russia and Ukraine being responsible for everything. This is a government-caused situation we are seeing with inflation in fuel and energy. It doesn't have to be this way.

So what is really disheartening as a Representative of folks is that we know our constituents, good people, are suffering from inflation. It is impacting everyday Americans and northern Californians in my district, everybody.

I have firsthand accounts from people in my district who are struggling financially due to these rising prices and inflation. Inflation is a tax on every American, as my colleagues have been saying. And we are hoping people will hear.

Rural Americans are feeling additional financial struggles even more so probably than the urban dwellers, but maybe it is the same. Maybe it is just different.

Rural residents tend to drive more. They have to drive farther distances to do what they do if they work on a ranch or live on a ranch, a timber operation or a mining operation, or they just live out. Maybe they are a park ranger. Maybe they take care of the parks. There are many reasons why you would live in a rural part of the State of California or any part of America, Madam Speaker.

That puts more mileage on your vehicle and uses more gas. You may tend to have a four-wheel drive vehicle in those areas, Madam Speaker, because you might have snow. There are other reasons that you might have to have a vehicle that has a little more oomph, a little more ability to get around than perhaps one in southern California. So it is likely they are going to use a little more gasoline to go where they need to go, and getting gasoline delivered to areas like that costs a little more. It is a little higher.

In my northern California district it is not uncommon to see \$6 on the sign for diesel or even premium gasoline—\$6. It is routinely \$6 for diesel. A lot of people drive diesel vehicles.

They have less retail options nearby. Their stores ship from farther distances, so the trucks that brought it—"if you got it, a truck brought it" is the saying—have to ship it farther to get there. So that store might need to

have just a little higher price to cover shipment. So further shipping, all these things just add up, especially for rural residents, on that. But they have a reason why they are rural residents, and we need them to be for producing what they produce in rural areas that we all use.

So a couple of residents in northern California, I would like to share what their issue is and what their struggle is.

The first story is about an elderly woman from Redding in northern California, which is one of the large cities in my district. She has had a tough life and grew up in an abusive household. She is very smart and very artistically talented, actually. But as she aged she began dealing with mental illness and confided she has begun to think of death as an alternative to her struggling. What a cheery situation for her.

After her mental health struggles became too much, it forced her out of the workforce. She began living on a fixed income of \$900 a month. With \$900—money is already tight—and she has had even more setbacks. Now, like most people, she has a family pet. She has a dog. Well, that dog happened to get sick, like it happens, and the bill for that was \$500.

Where is she going to get \$500 on a \$900 monthly income?

Maybe she can spread it out over time if the veterinarian works with her. So she ended up having to sell her truck for \$180 because she could no longer afford the gasoline and needed the money to pay utilities and other bills. Recently she ran out of food completely and went without food for several days. Even the local food bank—God bless them, they are doing really good work and they are becoming even more stretched and more tapped—the food bank had run out.

She ended up calling a friend who bought some groceries for her. She said that the cost of everything is so expensive now that even cutting out spending any personal money on personal things or elective things or maybe luxuries by having maybe a little meat on your plate, she is still unable to pay her bills.

She doesn't have cable or TV. She listens to the free books on tape from the Library of Congress. She said that she holds President Biden directly responsible for what is happening, the President and the policies of the majority here in Congress and even in Sacramento, in my home State of California. She does hope that President Biden can hear how the economy doesn't work for low-income people.

I think she understands that trillions and trillions of dollars of debt, and spending money you don't have and printing more money—inflation-causing money—isn't going to get her out of it either. We have to have an economy that works for normal people, productive people, and so folks like her can be helped.

Even after all this, though, you have to admire her. She said she considers

herself lucky because she still has a roof over her head.

Another story in a different sector is about a family who lives just south of the Oregon border in what is known as the Klamath Basin, the Klamath River area. There are a lot of farmers up there. There are issues with the dams that are in place that help make low-cost hydroelectric power.

So one day after the public comment period closed on the Klamath Dam destruction that is being put in place with the help of the Federal Government and a lot of lawsuits—this was in April—the family patriarch suffered a stroke and was found by his children unconscious and unresponsive.

Madam Speaker, if you don't think the stress of being put out of business by a government that has taken away your water, your electricity, and driving your costs through the roof wouldn't have a part in that stroke for that family member, the family patriarch, you are not paying attention.

He was airlifted to Klamath Falls in Oregon which is only a 15-minute flight but a 2½ hour drive. You are getting the picture, I think, of what rural issues we are dealing with, the challenges of people trying to farm so the country has food in this case.

Now, every week the entire family has to make the trek back up to Klamath Falls since it is the closest specialist in occupational therapy. So they schlep that trip back and forth with expensive fuel and long distance, but they need to do it in order to do what they do. They need to stay the night in a hotel since the drive over and back is a little too much to do in 1 day given the appointment schedule.

So the husband is only getting a little less than \$500 a month from disability for the family to live on, and each week they must make that 5-hour trip, gas, hotels, meals, et cetera. Of course, these costs are devastating to them. Inflation is driving much of this cost.

Things are going to happen to people—that we know. But at least making them a little more affordable by having an economy that works for the American people, especially lower- and middle-income folks who are suffering firsthand from the high cost of everything driven by a government policy that is hurting us.

This green new deal stuff is not an answer for low- and middle-income people. Forcing them to be in an electric car—let them eat cake is what it practically sounds like when the Transportation Secretary says that we can just replace it with electric cars.

No, we have to endure some pain. Nobody in Washington is enduring any pain, not in the Cabinet and not in Congress. No one would feel sorry for us anyway, and they shouldn't. It is the American public who is enduring the pain while people just callously say: Well, these high prices on fuel are just part of the transition to an electric future.

Well, in my home State, electricity barely stays on as it is now because they are pulling out the hydroelectric dams, as I just mentioned, on the Klamath. The water they are running out of Lake Oroville and Lake Shasta down through the river and out through the delta, that doesn't make hydroelectric power during part of the year.

Lake Oroville, for example, ran out of the ability to make hydropower because the lake reached historic lows in its entire history. We are seeing that getting ready to happen in Nevada on Lake Mead, dead pools soon.

These are government policies that drive inflation, the cost of food, the cost of electricity, and everything that is harming the American public.

So I have to ask the question, once again, to President Biden, his Cabinet, and even the majority in these two Houses here: Whose side are you on? A green new deal, a la-di-da agenda, or the struggles of the American people?

I hope the American public asks that question of themselves: Who is trying to help and who is causing the harm?

Think about that really hard I ask you. We are not here just for kicks. I am not here because I love to wear a suit. We are fighting for you. We are fighting for what is right. So please pay attention and decide for yourself who is trying to help and who is causing the harm.

I know Mr. JOHNSON is doing great work by helping us with this message. If people aren't going to pay attention to what is really causing it, then I don't know how we can help them. But please take this message away with you and we will do what we can. We are fighting here in Congress. We are fighting to get the message out and put policy reforms in place that indeed are going to help.

So I thank the gentleman for the time tonight and for his faithful efforts here.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend for his faithful efforts and being such a clarion call and a voice of reason.

One of the things that is necessary to maintain a constitutional Republic as the Founders warned us is that you have to have an informed and engaged electorate. I think people are paying attention now. I think they are feeling the pain, and it is drawing awareness to our situation. I think they are going to evaluate.

I am hopeful and optimistic, so we can turn some of this around. I thank my friend for his efforts.

Madam Speaker, you heard a recurring theme here tonight, whether we focus tonight on the economic crisis, the border crisis, the energy crisis—all the many crises—the common theme is this: If you review the facts objectively, Madam Speaker, then the evidence shows that all of these are intentional. They are intentional. These are the foreseeable and obvious results of the Democrats' policy choices of the

Biden administration and the Democrats that run both Houses of Congress.

House Republicans, on the other hand—as all my colleagues tonight have pointed out—are optimistic. We are so looking forward to the upcoming August district work period so that we can take our vision for a new direction for this country directly to the American people.

I believe that message is going to be well-received. I think people are desperate for the answers, and we have solutions to all the great challenges facing this country.

Madam Speaker, I thank all my colleagues, once again, for being faithful and being here tonight for this Special Order.

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

ECONOMICS 101

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

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Madam Speaker, one of the reasons and one of the focuses for tonight's presentation is I am just frustrated because of the silliness that not only has become this body but even when you listen to the White House, Madam Speaker.

So the White House is terribly concerned that on Thursday we will get the latest statistics from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. I believe it is on second quarter GDP. GDP now is the Atlanta Fed calculator. It is a wonderful app if you want to look at it.

It is basically saying: Hey, we may be negative, and when we were all in high school they said that two consecutive quarters of negative GDP, well, that is a recession. Technically it is not. Yes, there is a committee that decides it. That is what we argue about.

Has this place lost its mind?

So the press cycle becomes: Oh, are we in recession or not?

It is not, technically. If it goes negative it will be a recession. But isn't this horrible that we are talking about this?

Let's just pretend and stop worrying about it and actually let's try something unique.

Could we actually talk about what is happening to people, what is happening to the country, what is happening to the budgets, the debt and the deficits, the actual thing that will either make or break society, which will make people's lives more miserable or more prosperous?

Because right now we are in avoidance of all the big things.

But we do have some great virtue signaling bills. I mean, I had the blessing earlier today of my telehealth bill being stolen from me and handed to another Member because, well, we needed the politics.

Hey, good job, majority.

But I have to give Democrats credit. They have done some amazing things

in, what, their 16, 17 months of absolute control, when they won the House back in the 2018 election.

So this is a chart I have had here multiple times. Yes, it is all beaten up. The number is from, functionally, the 2021 CBO numbers. A couple of hours ago we got the updated numbers.

For anyone wanting to know why I am using tape, apparently it is against House rules for me to reach over and use a big marker and write on the boards.

But the number we had been operating with is in, functionally, 29 years we are going to have \$112 trillion of debt in today's dollars—not inflation-adjusted dollars, but in today's dollars—and it is almost all Medicare and Social Security. The rest of the budget is in balance.

A couple hours ago—and I have only made it through the first dozen pages of the new CBO report, and you can get it online, Madam Speaker, it is only 90 pages—we moved from \$112 trillion last year to—congratulations to the Democrats, they got us to \$138 trillion—\$138 trillion of borrowing in the next 30 years in today's dollars.

□ 1930

Now, the reality, we are never going to get there. We will blow up before that. But this talk, the virtue signaling, the insanity of this place, well the Democrats are getting in; we are going to pay for everything. We are going to do policies that are fiscally sensible.

Well, okay. Congratulations. CBO just actually took us from \$112 trillion to \$138 trillion on the math. It is just stunning. Does anyone around this place give a damn?

And maybe I am a little on the cranky side. You know, I had a miracle happen about 3 weeks ago. I was at home, and the phone rings, and my little girl's birth mom had a little boy; so now I have a little boy. So my wife and I, we have a 30-day-old baby at home, so there hasn't been a lot of sleep.

And I am holding this little guy, and I am going, he is only 30 years old when this happens. And the economy most likely blows up long before then.

Does anyone here care about the next generation? Does anyone here care about your own retirement?

You have got to understand how fast the numbers are rotting away from us. But at least we are going to have a debate for the next couple of days of are we in recession or not recession.

Well, technically two consecutive quarters are not technically a recession; and the White House cares a lot about that because we know that it is about the message and virtue signaling as the economy around us is burning down.

And I am going to show you some numbers here. Could we try something new? How about let's go back to a type of misery index? How miserable are our constituents? How miserable is America and the public?

And we are going to look at some slides here that show you just how much of people's wages have been stripped from them.

So a simple slide, and this is from the new CBO, from a couple of hours ago. We did our best to put it together, and it is not going to make a lot of sense. But basically, what I am trying to show is, \$138 trillion of borrowing in today's dollars. That is a pretty steep curve. Every bit of this steepness here that you see here is Social Security and Medicare.

How many of us here are willing—I am the senior Republican, I am the ranking Republican over Social Security. We are busting our humps to try to come up with a bipartisan way to save the program, in a functionally—in a decade.

If you are on Social Security, you are going to have a quarter of your Social Security check disappear. Let alone, we expect, just because of inflation, your copay on your Medicare is probably going to more than double.

The number of our brothers and sisters who will be seniors at the end of the decade, who will be moved into poverty because of what the Democrats have done this last year and a half; does anyone care about them?

And then, this is the stuff we have been able to start to pull out from the CBO numbers that should start to scare this place half to death. If you start looking at what they call the alternative scenarios, and that is actually when inflation or interest rates have small variances, and the speed that, if you actually go to the baseline scenario, but if you actually start to go to a scenario over there where interest rates are just 2 percent, 3 percent higher than the predicted average, you actually get in a line here in about 20, 25 years, every dime of tax receipts, every dime of tax receipts just pays interest.

There is no more government. There is no more military. There is no more medical research. There is no more education. There is no more Social Security and Medicare.

How many of you are going to spend your August going home and telling townhalls how you are going to protect Social Security and Medicare, but you are not willing to actually talk about the real math?

It is real. This isn't Republican or Democrat; it is math. And this place has basically become a math-free zone.

And look, this is a chart I bring up here all the time because it is nice and simple and graphic. 77 percent in 2001, was mandatory. Okay. This is Social Security and Medicare. These are things we put on formula. We don't vote on any of this.

Well, about 10 percent of our budget is defense; unlike, I had a Democrat just last week saying oh—no, defense is 10 percent of our spending. The entire budget that we, functionally, truly vote on, discretionary is now to 13. And guess what? This is the '21. The new numbers, the mandatory now is about 80 percent of all of our spending.