

Relief Act, and H.R. 2634, the Alimony Relief Act. Both of my bills seek additional deductions for taxpayers forced to submit to government-directed payments.

Regarding alimony, I hope to repeal the section of law within the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 that places the tax liability of government-mandated payments on the person who makes the payment and not the payee. Why should the person earning the money but not spending it pay the tax liability?

Mr. CARTER's FairTax Act ensures that we pay taxes on what we buy rather than on what we earn. It would make both of my bills unnecessary. The hours spent every year doing tax returns wouldn't be necessary, and Americans would have more time to spend with their families.

I hope we can make real progress on the FairTax Act, but in the meantime, I would welcome my colleagues to support my efforts. I look forward to the day when a simpler tax code is afforded to all of our constituents.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his very insightful comments. I appreciate that very much. I thank all of my colleagues for their support and for speaking in favor of America's favorite tax proposal. Yes, it has been around. It has been around for quite a while now, but its time has come.

This bill, in fact, was first proposed by Representative John Linder, a member of the Georgia delegation whose chief of staff, ROB WOODALL, took over the bill when he was elected to Congress, another Georgian. When Rob retired, he asked me if I would take over this legislation, and I was honored to do so because I made a commitment when I became a Member of Congress that this would be the first bill I would cosponsor as a Member of Congress, and it was. It has been ever since I have been a Member of Congress.

Cosponsoring this bill was my first act as a Member of Congress, and I am eager to see this landmark bill finally get the attention and legislative action it deserves. It is fair; it is simple; it is preferred. You are in control. You decide how much you want to pay in taxes, not some unelected bureaucrat, not some Member of Congress who decides they need a loophole or a tax break for something. No, you are going to decide. You are going to decide what you are going to pay taxes on and what you are not going to pay taxes on.

Again, as I started out tonight, today could be the last tax day our country ever sees. Let that sink in. Today could be the last tax day our country ever sees. All we have to do is adopt the FairTax Act, a consumption tax.

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

□ 1830

TARGETING PEOPLE OF FAITH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 9, 2023, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, this week Congress returned from 2 weeks working in our districts, and obviously, we heard quite a bit from our constituents back home. I would like to spend a little bit of time addressing issues that I think are on their minds.

The first thing is we had another step toward the—I will call it the de-Christianization or dislike of people of faith.

It was revealed within the last month and a half that a memo was leaked from the Richmond office of the FBI saying that they were concerned that conservative Catholics may be tied up with white supremacists, and we have to monitor them. I think this is one of the most offensive things up there.

Now, first of all, their source for this was the Southern Poverty Law Center. I would ask anybody to Google the Southern Poverty Law Center and see the degree to which it has been used to enrich its founders and is a totally discredited source.

I thought nobody outside of maybe a few journalists would trust it with anything, but apparently the FBI considers the Southern Poverty Law Center a legitimate source.

Even more scary is that they are targeting conservative Catholics. Do you know why they are targeting conservative Catholics?

Because they are sincere believers in their faith, and that scares the type of people who are running the country, or they are afraid they would be an obstacle in the type of country they want us to become.

They do say that this was not up to their exact standards. In other words, what they are apologizing for is they got caught because there was somebody there who was a whistleblower who exposed the way the leadership in the FBI thought.

I think all Americans—and I am not Catholic, but all Americans who take their faith seriously should be very alarmed at this.

There have been many countries around the world which consider Christianity or religion their enemy. I thought one of the major reasons why the United States was different than these other countries is because we are supposed to be a moral and religious Nation.

We are a Nation built for people who take their faith seriously. Now we find out the FBI thinks we ought to put informants in with groups of conservative Catholics to make sure they are not up to something untoward.

I hope all Americans are appropriately concerned with the type of people we have being hired in the FBI. I hope all clergymen realize that if they can go after the conservative Catholics, the next thing they are going to do is go after you.

The idea that they would think we should put informants in with conservative Catholic groups to make sure

they are not doing something untoward is truly scary.

WORKING TOWARD PEACE

Mr. GROTHMAN. My next topic for tonight is a topic in which not a lot of progress has been made in the last 2 weeks, but I continue to believe people in this body or the press corps should be turning up the heat a little bit on our current administration.

I have talked before about the potentially huge problems we could have in Ukraine. We are dealing with a very advanced country in Russia, a country with nuclear submarines, a country with the ability to shut down your electric grid, and no progress is being made toward some sort of peace agreement.

This war has now gone on for over a year. I think there are, sadly, some people in this town who wouldn't mind if it goes on another 2 or 3 years.

The additional cost, as far as monetary cost, is a scandal in its own right, but that is not as horrible as the huge cost in human suffering and death that every war has.

I have talked before about the fact that Ukraine has the second lowest birth rate of any country its size in the world, behind only South Korea.

Russia itself has had a big immigration problem in which people are leaving their country. I have been at the southern border and heard stories of young Russians coming here, so it should be particularly easy to negotiate some sort of deal.

The United States is in a position to negotiate that deal, but certainly other countries that we are friendly with; Israel, Turkiye, or France, could be prodded to work toward some sort of peace deal on humanitarian reasons, if none other.

Nevertheless, we don't hear a lot of talk about that, not a lot of gossip that behind the scenes, people are working toward some sort of agreement.

Given how poorly things went with Russia when they invaded, things didn't wrap up in 3 days like our CIA was guessing, I assume it was a surprise to Russia that things are still going on this long, as well.

I would assume that, therefore, both sides would like to work toward a peace agreement here. But sadly, the United States, who I think should be working for peace—I always kind of remember when the United States negotiated the end of the Russia or Japanese war.

We should be wanting world peace but, instead, you hear no rumors in that regard. I would hope that the press corps and other politicians in this area would be asking a little bit or prodding the relevant people along to make sure that we work toward peace.

CONTROL OF THE SOUTHERN BORDER

Mr. GROTHMAN. The next topic—I could always argue—and the most important topic for our country is the border. While back in the district, I spent 1 day—haven't been there in about 11 months, but I spent 1 day at

the Arizona-Texas border and continued to see what a complete mess we have down there.

While down there, Congressman BIGGS from Arizona and I were given a ride along the Arizona-Mexico border.

The ride had to go for 25 or 30, maybe 35 miles along a very rocky trail. I don't think the car could go more than 15 or 20 miles an hour.

We saw nobody until we got about 15 miles in, in the middle of nowhere, and we came across four or five families totaling 21 people.

We were informed by this group that they were dropped off about a 2-hour walk from the American border and had to walk over this rocky land to get there.

Now, so you know, most people who ask for asylum they go to designated points of entry where they roll out the red carpet—I am only exaggerating a little bit—to deal with people and walk them through.

Why was this group of 21 people—and you have got to understand. There is some question as to the whether the border is under control.

I will assure you: The border is under control. The Mexican drug-controlled gangs have that border under control.

These folks, after having to walk 2 hours through the desert, sat for 2 hours in the middle of nowhere. It was, fortunately, a cool day, about 70 degrees, but it could have been a hundred degrees.

Finally, us two Congressmen came across them. I don't know who would have come across them if we hadn't been taking the tour at the time.

We had to call and waited probably another 30 or 35 minutes for the Border Patrol to show up and take these 21 people back.

Now, why would the Mexican drug gangs want 21 people showing up in the middle of nowhere rather than the designated points of entry?

The reason is all along the southern border, the drug gangs have spotters in the surrounding mountains. When the people come across with drugs, they want to make sure they are not caught.

One way to make sure they are not caught is you send other people across that you know the Border Patrol has to deal with, you know the Border Patrol has to process.

It took a minimum of three—I would guess more than that—big SUVs to take these people to a designated Border Patrol station so that the gangs doing the spotting in the high mountains around us knew that now was the easy time to get through the fentanyl and other drugs that stream across our border. Just a real tragedy.

I think it was very risky to have such young kids going along, in addition to the fact that is 21 more people coming in our country, who I would almost be certain do not need asylum. They are just coming here because our President does not consider the border something worth enforcing.

I want to give you one other anecdote from that trip which tells you the

lack of seriousness that this administration has toward this unfettered immigration, as well as the stream of illegal drugs coming across the border.

I have been an advocate in the past for drug-sniffing dogs that can identify the horrible drugs that have killed over 100,000 Americans in the past.

I asked our guide, who was connected with the union down there, so he represented how the average Border Patrol people felt.

He said, no, not more dogs. Why didn't he want more dogs? Because right now, the Biden administration did give them more dogs. They gave them more dogs because they needed therapy dogs for the Border Patrol.

They felt that the stressful situation of being underfunded, of being miles and miles away from the closest Border Patrol agent in case something goes south, that the way to deal with the stress was to hire therapy dogs. They had 38 therapy dogs.

Wouldn't you think if you are going to hire dogs for the southern border, they would be drug-sniffing dogs and try to reduce that 100,000-plus number of people who are dying of illegal drug use every day? No.

The people who currently run our government think, well, the Border Patrol is stressed in the current situation. What should we do about it?

I don't think we should hire more Border Patrol agents. I don't think we should hire more drug-sniffing dogs.

Aha. Let's hire some more therapy dogs for the Border Patrol because they will feel better if, on their way out in the morning, they get to pet the dog.

Unbelievable. I mean, you can't make this stuff up, can you?

We dealt a little bit more with the border in the committee that I am the subcommittee chair earlier today. We remember a couple years ago, under a different President, that the press made a big deal that they felt there were some families being separated.

Those families could be only separated for, I think, under 20 days, and it was only if the parents had broken some law.

Well, today in our committee hearing, we looked at the number of unaccompanied minors crossing the southern border. These are minors crossing without parental guidance, without parents being with them.

In the final full year before the current administration, in a whole year, there were 15,000 unaccompanied minors crossing.

That was the first half of that year, before COVID was really out there, so it was kind of an artificial count; it should have been a higher number, but 15,000.

Last year, we had 128,000 unaccompanied minors crossing the border, young people without any parental guidance coming on their own. That, by itself, should be a major cause of concern.

We had a witness today, Robin Marcos, the Director of the Office of

Refugee Resettlement, a political appointee, and it was shocking what she didn't know about the young people crossing the border.

Now, I have been at the border before, and I know the Border Patrol will tell you, or other people guarding the border, that there are times they suspect that children are crossing the border and are only providing cover for other people who want to come here.

They say this is my child, but the Border Patrol suspects it is not their child. They do a DNA test and find out it is not their child.

Wouldn't you be giving DNA tests to just about every unaccompanied minor crossing the border to make sure they aren't being trafficked, or when you give them to a sponsor eventually, if they say that sponsor is an aunt or uncle or whatever, it really is?

But when you ask Ms. Marcos how many DNA tests they are giving of the unaccompanied minors, she has no idea. I would think that is about the first thing that you should know.

□ 1845

The second thing that you should wonder about: Is her agency adequately vetting the sponsors that are going to take over these kids who are coming here without their parents?

So we asked her how many sponsors are rejected as unfit to take care of these unaccompanied minors?

She had no idea.

Isn't that kind of surprising?

Wouldn't you think in this era of human trafficking that you would want to know that?

Wouldn't you think in this era in which a lot of these kids cross the border, and according to The New York Times, wind up working in unsafe conditions—I assume in part to pay off the debt that they have to pay for coming into this country—wouldn't you think that we would be doing a thorough investigation of these sponsors?

Apparently not.

We have no idea how many sponsors were considered unfit to come here.

Another thing that surprised me at the border was that if you really wanted to disrupt the drug trade that is killing over 100,000 Americans a year, one of the things you could do very successfully is not only try to track down people coming into the country, you could track down people leaving the country with tens or hundreds of thousands of dollars. After all, it wouldn't be so profitable for the drug trade if some of that cash was being intercepted.

I guess for a while, a few years ago, they tried to intercept that cash. Whether it is the lack of money or whatever, they are not doing it anymore. I guess I will take that as one more piece of evidence of the lack of seriousness that this administration is taking in trying to disrupt the drug trade coming across the southern border. In any event, we don't see that happening either.

Like I said, the new Director, who has been here since last September, really knows very little about what is going on at the border. You would think she would want to know.

We also know from *The New York Times*—and she didn't deny this—that there are 87,000 unaccompanied minors, and we don't know where they are.

Now, she could say it is not her job, but when we are taking people away from their parents or when people are leaving their parents and coming to America, wouldn't you think we would express a little bit of interest to see whether they are being taken care of by someone that the child would be safe with?

Apparently not.

Now, some may say, Well, this guy says it is the child's uncle. It could be an uncle that they have never met in their life. They could be making it up that it is an uncle. It could be an uncle who lives with six other guys, and he is taking in a 14-year-old girl to live with them.

Who knows what is going on? There is little concern.

I guess the only thing that drives this administration's Border Patrol policy is getting as many people here as quickly as possible because they want to change America. That is what we are dealing with.

One final thing. I would think that when somebody comes here without parents, you would want to contact the parents and let them know. We have little Mary here. She says she is 12 years old. We want to make sure that you understand that she is here in Tucson, Arizona.

Our Director has no idea how many parents have been contacted. She has no idea how many times both parents are being contacted, or maybe only one parent is connected with that child.

We have no idea. However, if we care even remotely for these kids, I would think we would be in contact with their parents: You said you are sending little Mary here to live with Uncle Joe; is that accurate?

You would try to get ahold of both parents because we like to have both parents play a role in raising their children. Who knows if we ever get ahold of both parents.

I hope, for humanitarian interests, that we have some concern over the lack of care for over 120,000 unaccompanied minors coming into this country every year. I can't help but ask myself, given that some of these kids will probably never see their parents again: Where was the press corps and where were the Democrats, who at one time were all concerned that sometimes when a parent broke the law, they would have to spend 15 or 16 days apart from their child?

That is an important story, and a story I hope people follow up on.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Mr. GROTHMAN. Now, I will deal with one of the problems the Biden administration thinks is of great con-

cern. And I don't think it should be a major concern, but they keep pushing it and pushing it down upon us, and that is: what to do about the supposed huge amount of racism in the country?

We know that when Joe Biden was sworn in—I attended his inaugural speech—I believe if there was one theme, it was racism. He talked about racism four times. He talked about white supremacy first.

He really thought we had a big racist problem in America today. And he followed up on it in this year's state of the Union address, another time Joe Biden couldn't resist taking a shot at our law enforcement and saying how racist they were.

This, despite the fact that when they do studies of law enforcement when adjusted to criminal behavior, there is no difference of anything going the other way, as far as the chance that race will be a factor in people who die.

In any event, Joe Biden has done two things that I think require us to look at the so-called racial element as Joe Biden's heavy-handed government weighs in.

In his budget, he begins with new diversity, equity, and inclusion teams in all government agencies. That is interesting. So we have bureaucrats—I am sure bureaucrats will be involved—whose job it is apparently to poke around and educate people that they should view themselves not as individuals but view themselves racially.

One of the things I did when I was on break—I am not quite through with the book—is to take advantage of a gem that you might not be familiar with by the incisive Thomas Sowell, "Affirmative Action Around the World."

I don't think a lot of people in this body know that this idea of affirmative action, recognizing people by race, promoting them by race, hiring by race, is not unique to the United States. It has happened in various other countries around the world, and I think we ought to see what traits we have in common as soon as you go down the path of affirmative action.

I first dealt with this problem when I was in the State legislature many years before. Of course, with affirmative action and racial preferences and identifying people by race is not something unique to the government. To a certain extent with the government weighing in, it has become very common at universities, very common in big business.

We were in a hearing a couple of weeks ago and it was revealed that in college universities these racial police are being hired for as much as \$200,000 a year. It drives me up a wall given that sometimes we talk about student loan debt. The fact that the student loan debt is going to pay for these race hustlers, I think, is entirely inappropriate.

I also believe there are certain majors we need more of in this country. We need more nurses. We need more engineers. It drives me up a wall when we

have a shortage of nursing professors or engineering professors and hearing that universities think it is more important to hire the equity police.

In any event, what lessons can we learn from Thomas Sowell?

When going down this path and identifying people by race, what things happen in common when they tried this in countries around the world?

Well, the first thing is, all around the world when they have affirmative action, it usually starts out with a lie that this race preference stuff will happen for a short period of time and then will disappear, maybe 10 years, maybe 20 years.

This country began to enforce affirmative action in earnest in 1965. So the current race preference-type stuff is about 57 years old, well longer than originally thought.

Secondly, around the world, once you go down this path, you keep adding more people to the mix. And I think at the time when Lyndon Johnson really kicked off affirmative action in earnest in 1965 it was primarily for Black Americans, with an implication that slavery might have been part of it, that sort of thing.

Since then, we have added Hispanics—new word. It is kind of an interesting thing because for the purpose of affirmative action, if your ancestors came from Spain and spent a couple of generations in Costa Rica, you are considered a minority. If your ancestors came from Spain and came straight to the United States, you are considered European, which shows the ridiculousness of the whole thing.

This is common around the world. The idea of we keep adding—we added women to the mix, so we need to have affirmative action there as well.

Secondly, people begin to change their identity as soon as affirmative action kicks in. A lot of people don't realize that if you are one-quarter, say, Latin, or one-eighth Asian, you can be considered eligible for affirmative action. So they follow this stuff. Somebody who maybe before affirmative action on the census form said I am White, but because they are a quarter Cuban—which is European anyway—you all of a sudden can relabel yourself a minority.

Now, we obviously had a U.S. Senator here a few years ago, ELIZABETH WARREN, an extreme example of that. She was whatever, 1/64th or 1/128th American Indian, Native American, and she therefore changed her identity and miraculously said, I am a Native American; I should get preferences.

I think that is inappropriate, but that is what the current system apparently allows, and this is common. Apparently, when affirmative action is implemented in other countries, people change their identity.

The next thing that happens is, even though I think affirmative action is supposed to benefit the least fortunate of people of certain groups, it uniformly winds up benefiting the most fortunate of those groups.

In other words, if you have preferences in government contracting, it benefits the wealthy businessman. It doesn't benefit the person more at the bottom of the heap. But this is common around the world. The benefits of the people who implement affirmative action are usually the people who are the most well-off in the first place.

I do believe that—and maybe the least bad thing is it leads to resentment—in countries that previously everybody was getting along, all of a sudden bifurcate as people fight for more and more of their group. They didn't think they were part of a group before, but all of a sudden, they are part of a group.

I think everybody should read about what happened in Sri Lanka, a country that had two primary ethnic groups. They got along for apparently centuries very well on the small island of Sri Lanka, but once affirmative action kicked in, the resentment kicked in. They wound up having a civil war and over 20,000 people died. This was on an island and before they had affirmative action everybody was getting along just fine.

I would also point out that means in some cases, you almost, by definition, have to be promoting people because it is very important we have the best person there—doctors, air traffic controllers, engineers. Maybe it doesn't matter a lot the quality of professor we have in universities, but it certainly matters in these other occupations. And if we don't have the best people there, it can result in deaths.

Now, there is one thing I wish the press would follow up on a little bit here. About 2 years ago, when Joe Biden first took office, Senators TAMMY DUCKWORTH and MAZIE HIRONO said that we shouldn't have any more White guys appointed by the Biden administration.

I think that was an inflammatory thing to say. They haven't followed up on it, but recently, there was an article in a legal journal pointing out—not saying it is good or bad—we had 97 new judges so far in the first 2 years of the Biden administration, only five were White guys, and at least two were gay.

Well, it sounds like this strict adherence to group identity is playing a big role in who President Biden is appointing. And I am not sure the American public knows the degree to which that is going on, but it is something that should be looked into. It is something that maybe we should look at all appointments rather than just judicial appointments. I think it is something that a shocking number of people don't know about, and it is something we should follow up on.

□ 1900

So there are some of the issues that were discussed back in my district when I was there. None of these issues, I think, have received the appropriate amount of attention that it should be given by our press corps, and hopefully

we will hear more about all of these issues in the press in the weeks and months to come.

Thank you. I yield back the balance of my time.

CELEBRATING APRIL AS FAITH MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. MILLER) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to submit extraneous material into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for joining me tonight in this Special Order. I am honored to join together to celebrate April as Faith Month, and I am calling on people of faith to join in prayer and in celebration.

As a Member of Congress, I am happy to reaffirm my commitment to the Judeo-Christian values and the freedom of religion on which our country was founded.

In Congress, my colleagues and I will always fight to protect the right of all Americans to exercise their faith and maintain the freedom of religion. People of faith seek to be a positive force in their communities, especially in difficult circumstances.

Religious organizations in America have a rich history of charitable engagement in helping the poor, the sick, and the afflicted, and they should be appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman (Mrs. HARSHBARGER), my friend and colleague from Tennessee.

Mrs. HARSHBARGER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative MILLER for yielding.

I want to talk about faith. What is faith? Thankfully, the Bible contains a clear definition in Hebrews 11:1. It says: Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen.

So faith is trusting in something you cannot explicitly prove. Trust is actually relying on the fact that something is true. This biblical definition of faith doesn't only apply to salvation, which is God's gift to us, but to the rest of our Christian life. We are to believe what the Bible says and we are to obey it. That is called living by faith.

We are to believe the promises of God, we are to agree with the truth of God's word, and we are to be transformed by it. Hebrews 11:6 says: Because without faith, it is impossible to please God. Without faith, we cannot be saved. Without faith, the Christian life cannot be what God intends it to

be. Without faith, I wouldn't be standing in this Chamber today representing the precious people of the First District of Tennessee. Without faith, I wouldn't be able to share a hopeful message with this great Nation that if God be for us, who shall be against us?

Faith knows that no matter what the situation is in our life or someone else's life that the Lord is working within that situation for their good and His glory. Perfect faith is simply taking God at His word.

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman HARSHBARGER for speaking. It has been a privilege to join with her weekly and with other members to pray for our country.

Our Nation is in crisis because our society has turned away from God and has embraced a culture that now tells children that life has no value. This year, I launched the Congressional Family Caucus because I believe we have a moral obligation as servant representatives to save our American values and to defend the natural family as ordained by God, a husband and a wife committed to each other for life with their children.

We need to defend the natural family from attempts by the radical left to erode this core foundation of our society. In Deuteronomy 6, in the context of the traditional family, in the home, we are to diligently instruct our children to love God and to obey His commandments.

During Faith Month, I would like to recognize that a happy family is a blessing from God and is foundational to human flourishing. I will always proudly stand up for faith and for our families in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CLYDE).

Mr. CLYDE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Congresswoman MILLER from Illinois, for leading on this important issue, this important Special Order, and for being a leader in defending religious freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and celebration of Faith Month. During Faith Month, we celebrate the enduring power of the Bible as God's revelation to His creation, offering guidance and the promise of eternal life through the Gospel of His word.

This sacred text has played a pivotal role in shaping the very fabric of our Nation, acting as a guard for liberty in the United States of America.

Over 400 years ago, settlers fled religious persecution in search of the New World, and the Bible became the cornerstone of our Founding Fathers' vision for a free government. Their wise leadership wove the Word of God into the foundation and core principles of our Nation, ensuring unity and success for generations to come.

Our Founders wisely and proudly proclaimed that our liberties are not bestowed by the government, but by our heavenly creator. As Thomas Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Independence, "We hold these truths to be self-