

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rushed down to the floor because I just read a headline that said that the Republicans are not headed to negotiations today. In fact, all of the Republicans have quit here on a Thursday morning and have left town.

Meanwhile, back home in Tampa, I know that one of my neighbors is expecting their Social Security check at the end of next week, and that is at risk.

I have another neighbor in St. Petersburg on a fixed income watching their retirement savings, expecting machinations in the market and worrying about the ability to pay rent.

Republicans have left Americans wondering: Why do you want to inflict job losses?

Why do you want to risk a recession?

Meanwhile, Democrats are here because we want to avoid those kinds of things. We want to avoid job losses, avoid falling into a recession, avoid harm to veterans, avoid harm to our neighbors, higher costs, harm to our small business owners.

Enough of this manufactured MAGA crisis. We have to put people over politics for a change and stop this careening from one crisis to another, with chaos inflicted by the GOP.

Put people over politics. Get back to work. Let's fix this for the people we represent.

#### DEBT CEILING CRISIS

(Mr. MFUME asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MFUME. Madam Speaker, I say to the ladies and gentlemen all over the country: Welcome to the United States Congress.

Only today, while we are facing a debt crisis, all of the Republicans have left to go out of town. They have gotten into their cars and their limos, and they are catching planes to go home while we are teetering on the brink of disaster.

What kind of leadership is that, KEVIN MCCARTHY?

We have heard the list. We know what the cuts are going to affect. They are going to affect law enforcement, veterans' affairs, food assistance, education, 401(k) retirement plans, pension plans, and cuts to Social Security payments.

How can you leave town and not be here to deal with this?

All we need are five Republicans to sign this discharge petition, and it goes away. It is over with.

Everybody else has left. So what you see here today are Members of the Democratic Party making an American argument that we have a responsibility to pay our debts.

They are gone. "Beam me up, Scotty." There is no intelligent life on that side of the aisle.

#### DEBT CEILING CRISIS

(Mr. CÁRDENAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Madam Speaker, House Republicans are playing political games and threatening to default on our country's debt.

The extreme MAGA Republicans have taken over the House of Representatives, and they are creating a crisis. It is a crisis that they created, they manufactured in their minds, and now they are trying to convince the American people what they are doing is right.

It is not right for them to make cruel cuts to hurt children, seniors, veterans, and teachers, threatening a devastating default on our debt.

Ladies and gentlemen, Madam Speaker, the Republicans gave billions of dollars in tax cuts to the biggest corporations and the wealthiest people in America. That was step one.

Now, step two, they are coming after you, the hardworking American people, saying now we are going to take away from you after you have actually done so much for your country.

They are stepping into this situation. They want to take food away from children and seniors. They want to see us lay off 100,000 teachers and take away childcare from children.

They are doing this only to try to score political points.

Let's get back to work, Republicans. Let's do the right thing.

#### DEBT CEILING CRISIS

(Mr. MEEKS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I ask, where are they? Where did they go?

Where are they?

Did they leave us for a recession, allowing revenues to fall and borrowing costs to skyrocket?

Where are they?

Capital markets alone will be out of reach, and many small businesses won't make their payroll at the end of the month.

Where are they?

The world is looking at us and questioning our leadership and where we are going to move and how we are going to save our own people and our values.

Where are they in this time of need?

I know where the Democrats are. They are right here talking about how we will stand for them and not allow this Republican-made default on America last.

Where are they?

They need to get back here and get back here now for the sake of the American people. The world is watching us. They are looking.

They are saying that we may not have to worry about our competitors.

We don't have to worry about them. We have to worry about our MAGA Re-

publicans who have decided to leave and not address the issues that are most important to America today.

Where are they?

Come on back here and get to work.

□ 1300

#### DEBT CEILING CRISIS

(Mr. GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, and still I rise; and I rise today with a very simple message. The debt ceiling has outlived its usefulness. It is time to eliminate the debt ceiling.

We have to do so because these issues that we are dealing with currently are only the genesis. The revelations will lead us to other issues involving the social agenda. Budgetary items will not be the only items on this extortion agenda.

It is time to end the debt ceiling and let us move forward and negotiate as we appropriately should and have done to these many years.

#### DEBT CEILING CRISIS

(Ms. UNDERWOOD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. UNDERWOOD. Madam Speaker, as a co-chair of the Democratic Policy and Communications Committee, I am so proud to hold the floor today with the united House Democratic Caucus.

Let's be crystal clear: The only reason we are here right now is because Republicans are playing politics with people's lives.

This crisis has been engineered to rip food out of the mouths of hungry families, take back the benefits our veterans have earned, and kick children out of childcare, or—they tell us—we can default on our debt and march right into a global economic disaster.

Now they have gone home for the holiday.

Madam Speaker, 87 Democrats spoke before me over the last several hours; 87 Democrats have pleaded with you on behalf of our constituents to keep the House in session, to prevent a default on our debt. Democrats held the floor.

I ask the Chair and Speaker MCCARTHY: Will you join us?

#### HOUSE REPUBLICANS DID OUR JOB

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from California (Mr. KILEY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KILEY. Madam Speaker, we just heard a lot of speeches at a very high volume on the topic of the debt ceiling, and many of them had an accompanying visual that said, "House Republicans are forcing a default on our debt."

Now, that is a very strange statement, given that the House has already passed a bill to stop us from defaulting on our debt. Weeks ago, the House passed a bill to raise the debt ceiling. I will say that again. The House has passed a bill to raise the debt ceiling that protects Social Security, protects Medicare, protects our veterans, and puts us on the more fiscally sustainable path that Americans are demanding.

Now, that bill is sitting in the Senate right now. The Senate could pass it at any time, but, of course, the Senate isn't even here this week, so they haven't done so.

As we speak, Speaker MCCARTHY and President Biden are negotiating. This is precisely what the overwhelming majority of Americans—Democrats, Republicans, Independents—say that they want: A bipartisan solution that raises the debt ceiling while making responsible reforms to spending.

The speeches we just heard are advocating precisely the opposite. They want to pull the rug out from under this ongoing negotiation, bring it to a stop, impose a one-sided, partisan solution that allows us to keep spending money without limit.

Indeed, I was particularly struck by a comment from the Congresswoman from New York, who in defense of this idea that we should keep spending money without limit said this: If anyone wants to entertain the thought that we spend too much, think about the last time that someone said the government does too much.

Those are her words. She said, think about the last time anyone said the government does too much.

Well, actually, my constituents say that a lot. The government does too much when it overtaxes and overregulates Americans.

The government certainly did too much when it shut down schools, shut down businesses, shut down churches, and imposed unlawful mandates.

The government does too much when it pays people more to not work than to work.

The government did too much when it went on a multitrillion-dollar spending spree that even Barack Obama's top economic adviser warned against and gave us this historic inflation crisis.

The government does too much when it unleashes 87,000 new IRS agents on unsuspecting American taxpayers.

The government does too much when it shuts down the Keystone pipeline and inhibits our ability to produce energy domestically and make us energy independent.

At the end of the day, though, we also need to ask, as we have seen the budget just grow and grow and grow without limit, what has the result of all that additional spending been?

Do you look around and see beautiful roads and infrastructure?

Do you see world-leading schools?

Do you see a prosperous economy?

No, of course not.

Therefore, I do think that as we make reforms to spending, we also need to focus on waste, fraud, and abuse. We need to focus not just on how much money is being spent but on how that money is being spent. Not just on the number of dollars that we are spending, but on the results that we are getting.

I am hoping that that is the new paradigm that will emerge from the negotiations going on right now between President Biden and Speaker McCarthy, a paradigm of customer service, citizen service, a performance-based government. That is what Americans deserve, and I encourage the President to negotiate in good faith with Speaker McCarthy to move us in that direction.

PRESIDENT BIDEN SHOULD WITHDRAW JULIE SU'S NOMINATION

Mr. KILEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss the latest disturbing revelations relating to President Biden's nominee for U.S. Labor Secretary, Julie Su. The nomination remains stalled, and for good reason.

Ms. Su's record of gross mismanagement, historic, unmatched mismanagement as California's labor secretary under Governor Gavin Newsom is now well understood. For example, under Ms. Su's tenure, \$32.6 billion in taxpayer funds were fraudulently paid to death row inmates, international criminal syndicates, and other fraudsters.

This fraud was possible because Su waived fraud prevention protections, actually removed guardrails despite repeated warnings, and she failed to follow the commonsense practices of other States, and then failed to take corrective actions as billions were lost to fraud.

At the same time that this fraud was occurring, by the way, Su improperly denied or delayed for weeks, months, sometimes indefinitely, legitimate unemployment claims for millions of Americans.

Madam Speaker, I have now spoken on this floor several times to make sure that Americans are aware of that track record and understand the risk that elevating Ms. Su poses.

It is a reasonable inference that a nominee who failed in her role as State labor secretary would likewise fail in the role as U.S. Labor Secretary, and certainly has failed to earn such a promotion.

Well, now that is no longer merely an inference. It is the reality because as her nomination has stalled, Ms. Su has all the while been serving as the Acting Secretary at the Department of Labor, and unsurprisingly, she has brought her record of mismanagement from California to the Department of Labor as Acting Secretary, with terrible consequences.

A recent report from The New York Times has uncovered evidence of a major spike in unaccompanied migrant minors, children, being funneled to work in dangerous jobs in violation of Federal labor law. The article is titled,

"As Migrant Children Were Put to Work, U.S. Ignored Warnings."

The Times reports the White House and Federal agencies were repeatedly alerted to signs of children at risk. The warnings were ignored or missed.

To take one example from The Times article: "... a boy working construction said he felt ashamed about not knowing how to read. He, too, was released in 2021—at age 12—and was immediately put to work by a man who had sponsored at least five children."

In another case: "At a day-labor pickup site, a 13-year-old released last year to a man he had never met, said he wished he could enroll in middle school and start learning English."

The problem is much broader than a handful of cases. Signs of migrant child labor have been uncovered inside industrial workplaces, including several auto part factories. Additionally, over 100 children were found working the overnight shift scouring meatpacking plants across the country, according to The Times.

Now, I should note, monitoring workplaces to prevent child labor is the job of the Department of Labor. Julie Su was Deputy Labor Secretary and is now Acting Labor Secretary. She held those roles as children were exploited to work in grueling conditions in violation of Federal labor law.

This pattern of conduct almost exactly mirrors Su's tenure in California: repeated warnings of a serious problem, little to no preventative action, followed by a refusal to accept responsibility or change course when her failures are brought to light.

Unfortunately, this isn't the only major concern that has emerged during Julie Su's short time as U.S. Acting Secretary of Labor. At the same time that children have been exploited in workplaces, Ms. Su has failed to properly manage the H-2A program for bringing in temporary agricultural workers on a legal basis.

Just this morning, House Education and the Workforce Committee Chairwoman VIRGINIA FOXX and I sent an oversight letter to Acting Secretary Su regarding serious delays in the processing of H-2A applications. In the letter we write: "It has come to the attention of the Committee on Education and the Workforce that employers applying for labor certifications at the Department of Labor for H-2A agricultural workers are facing substantial delays. These delays can be tremendously harmful for American agriculture. The arrival of workers can be delayed by weeks, causing inefficiencies and supply chain disruptions. . . . The planting and harvesting windows offer only a short amount of time to meet the season's needs. Our understanding is that this worsening problem is caused by unnecessary and avoidable delays at the Department of Labor."

Incredibly, a Department of Labor official, Mike Rios, who serves as regional agricultural enforcement director at the Wage and Hour Division, is

quoted as saying this: "You can see that the H-2A program literally is the purchase of humans to perform difficult work under terrible conditions, sometimes including subhuman living conditions."

This is a bipartisan program that has been created and has existed for a long time. But that is what he had to say about it. He is also quoted as saying: "You can throw a rock and hit a violation in the agricultural industry." That is a strange thing for him to say considering that it is his department and Julie Su's department, the Department of Labor, that is responsible for preventing those sorts of violations, for enforcing our labor laws.

Under Julie Su's leadership, the Department of Labor is failing to protect workers, including children, is unfairly attacking America's farmers, and is failing to support our agriculture sector's workforce needs under a program authorized by Federal law.

She has been Acting Secretary for only a matter of months and was Deputy Secretary for 2 years. In that time, she has directly transferred her record of mismanagement from California to the rest of the Nation.

I should say, in California right now, we have the Nation's largest budget deficit. We have the Nation's second highest unemployment rate. We have the Nation's lowest rate of income growth. We have the highest rate of poverty. This is the direct result of the mismanagement and the antiworker, antibusiness, antiopportunity policies from the likes of Julie Su and Gavin Newsom.

With everything we now know, to elevate Ms. Su would be to take our country down the failed path of California with eyes wide open. I urge President Biden to choose a different course. It is past time to withdraw this nomination.

#### FENTANYL TRAFFICKING MUST BE STOPPED

Mr. KILEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to support the Halt All Lethal Trafficking of Fentanyl Act, which passed the House of Representatives earlier today. This bill fixes a critical loophole and empowers law enforcement to continue to have the tools they need to prevent fentanyl distribution in communities across America.

We are seeing staggering amounts of fentanyl pour across the southern border, flooding our communities with illicit and lethal pills, killing tens of thousands of Americans every year. This is now the leading cause of death for young people in our country; more than car accidents, more than suicides, more than anything. It is affecting every community in our country, including my own.

During the State of the Union a few months ago, I was honored to have as my guests two of our Nation's leading advocates for fentanyl awareness, the parents of a young man named Zach Didier, who tragically lost his life to fentanyl. He was a senior at Whitney High School, a standout student with

no history of drug use, and from one pill, he tragically lost his life. His parents had to go through the gut-wrenching experience of seeing him get letters in the mail accepting him to some of our Nation's leading universities after he had passed away. There is simply no doubt that addressing the fentanyl crisis will save the lives of many of my constituents and of people in every community in our country.

□ 1315

This act, the Halt All Lethal Trafficking of Fentanyl Act, is a major step in that direction. In fact, the act itself is common sense.

Fentanyl is currently classified as a schedule I drug, which gives the Drug Enforcement Administration the power to enforce and arrest criminals involved in producing and distributing fentanyl. To avoid prosecution, criminals have begun to manufacture drugs nearly chemically identical to fentanyl.

Now, these drugs are just as deadly. They mimic fentanyl in every way, but they don't fall under the technical definition of fentanyl.

In response, the Department of Justice and DEA temporarily classified these fentanyl-related substances as schedule I drugs. This commonsense act makes this temporary classification permanent rather than letting it expire.

Giving law enforcement the tools they need to prosecute those responsible and involved in the fentanyl crisis, from producers to dealers, is a critical component of the multipronged approach needed to save lives and stop fentanyl from destroying our communities. We know this approach works.

After the DEA classified fentanyl-related substances as schedule I drugs, law enforcement encounters of these fentanyl copycat drugs fell by over 90 percent.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues in the Senate to support a proven measure that will save lives and to vote "aye" on the Halt All Lethal Trafficking of Fentanyl Act, which just passed the House today with bipartisan support and has the support of President Biden, as well.

#### REPLACING SENATOR FEINSTEIN

Mr. KILEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to address the situation surrounding the senior Senator from California, DIANNE FEINSTEIN.

The latest news is that our Governor, Gavin Newsom, is now talking about appointing Oprah to the U.S. Senate as a replacement.

Now, Gavin Newsom has been talking about replacing Senator FEINSTEIN for over 2 years. He started publicly speculating in 2021 about who he would replace, and at that point, Senator FEINSTEIN was barely a third of the way through her term.

California's other senator, ALEX PADILLA, himself first got his office through appointment by Governor Newsom, so if there was, in fact, an ap-

pointment for Senator FEINSTEIN, then both of our U.S. Senators would have been handpicked not by millions of voters but by a single person to initially get their jobs.

At this moment, pressure is coming from all directions when it comes to this situation and with a race for 2024 already underway. A number of sitting Members of the House have actually overtly called on Senator FEINSTEIN to resign.

RO KHANNA said: "It is time for Senator FEINSTEIN to resign. We need to put the country ahead of personal loyalty. While she has had a lifetime of public service, it is obvious she can no longer fulfill her duties. Not speaking out undermines our credibility as elected representatives of the people." That is what he said.

We also had Congresswoman TLAIB, as well as Congresswoman KAMLAGER-DOVE, make similar comments, urging the Senator to vacate her office.

The individual who is being supported by Congressman KHANNA, BARBARA LEE, told KQED that she would accept an appointment to the job if Governor Gavin Newsom offered it to her.

Meanwhile, Speaker NANCY PELOSI, who, of course, herself is from California, is supporting another candidate, Congressman SCHIFF, and there have been a number of recent headlines related to this.

This comes from Politico, which says that Feinstein's primary caregiver is PELOSI's daughter. The subheading says: "A quiet caretaking arrangement has raised questions about whether Nancy Pelosi has the ailing Senator's personal interests at heart."

Another headline from Washington Examiner: "Pelosi's secret campaign to aid Feinstein and get Schiff into the Senate."

From FOX News: "Pelosi's office denies her daughter is aiding Feinstein to help Adam Schiff win a Senate seat."

This is just a mess. None of it right now is about what is in the interest of Senator FEINSTEIN, the interest of our State, or the interest of our country. It is all about politics.

I believe the solution is to do away with the possibility of a gubernatorial appointment altogether. That way, Senator FEINSTEIN can make a decision on her own terms. She will know that whether she finishes her term or whether she steps down before the end of her term, it is California voters who will decide who her successor will be. That is what will allow her to make a decision without all the distractions of politics at the moment.

To that end, I have introduced a constitutional amendment doing away with appointed Senators. Now, this would make it so the Senate is the same as the House. You don't have any appointed Members of the House who step onto this floor. Yet, you have had a lot of appointed Senators. I want to make it the same way, that if you want to represent your State as a United

States Senator, you need to be elected to do so.

Indeed, this is really an anachronism, this process of appointing Senators in the case of a vacancy, and it has been subject to rampant abuse.

We had Governor Rob Blagojevich go to prison after he essentially auctioned off Barack Obama's vacated Senate seat. We have had Governors who have appointed their family members, who have appointed their spouses. Several Governors have even appointed themselves.

I am calling on Members of the House and Senate to join me in passing that to do away with this anachronistic, antidemocratic process of appointing Senators.

In the meantime, this almost certainly will not take effect prior to the current situation with Senator FEINSTEIN being resolved, so I am calling on the California State Legislature, which has oversight over election laws and itself is responsible for creating the procedure for gubernatorial appointment, to address the situation.

There is actually a little bit of a backstory here. When Senator PADILLA was appointed to the Senate following the election of KAMALA HARRIS as Vice President, I raised an issue at the time with the legality of that appointment. Actually, the California State Legislative Analyst's Office, the legislative counsel's office in California, agreed with me that it would not be constitutional for the Governor to appoint a Senator who would then serve out the remainder of KAMALA HARRIS' term, which was set to expire in 2022.

The reason for that is that the Constitution, the 17th Amendment, only allows temporary appointments. So, if you appoint someone who serves the rest of the term, that is not temporary. That is permanent.

What the legislature did in response to the legal issue I raised, and that the legislative counsel's office agreed with me on, is they passed a bill to say that they will have a special election to determine who the new Senator is going to be and who is going to finish the term, but we are not going to have that special election until the next election. That actually happened in November 2022 at the exact same time we held the election for who would serve the new 6-year term.

It was an absurdity. We literally had the same election on the ballot twice. One was for the new 6-year term, and the other was just for the last couple of months, the lame duck portion of the existing term.

That was the way our legislature figured out to give basically as much advantage to the Governor's chosen appointed Senator as possible while still abiding by the letter, if not the spirit, of the 17th Amendment.

What I have been in conversations with some members of the legislature about is that they should change this law or, at the very least, make an exception to it for the current situation

with Senator FEINSTEIN, to say that if there is a vacancy, then there will not be an appointment, that there will be an immediate special election, and that is how the successor will be chosen for the remainder of Senator FEINSTEIN's term, which is set to expire in 2024.

I think that this is what will allow for fairness in the process of choosing our next Senator. It will give millions of Californians a say, rather than just one individual, and it will give Senator FEINSTEIN the ability to make a decision that is best for her, best for the State, and best for the country.

I urge that action on the part of the California Legislature and Governor.

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

#### RENAMING THE RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, and still I rise. And still I rise a proud descendant of the enslaved people who are the foundational mothers and fathers of the United States of America.

They are the foundational mothers and fathers because many of them had their entire lives sacrificed so that the country can have the economic foundation that it had in the early stages of its existence.

These foundational mothers and fathers are the persons who were kidnapped, brought to this country, placed into slavery, forced into labor, centuries of labor, not compensated, no remuneration. I am a proud descendant, and I am a proud descendant because they ought to be respected.

It is time to respect the foundational mothers and fathers who laid the economic foundation upon which this Nation stands today.

I am also proud to be here today to speak about the conscience agenda.

We want to make sure that we have a slavery remembrance day, August 20. On August 20, 1619, the *White Lion* docked in Point Comfort, Virginia, near what we now call Norfolk, Virginia. On this *White Lion* were persons who were placed into slavery in this country.

August 20, 1619, a moment in time that will impact the rest of time, we will never be able to escape the fact that it happened. It was a seminal moment in time. August 20 ought to be slavery remembrance day.

We ought to also do something to acknowledge those persons whom I call the foundational mothers and fathers. I am a proud descendant of them.

In 1956, we accorded a Congressional Gold Medal to Confederate soldiers, to those persons who would enslave persons or maintain slavery. This Con-

gress did it, a Congressional Gold Medal.

Well, why not have a Congressional Gold Medal for the enslaved, the foundational mothers and fathers?

This is part of the conscience agenda, a Congressional Gold Medal for the enslaved.

In this country that I love, I salute the flag; I say the Pledge of Allegiance; and I stand for the national anthem. It means something to me to be an American.

By the way, the greatness of the country won't be measured by whether I do these things. The greatness of the country will be measured by whether I would defend those who choose not to salute the flag, who choose not to say the Pledge of Allegiance. The greatness of America is in how we tolerate persons who have opinions that are not popular.

That is the greatness of America, in part. There are many other aspects of it.

The truth is, in this country that I am proud to be a part of, proud to say I am an American—the United States is my home; the origin of my descendants was far away—we revere the enslavers and revile the enslaved.

How can we possibly allow this to continue? These were human beings. They merit a Congressional Gold Medal.

If we can give a Congressional Gold Medal to the enslavers, the Confederate soldiers, then we can accord one to the enslaved people who were the foundational mothers and fathers who worked for hundreds of years to make this country the great Nation that it is.

That is all a part of the conscience agenda. Today, however, having spoken of these things briefly, I am going to focus on the third item on the conscience agenda.

The third item on the conscience agenda is removing the name of Richard Russell from the Russell Senate Office Building.

To properly address this, I have to lay a predicate. We have to talk first about beneficial bigotry.

□ 1330

And to properly explain beneficial bigotry, we have to address a concept. It is this notion that those who tolerate bigotry perpetuate bigotry. Those who tolerate bigotry, because of that toleration of bigotry, you are perpetuating it because you're not doing what you can to stop it.

We ought not tolerate bigotry. The Russell Senate Office Building is named after Richard Russell, a self-proclaimed white supremacist. That is what he called himself. He was a person who fought antilynching legislation. That means he did not want us to pass antilynching legislation.

He was a person who fought integration. If he had his way, there is a good likelihood I would not be standing here today. He was the person who coauthored the Southern Manifesto. Richard Russell, his name is on the Russell