

The presence of unsecured firearms in the home increases the risk of unintentional and intentional shootings.

It is long past the time to do something about the epidemic of gun violence in our nation—the nation that prides itself on protecting our children and the future generations.

If we want to protect the youth, we must start by learning how to effectively store guns in the homes that choose to have them.

The Kimberly Vaughan Firearm Safe Storage Act will help protect our children and adults from senseless gun violence through simple gun storage legislation.

I encourage my colleagues in the House and on the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force to push this bill forward so we can proactively and proactively act on preventing firearm violence in America.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her remarks, her good work on gun violence prevention efforts, and her dedication to making sure that we pass the laws that will keep our kids and our communities safe.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, we have had Army combat veterans, Marine Corps combat veterans, hunters, gun owners, gun collectors, and moms and dads on this floor tonight asking and pleading with the Republican leadership to allow gun violence prevention legislation to come to this floor for debate and for a vote.

Mr. Speaker, can you give us any idea when your leadership will be bringing gun violence prevention bills to the floor for action?

Sadly, that is what I was afraid of. Silence. Just like after every mass shooting, silence.

There has to be an effort on the part of this leadership to deal with this issue that is disrupting communities and leading to thousands and thousands of deaths.

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

STATE OF THE AMERICAN DREAM TODAY

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

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle decrying the alleged lack of action by those on my side of the aisle with respect to gun violence and with respect to guns generally.

□ 1930

I think it is important to note the primary driver of the current malaise and the current dangers upon citizens by those with guns comes from criminals and those who have mental health problems.

A full one-third of Americans are currently putting themselves out as depressed according to polls. We have mental health issues and drug issues with our children. We have problems with people who feel socially detached.

I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that when I was a child, about the time I was born, fully one-half of American households had weapons and they had guns. Fewer than one-third do today.

The fact is we have a problem and an epidemic of people with mental health issues and we have a lack of resolve of leadership in this country to deal with those or to deal with the criminals perpetrating crimes. That is the truth.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle rush to say that they want to get the guns. The fact is we need to stop the criminals. I was a Federal prosecutor. I spent my time in the United States Attorneys' Office targeting criminals with guns and putting bad guys behind bars. There has been a movement of late to allow these criminals back out on our streets. That is a mistake.

There has been a longstanding movement to not treat those with mental health problems, and it is getting infinitely worse with these devices, iPhones, and all of the focus that our young are directing towards electronic devices rather than engaging with their fellow mankind.

We know it, we see it, and we do nothing about it.

We rage against TikTok because of its relationship to China.

Why don't we rage against the extent to which these are addictive devices putting garbage in the minds of our children and creating environments where children get detached from reality and detached from society?

We see it unfold before our very eyes, and the response among leaders of this country is to form a task force. You don't need a task force to understand that our society is breaking down, and you don't need a task force to understand that our communities are breaking down.

This is what the American people are feeling on a daily basis. When I talk to my constituents, the people I run into, the people I run into on airplanes, Americans I don't represent and Americans I do represent, they know that something is very, very wrong with our country.

That is the truth. That is what the American people know.

Not just with politicians and not just with elective leaders, not just with Congress, and not just with the economy, but that something is just fundamentally wrong and fundamentally broken with our way of life.

They are not wrong. Just a couple of weeks ago, we celebrated Independence Day. One line from that document which was written specifically about and to King George citing the death warrants for all those who signed it, he said, Jefferson wrote, they wrote, they said that he—the king—has abdicated government here by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us.

How different is that from our current situation?

The elites in this country are waging war against us. They are waging war

against our values, waging wars against our prosperity, and waging war against our natural rights as parents, as citizens, and as individuals.

The average Americans right out there today listening just want to play by the rules. They want to go to school, they want to get a job, they want to buy a house, they want to support their family, and they want to raise their kids. They want to raise their kids to be happy, they want their kids to be free, and they want a society—more importantly—they want a family that is flourishing and happy and that can achieve. All of that is what we historically call the American Dream.

What is the state of the American Dream today?

If I ask that question, half the people in the room would be staring at their dadgum iPhones because we don't engage with people anymore.

If I said this in the middle of a meeting of my colleagues, or if I said it in a restaurant, how many times do you see everybody just staring at these things?

The question here is: What happened to the American Dream?

If my colleagues were in this room—of course, they are not—I would ask: Do you believe the American Dream can be achieved by your children and by your grandchildren today?

Do you believe it?

Do you believe it is attainable?

Do you believe that if they play by the rules that they will achieve the dream?

Or do you think that the rich and the powerful—the large corporations, the government, your own leaders—are rigging the system to protect their own status and to protect their own wealth against your freedom and your prosperity?

We have a system where too often today, crony policies help big, woke corporations make windfall profits while families struggle with inflation and small businesses struggle to stay afloat amid a mountain of regulatory burdens and costs. That is the truth.

Everybody I talk to can't afford labor, they can't afford their supplies, they can't afford a car, they can't buy a new vehicle because it has been regulated to death, and they can barely afford their electricity bills.

That is the truth of everyday Americans right now, and they are wondering why? What happened to that American Dream?

The elites, on the other hand, bailed out Wall Street, and they forced Main Street to pay for it.

Now they are doing it again. Wall Street got a \$1 trillion bailout after a heavy hand at tanking the economy, and they are making more money than ever now.

This year the Federal Government gave a \$22 billion bailout to Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank of New York.

The administration only cares about their own. Treasury Secretary Yellen

said that small and regional banks wouldn't get the same treatment.

What exactly does "too big to fail" mean?

"Too big to fail" means I am going to protect the fat cats down the street, but you at home are left holding the bag.

Since 2008, corporate profits have increased by 250 percent in the last 15 years. Hourly wages have increased less than 50 percent.

Mr. Speaker, you say: Oh, CHIP, you sound like a Democrat.

What I am trying to say is we have a situation where, as the Founders predicted, the power structure in this town is too tilted to the power structure of Wall Street, and too tilted to the power structure in corporate boardrooms across this country.

Hardworking Americans are the ones who can't make it, and we should be here fighting for them, but are we?

In 1989, the typical American could provide middle-class essentials for a family of four by working 40 weeks a year leaving time for vacation or holidays. It will take that same individual 62 weeks to provide the same life for his or her family in 2022.

Think about that, Mr. Speaker. That is just 30 years.

What are we doing?

The political elites shipped jobs overseas while enriching themselves off the Chinese Communist officials who are taking those jobs and threatening our supply chain.

What do we do?

We respond with the CHIPS Act. Don't blame me. The CHIPS Act basically just increases that flow to China. It is nuts. You can't even make it up, Mr. Speaker, but that is what we do in the people's House.

U.S. manufacturing activity contracted in June for the eighth straight month declining 0.9 percentage points for May. It was the longest period of contraction in U.S. manufacturing since the Great Recession.

During COVID, we shut down the greatest economy in the history of the world. People got laid off, they lost jobs, and small businesses shut down. I have read stats of 100,000 small businesses getting absolutely whacked during the COVID hysteria driven by Dr. Fauci and the cronies in this town, but the wealthiest Americans got 40 percent richer during that same time.

Now, again, I am a believer in lifting all boats, but that is only true if the free enterprise and the free market system in this country is released unfettered to allow Americans to achieve the American Dream, but right now it is stacked, and it is stacked in favor of a small handful of elites against the hardworking average American.

In 2023, as I said before, we have seen three of the largest bank failures in American history. First Republic, \$212 billion; Silicon Valley, \$209 billion; and Signature Bank, \$110 billion. There we were racing to bail out. That is not capitalism, Mr. Speaker. That is not

free enterprise. Rushing in to bail people out is the elites protecting their own against the hardworking American.

For decades we have wasted money that isn't ours on policies and projects no one wants, and then we pass the credit card bill down to the next generation.

In the months since this body extended the debt ceiling for another 18 months until January of 2025, in the infinite wisdom of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, we have already amassed another \$1 trillion in debt since Memorial Day, and yet everyone in this body except for a handful gleefully skipped away after saying: Sure, let's raise the debt another \$4 trillion. It isn't going to be \$4 trillion.

When are we going to get serious about what we are doing here?

What about wars?

We are now 21 years—22 years—into the authorization of the use of military force post-9/11, and we have not updated it. The 2002 authorization of force in Iraq—Saddam Hussein has been dead 15 years—still exists. We have an authorization of force from 1991 that still exists and 1957 that still exists.

Why?

Because there is a cadre of people in this town who make a large sum of money and get a whole lot of power when there are endless wars continuing for this town to fund with borrowed money driving up inflation, killing jobs, and killing the American Dream. All of us people in this Chamber are running around talking about we have to do it for the defense.

For fiscal year 2022, the United States Federal Government spent \$8 trillion on the post-9/11 wars in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, and elsewhere—\$8 trillion, and that is not talking about the thousands of lives lost, the tens of thousands of lives permanently impacted through injury and post-traumatic stress disorder.

When the bill comes due, what do we do?

We raise the ceiling on what we can borrow as I said a minute ago. The \$32 trillion we just increased to \$36 trillion. CBO reported a \$1.4 trillion deficit in the first 9 months of fiscal year 2023. That is \$875 billion higher than the year before.

We spent more on so-called COVID relief from 2000 to 2021, around \$6 trillion, than we did in the 3½ years of World War II.

Think about that, Mr. Speaker, World War II in current dollars amounted to \$4.1 trillion. We are running around like a bunch of scared ninnies with masks and spent \$6 trillion.

Why?

We could because we just wrote a blank check.

□ 1945

Since the Biden administration took office, prices have increased over 16

percent. The annual cost of inflation has been estimated to harm American households upwards of \$8,900.

Household debt has increased by \$2.9 trillion since the end of 2019. In the first quarter of 2023, aggregate household debt increased by \$148 billion. Think about this.

How about education? We just want the taxes that we pay to teach our kids what they need to know to succeed in the real world, but teachers' unions and bureaucrats want to teach them that merit and achievement are bad, that skin color defines all of us, that there isn't man and woman, and that America is evil.

Meanwhile, their same beliefs want to undermine the basic parental right to raise their children in their own values and push harmful gender ideology on them.

In Cupertino, California, third graders were required to deconstruct their racial identities and then rank themselves according to their power and privilege.

In Evanston, Illinois, students listened to "Not My Idea," a book about whiteness which states that whiteness is bad. An advisory board in Virginia's Loudoun County Public Schools demanded that teachers be dismissed if they criticized the district's equity training inspired by critical race theory.

The President of the American Federation of Teachers vowed the union will fight "cultural warriors" that want to deprive students of a robust understanding of our common history.

In Lexington, Massachusetts, fourth graders were taught to articulate what gender identity is and why it is important to use nonbinary language.

They give our kids pornographic and sexualized books such as "Gender Queer: A Memoir," an explicit pornographic book; "Flamer"—good grief—a graphic book about young boys performing sexual acts at a summer camp; "This Book is Gay," a book containing instructions on the "ins and outs of gay sex."

I am on the floor of the House of Representatives, and I am reading this garbage. Our kids are being given this garbage, and you want to know why parents are dismayed, why parents are frustrated, why the American people are left scratching their head, saying something is terribly wrong.

At Round Rock ISD in Texas, at Walsh Middle School a training presentation instructed teachers not to tell parents if a student tells them they identify as transgender or nonbinary.

When the children of the elites go to the right schools, they get the right jobs. Everyone else gets to rack up debt to get a job in a hamstrung economy with a useless degree that is based more on indoctrination than on education.

Tuition is skyrocketing. We are not even able to afford the garbage education that the elites are foisting on the American people.

Now, if you get through that maze, and you want to buy a house, you can't. You can't afford it. In 1985, the average single family home was \$82,800. In 2019, they would have spent \$313,000; in 2020, \$391,900; and in 2022, it reached \$540,000. How can you afford that?

Mr. Speaker, 30-year mortgage rates have gone from 2 to 3 to percent to 7 percent in under a year. In 2021 with sub-3 percent interest rates, a \$400,000 home cost \$604,000 over 30 years. Today, with 7 percent interest rates, that same \$400,000 home, which you can't even get in most places in this country, costs more than a million dollars over the 30-year span, interest accounting for 157 percent of the home price. Think about that. Earlier this year, mortgage demand plunged to the lowest level since 1995.

What about healthcare; a system where crony policies help big corporations make windfall profits while families struggle with inflation and small businesses struggle to stay afloat?

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, medical and health service managers, which are described as managers that, "plan, direct, and coordinate the business activities of healthcare providers," i.e., bureaucrats—they might be private bureaucrats, but they are very publicly funded bureaucrats through private corporations, so-called—they are slated to see 32 percent growth in jobs from 2019 to 2029. Not doctors; bureaucrats. This is compared to a 4 percent growth rate for physicians and surgeons if we can even get them educated.

Health insurance companies rake in roughly \$1 trillion per year. Health and medical insurance companies placed second in biggest industries by revenue in the United States only behind retirement and pension plans.

I want to pause for a second. I was blessed to go to the National Museum of Military Vehicles in Dubois, Wyoming, 2 weeks ago when I was there around Independence Day. That museum is incredible, by the way. I recommend it to all listening.

A large part of the museum is dedicated to what we achieved in World War II. If you ask the average American what we achieved in World War II, at least those who were educated and informed enough to even tell you what World War II was, they will tell you that we beat Nazism, we beat Hitler, we beat Imperial Japan. Again, that is if we are lucky.

The fact is, it was an unbelievable demonstration of American industrial might. Absent our industrial strength, we lose. That is the truth. If we had not been able to develop what we developed, to take our manufacturing capacity and build thousands of planes, thousands of Jeeps, thousands of boats, thousands of guns, there is no way we would have been able to carry out what we were able to carry out in World War II.

Now, come back. What I just said; what is our number one industry? Re-

tirement and pension plans. What is our second? Medical insurance companies. We have major financial institutions. Where is our industrial base?

You want to beat China? Good luck. Mind you, they drove us all the way back in Korea in 1951, the Chinese did, or 1952, somewhere around there. Here we are talking about beating China, and we don't have the industrial capacity to sneeze at China right now.

That should worry everybody in this Chamber, but instead, we get nothing but fits of angst over social engineering, over equity, over LGBTQ, over all manners of apologizing for past sins. We have a world to go engage in.

The deals they strike with the government, these healthcare bureaucrats, most recently through ObamaCare, guarantees their growth. Anthem had a 344 percent increase in government revenue from 2010 to 2020. United Healthcare, 198 percent increase in government revenue during the same period. Cigna, Anthem, United Healthcare and Humana have seen an average increase of 562 percent in their stock prices from January 11 to January 2021.

In 2016, 60 percent of the Nation's top five health insurers' revenue came from Medicare and Medicaid, up from \$92 billion in 2010. In 2022, big insurance revenues reached \$1.25 trillion and profits of almost \$70 billion, a 300 percent increase in revenue and a 287 percent increase in profits.

The CBO estimates that Federal subsidies for health insurance for Americans under 65 will reach \$1 trillion in 2023.

Where is the talk about doctors? Where is the talk about getting care? That is a corporate crony enrichment plan that is undermining your ability to get healthcare. Be worried about your ability to afford care and even have the care if you can afford it; to have a doctor if you want to get one; to choose the doctor if you want to choose because these bureaucrats are going to tell you who you can see. They are going to tell you when you can get care.

They say it is private healthcare. It is not. We have single-payer healthcare. It is just inefficient corporate cronyism running amuck and a bunch of people in this town getting rich and lobbyists getting rich and people in this body not doing a dang thing about it while you can't get care. You can't figure out how to afford your bills.

Energy; a whole other thing. Wealthy people drive around in expensive electric vehicles while climate czar John Kerry this week flies to China, spewing a trail of CO₂ so he can go preach about the climate in China. You can't even make this up.

Orwell would just be down here somewhere between laughing and crying. The average American is struggling just to put gas in their car and keep the lights on. They can't afford a new car because of these anti-energy poli-

cies from the radical left, but unfortunately, too often embraced by my own colleagues on this side of the aisle.

In 2021, American energy prices spiked 29 percent, according to BLS, and a further 7 percent in 2022. Gas prices jumped nearly 50 percent in 2021, but here is the thing: I read somewhere online the other day the average price of a new car is almost \$70,000. I don't know if that is accurate. I have to go do some research, but I can tell you from personal experience, it is a lot.

Why? Why do you think Ford is shutting down certain lines? Why do you think General Motors is shutting down certain lines? Because my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and this White House want to live in their climate utopia, and they are shutting down American production and capacity to build the internal combustion engine, all so they can push electronic vehicles that nobody can afford and nobody can drive from Austin to Midland or Austin to Houston.

We are literally funding the destruction of reliable energy in this country and thereby diminishing it around the world.

The Democrats' Inflation Reduction Act gave \$1.2 trillion in crony subsidies to unreliable forms of energy. This summer, for the first time in history, the Texas grid will see more energy demand than it can meet with reliable electricity generation. That is in Texas.

The EIA estimates these subsidies could make wind and solar account for 60 percent of U.S. generation by 2050, at which point the entire mind-numbed, indoctrinated youth of this country stand up and applaud and say, isn't that awesome.

What they don't know is that it isn't awesome because it is unreliable energy that increases the cost, has enormous environmental impacts, and is doing nothing to significantly drop CO₂ production because China and India are driving CO₂ production.

These same climate doomsayers try to sell us unreliable, more expensive energy policies, which empower our enemies, the Chinese Communist Party. Chinese companies are eligible for these climate credits that we just passed. Again, you can't make this up.

Can you imagine in 1939 saying, hey, guys, I have a good idea. Let's create a way for the American taxpayer to subsidize Adolf Hitler. We are doing that. We are going, oh, let's go subsidize the Chinese Communist Party.

Mr. Speaker, 80 percent of the solar panels installed in the United States come from Chinese firms. China controls 77 percent of EV battery manufacturing.

Meanwhile, China's building two new coal-powered plants per week in 2022, as they did, on top of the 1,100 coal-fired plants they already have. We have about 250.

We are running around whining like a bunch of losers, apologizing for our ability to produce reliable energy and clean-burning natural gas.

We are not building any new nuclear power. We are just running around saying subsidize, subsidize, subsidize wind and solar so we can weaken our grid, empower the Chinese, all so people can feel good about themselves while they drive their Tesla around.

□ 2000

What the average American notices all around them in every part of their daily lives is that systematic, political, cultural rot. I use that term “rot” intentionally. When something rots, it decays from the inside. Even though it looks fine, it is falling apart.

As some have noticed, they have said America will not lose to a foreign enemy; we will lose to ourselves. Even though they might not see it, every American can tell that something is not right. They can tell that something is amiss. There is something rotten in this country right now because that is what we are seeing happen to our way of life.

My friends on the other side of the aisle love to lecture us all about the importance of our democracy. The reality is that we are currently living in a cultural oligarchy, a bureaucratic oligarchy, where the rich and the powerful protect their status and prestige at the cost of the American Dream while they preach to us.

These elite forces in the government, corporate America, and our education system feel different, but they are all on the same team. They are people who profit even as the rest of us suffer. They are the ones who set the rules. They are the ones who destroy anyone who steps out of line. They are the ones who rig the system from far away so that we don't notice the rigging.

The rigging starts here in Washington, but it oozes into the school board meetings. It oozes into the local council meetings. It oozes throughout the corporate boardrooms, HR offices, television shows.

There is an expression in Texas: “All hat, no cattle.” The lesson it imparts is that if you want to talk a big game, you need to back it up with action.

The American people are fed up with words. They deserve action. We can't promise a wall and not build a wall. We can't say we are going to protect freedom and then cave to Dr. Fauci and let him retire scot-free. You can't tell Americans you are going to protect their money and then get distracted in hiding behind Hunter Biden's drama and his family's money. We can't say we are against a two-tiered system of justice and not hold this President and this Cabinet—Mayorkas, Garland, all of them—accountable for targeting Americans and abandoning and endangering their country and making a mockery of the Constitution.

America's systemic rot is too deep for empty promises and bumper sticker slogans. America deserves leaders who are not ashamed of the country they lead and do not make us ashamed of them. America deserves leaders who

not only see the dangers of preventable decline but ones who will actually fight to defend it. We cannot back down. We cannot shy away from the fight.

Right now, today, on the floor of the House of Representatives, this week, next week, next month, through the appropriations process, through the end of the year, all next year, heading into a Presidential election, we are fighting for the soul of this country. That is what is at stake.

To borrow from General Washington on July 2, 1776, “The fate of unborn millions will now depend, under God, on” our courage and our conduct. “We have, therefore, to resolve to conquer or die.”

That is the kind of resolve America needs from us, from this country, from Americans. That is what we owe the American people. As deep as the rot currently is, we cannot let it continue to destroy and undermine the American Dream. We are duty bound to save that American Dream for our kids and our grandkids. That is the truth. It is time for Americans to win again. That is our calling in this Chamber.

I am proud to have my friend from Pennsylvania here with me. I said it would be 30 minutes; I went 35. I know of no greater patriot, a man who wore the uniform of his country and served honorably and serves honorably in the United States Congress. I am proud to call him my friend.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY), my friend.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to be with my good friend from Texas, standing up for all Americans and all of America in the face of this place known as the swamp.

There was a time when the country revered Washington, D.C., and no one ever would think of it as the swamp. I was listening to your comments about World War II and visiting the museum this summer. I hope to visit it myself.

I think about just recently the use of the Defense Production Act. In the past, it was used to build tanks, airplanes, munitions, the equipment that the American soldier and servicemember needed to go fight tyranny, fascism, and totalitarianism and be successful.

This government said to the factory that was building a car, that was building some other machine implement: Whoa, hold on a second here, bigger calling here. We have to save the world from tyranny, so you are no longer going to build a car. You are going to build a jeep. You are no longer going to build something for agricultural production. You are going to build a howitzer.

Where are we in 2023? Well, we are going to use the Defense Production Act to force companies—there is no declaration of war, but we are going to force companies to build solar panels and batteries and electric vehicles, windmills, all sourced—my good friend from Texas already talked about where

the sourcing of these raw materials come from. Even if you are not buying the solar panel from China, 90 percent of polysilicon comes from China, so we are forcing companies to build these things that, by the way, don't help.

If you are talking about carbon, it actually costs more to produce these things than it does just to produce the energy that they in turn produce. That aside, it is using the Defense Production Act to force companies in America to do this because of a political whim.

I make the argument that this is not needed and is not needed at this time, and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle don't agree. I am astounded. I am astounded that some Okie from Muskogee, a guy from Dillsburg, Pennsylvania, who has read the Constitution and says, my goodness, it is pretty obvious. The Federal Government is limited in its powers—limited. We are not supposed to be telling people what kind of car they can drive or if they are a business and want to produce one thing, and we are telling them, no, they are going to produce batteries instead because we demand it.

Today in a hearing, the Energy Department is proposing rules for new efficiency standards on dryers, washing machines, dishwashers, refrigerators, you name it. If you have a gas stove in your home, they are going to exclude 95 percent of the market. They are saying, well, it is not a ban. I say to myself: Man, I am just a guy from Dillsburg who used to work with his hands underneath a car. I went to votech school. If I understand that the Federal Government shouldn't be telling me this, why doesn't the rest of the country understand it? Am I missing something?

I am not missing anything because when I did spend a week home, just like Mr. ROY did, the great Representative from the State of Texas, I can imagine what he heard. I will tell you what I heard. Time after time at the gas station, when I came out of the movie theater with my wife, when I am at the grocery store, people walk up to me, and they say: Keep fighting.

They don't even tell me what to keep fighting on. They know what CHIP ROY knows, what SCOTT PERRY knows, that this country is rotting from the inside. They can't necessarily explain how it happened or what it is, but they know that they can't afford their groceries. They know that they can't afford to move to a bigger home. They know that they can't afford a mortgage on a car. They know that when their parents had a house, the biggest bill they had was their mortgage, and the second biggest bill if they decided to take out a car loan was a car loan. Now, the second biggest bill people have is health insurance. Health insurance—I thought we solved that problem in the United States of America.

Do you know who sounds like they are getting rich? It is not doctors. It is somebody in the middle. It is bureaucrats siphoning off all the money.

This town created it. This town solved the problem that it created by making the problem worse. Now my bosses and CHIP's bosses, my constituents and yours, can't afford to live their lives in America and be healthy, take a vacation, have a decent car, a decent home, a decent education for their children.

They are making choices: "Well, I don't know. My house has a gas stove in it. I can't afford to rewire it for an electric stove, but the bureaucrats at the Department of Energy"—I talked to her today. I said: Do you know what is involved in changing from a gas stove to an electric stove? Do you know what is involved? Well, she had no idea, but thank goodness my colleague on the other side of the aisle said, well, if you have to run electricity, we have a \$4,000 grant provided by the Federal Government to do that.

The citizens who get up early in the morning, pack a lunch box, and kiss their kids good-bye are paying for that \$4,000. They don't want to. They can't afford to. They want the \$4,000 for their kids and their home, not the Federal Government to tell them how to spend it and what they are working for. It is absurd and obscene.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania, and I want to pick up on what he has observed when he goes home to Pennsylvania, when he is traveling around this country. He has observed what I observe, having individuals pull me aside in an airport, on an airplane, driving around, at a gas station in Texas, at a gas station in Colorado, at a gas station in Virginia, all over this country, they pull me aside and say: Thank you. Keep fighting.

Just like you said, they don't give details. They get it. They see it. They want someone to stand up and fight for this country because they see this country slipping through our fingers.

As has long been said, where else are we going to go? What else are we going to do? As President Reagan said, there is nowhere else to go. This is it.

We are the beacon of hope for the world, and we are still the greatest country in the history of the world, but we are giving it away. We are losing it through a cultural rot and decay where elites are telling us that we have to apologize for being Americans.

In that museum that I walked through in Dubois, Wyoming, there is a great graphic—I don't have it in front of me, although I might be able to pull up a picture—that talks about the tens of millions of lives in this world that have been liberated by Americans.

Yes, we are an imperfect country. Yes, we have committed sins because all of us fall short of the glory of God. Yes, but we are a strong, righteous country that has bled for good around this world. Even in the center of sin, even in 1861 to 1865, we bled so that people around this world could be free, so they can know what it means to prosper.

Here we sit in this Chamber, in the luxury of the protections bought by the people before us, giving it away, shamefully dismissing it, undermining the American Dream for our kids and grandkids. It defies all logic to do that, but the Founders knew that it was likely.

Our job is to break that. When people ask me today: Why did you vote yes on five bills on the floor of the House today to say that we need to essentially end previously declared emergencies when you know, Chip, that there are bad guys connected to those emergencies and that we are using our resources to freeze their assets, take their money away, clamp down on them? Do you just want to walk away from that?

No, I want to restore order in this town. I want to restore order in this country, in this government, by saying you don't get to declare an emergency in 2003 and keep operating 21 years later under an emergency.

Come back to Congress. Let's figure out what we need to do. Let's figure out our authorizations of force. Let's figure out our use of our ability to freeze financial assets. Come back to Congress. We have to fight to restore order, or we are going to lose the Republic. The Republic depends on it.

One last point on that, and I will yield back. The rule of law matters. The Republic depends on it. It depends on us getting it right. I heard my colleagues earlier today referring to the border crisis as a fake crisis. I mean, I don't know what planet some of my colleagues live on to refer to what I see happening to human beings in south Texas—dying in the Texas heat; dying in tractor-trailers; getting forced into the sex trafficking trade, as we are seeing unfold, as we see depicted in the "Sound of Freedom," the movie.

□ 2015

We are allowing that to happen on our watch in the supposedly most powerful nation in the history of the world. My colleagues dismiss it as a fake crisis. The Republic cannot sustain if that is how we are going to treat the rule of law and what we do at our southern border.

I have to say this to all my Republican colleagues right now: If you think I am going to vote for any of our appropriations bills without forcing this President to his knees to secure the border of the United States, you are out of your dang mind.

Enough. Use the power of the purse. Quit wilting in the corner. "Oh, we have to fund government shutdowns." Whatever. Do your job.

That is my call to my Republican colleagues. Don't walk away from the fight. We blinked on Memorial Day. That is the truth. We blinked. \$4 trillion, no policy changes, we blinked. We are not going to allow Republicans to blink again in this appropriations season.

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

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I am thinking about Mr. ROY's comments. We say the Republic can't exist if our colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to dismiss the calamity that is happening on the border, the human tragedy, because it is not a dismissal. It is a collaboration. It is part and parcel to aiding and abetting. It is part and parcel to being involved in and supporting the largest human trafficking operation in recorded history. That is what it is.

If my friends on the other side of the aisle think that there is some political favor in knowing that they are doing nothing about 10-year-old boys and girls being trafficked into unimaginable circumstances, then I sure hope that God is with them because they are going to need something for their souls.

That aside, look, I get the politics of it, but I, like my good friend and colleague from Texas, cannot help myself. I cannot help myself in thinking about the Founding Fathers who pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor knowing that mankind, that men and women, were flawed, that they fell short of the grace of God, and that they knew that power was corrupting.

They set up this system—for my good friends on the other side of the aisle—not as a democracy but a republic, a republic with competing interests to check the power of government, the power of the avarice of man and mankind so that the individual was preeminent.

The Founders knew. The Founders knew what the difference was, and that is why they called it a republic. People stand up, and I am happy that they do, and they pledge allegiance to the flag and to the Republic for which it stands. I would submit to you that many don't know what it means to be a republic. A republic means that individual citizens are preeminent.

I talk to my bosses, my constituents, and I ask them: When you can't buy the car that you want, when you are forced to subsidize the car that the other guy wants because he wants to virtue signal to you about how much more he cares about the planet, do you feel preeminent? They don't.

When they can't afford a home—Mr. ROY went through the price of new homes. Unimaginable. My children, I don't know how they will afford to be out on their own. I don't know how you start a business today. Yet, somehow we act like we are in a republic.

Mr. Speaker, our country is in trouble, and there is an urgency that Mr. ROY gets. There is the urgency that the people at the grocery store and the gas station and the movie theater, the people who get up early and pack a lunch box, they get the urgency. Do you know who doesn't? Folks in this town who somehow told themselves, well, look, if we save \$12 billion and we spend \$4 trillion, somehow that is a good deal.

Look, I am not a math whiz, self-admitted, but I can do arithmetic. We spend over a trillion dollars in a month around this place, so if you are saving \$12 billion to spend \$1 trillion, let alone \$4 trillion, is that a good deal? Only in Washington. I mean, literally, Orwell thought he was writing fiction. He thought he was writing fiction. It is coming to fruition, and we are living in it.

We can't seem to convince our colleagues of the urgency of this situation, the peril that the Republic is in when people are not preeminent, when we lie to our citizens and tell them they can buy an electric lawn mower and it is just as good as your gas lawn mower.

I watch my neighbors mow half a lawn. Do you know why they mow half the lawn? Because they ran out of power and have to charge the thing back up. They mow it the next day.

Look, if that is your choice, God bless you, but we are lying to our citizens about all of this. This town is lying, and I for one won't stand for it. I will not help them pass bills that bankrupt our country, don't secure our border, and don't secure the virtues of liberty for our posterity—my children and theirs.

If they want to vote for it, they can deal with their constituents, their bosses, and the good Lord, but I am not going to bankrupt my country.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, in this 2 weeks following Independence Day, you do a lot of thinking if you are, as I assume my friend was, part of an Independence Day parade. There are a lot of patriotic Americans out there, particularly in flyover country, who love their country and want to defend their country, and they just want their life back. That is it. They want that American Dream back.

By God, I am going to do everything I can do in this godforsaken town to give them their freedom back, to give them the American Dream back. I don't care who gets mad at me. I don't care who is worried about what bill he or she didn't get across some finish line that nobody in America generally cares about.

We are going to fight to change this town. "Conquer or die," as General Washington said.

The fact is you have to ask yourself the question: Are you free? Are we free? Are we free if you pay taxes to a school that teaches your children that your country is evil, or that there isn't a difference between a man and a woman, if you can't even talk about God, much less pray to God? Are you a free American if that is what you are dealing with in the schools?

Are you free if you want to simply have a vehicle to move around, to carry out your livelihood to provide for your family, and you can't afford one because a bunch of elitists in Martha's Vineyard decide you have to drive an \$80,000 battery-powered car?

Are you free if you are worried that your streets are unsafe, your border is

wide open, and you are endangered, and fentanyl is pouring into your communities because your government refuses to do its one basic task? Are you actually free?

Are you free if you just want to go to the doctor of your choice and are prohibited from doing so because the government regulatory state and corporate cronies have combined to make a whole lot of money while you can't go to the doctor of your choice? Are you free?

Are you free if one President is treated differently than another President by the system of justice reporting to the President? Are you free?

Are we living in a free country? Are you free if you simply wanted to go about your way of life, but your government said you couldn't unless you stuck a needle in your arm with a vaccine created with full liability protection and then mandated by the very government saying you have to take it, and if you don't take it, you are going to lose your job? Are you free?

No, you are not free. It is about damn time that we live free again. That is why we are here.

Again, to my colleagues on this side of the aisle, I don't care about your checklist of stuff you want to campaign on. I don't care about what you don't want to vote on. I care about one thing and one thing only, and that is living free. It is our God-given right. It is what people bled and died for—living free, imperfect, in a simple world, but free.

That is our calling. That is our duty. Our duty isn't to get reelected. Our duty is to fight for the people who sent us here, to fight for them against a cultural elite who wants to rip away their lives.

That is what my mission is every day when I wake up in this godforsaken town.

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

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I couldn't have said it better. I watched a movie that has been out for some time, but the question from the gentleman to his wife, he asked what he should do in a situation, and she said it is not what a Senator would do, not what a leader would do, but it is what a free man would do. That is the decision.

That is what drives me. That is what drives my colleague. That is what we think should drive everyone here.

Sure, we would love to have the approval of the body, of our compatriots here, but what is more important to us is that we do the right thing on every occasion, not because it is easy, not because it is tough to message it back home, or not because somebody is going to not have one of their programs funded at the level they want it funded at. We are way beyond that now.

Our country is perilously close. We are borrowing money to pay our bills. We don't even print the money anymore. They just create it digitally. We

don't even print it, it is so much, and no one around here seems to care. When we talk about saving \$100 billion in the face of them spending \$4 trillion, they recoil.

How can we do that? Six months ago, we were spending that amount of money, and you would think that we were asking them to literally give their firstborn child or their right arm to try to get somewhere closer to living within our means. It is unacceptable.

The time is now. The urgency is now. You cannot be free if you can't afford to live free. You are not free if you are not making your own decisions. That is where we are, Mr. Speaker. It has to stop here. It has to stop now.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Pennsylvania for his comments. I think I have less than a minute left, and I will close with, as I said before, as General George Washington said on July 2, 1776, 247 years ago, on the day we actually declared independence: "The fate of unborn millions will now depend, under God," on our courage and our conduct. "We have, therefore, to resolve to conquer or die."

That is why we are here.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 28 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, July 19, 2023, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

EC-1403. A letter from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Supervisory Guidance on Multiple Re-Presentation NSF Fees August 2022 (Revised June 2023) received June 27, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

EC-1404. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel For Regulatory Services, Office of General Counsel, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Improving Income Driven Repayment for the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program and the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program (RIN: 1840-AD81) received July 17, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

EC-1405. A letter from the Deputy Chief, Space Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Revising Spectrum Sharing Rules for Non-Geostationary Orbit, Fixed-Satellite Service Systems [IB Docket No.: 21-456], pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.