

and paid into the system, gets below-poverty level checks, except for the fact that the United States Congress hasn't taken any action to correct this. It is long overdue.

With people like Julia coming in, Mr. Speaker, I know that there is a great opportunity for us to come together and succeed and make sure that all Americans know that Social Security is there for them.

This is not the time to talk about cutting their benefits. This is the time to talk about extending their benefits.

Yes, it is true that people are living longer, but for every year you raise the age of Social Security, that is a 7 percent cut. What sense does it make if you are living longer that you receive less Social Security money to live on? Of course, it does not.

#### RESTORE FISCAL SANITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MANN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the face of a looming government shutdown to discuss fiscal responsibility and the importance of returning to regular order in this Congress.

The government borrows too much money and the government spends too much money. The Biden administration and Congressional Democrats' spending addiction has created massive inflation and caused our national debt to climb to nearly \$33 trillion. They prioritize spending that is out of touch with what Americans are asking for and are killing the economy in the process.

Republicans have offered real solutions to fix this mess. All the other side has offered is enthusiasm for more reckless behavior.

House Republicans remain committed to limiting future government spending, reclaiming unspent COVID relief money, eliminating burdensome regulations, and promoting pro-growth energy and economic policies.

We need to get government spending under control and get our economy back on track, and we need to protect both our national defense and Social Security and Medicare benefits for seniors while we do it.

What we are seeing now is President Biden and Washington Democrats' failure to negotiate, which regular order mandates and which Congress is based on. We can't keep going down this road.

In my commitment to the Big First, I promised to do everything I can to end Washington's spending addiction, balance the budget, grow the economy, curb inflation, secure the border, and lower taxes for individuals and small businesses.

We must restore fiscal sanity. Americans deserve to have their tax dollars used wisely. Giving the President endless, no-limit credit cards is no way to govern in a democracy.

Let's secure the border. Let's decrease our country's dependence on Communist China. Let's commit to reining in government spending.

It is hard for me to imagine how anyone can love the open border so much, or love losing to China so much, or love \$200 billion of unaccounted for COVID relief dollars so much that they would be willing to shut down the Federal Government to keep the situation as is.

If the other side would spend as much energy on funding the government as they do on their liberal wish list, we would have solved this problem long ago.

#### GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Mrs. TRAHAN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. TRAHAN. Mr. Speaker, we have 10 days until House Republicans force a catastrophic government shutdown; 10 days until the food assistance that nearly 50 million Americans rely on, including 6 million women and children, is put in jeopardy; 10 days until seniors struggling with the Social Security or Medicare issue can't get someone on the phone to get their benefit or to keep their coverage; 10 days until the loans small businesses depend on to pay their workers and keep their doors open are delayed for who knows how long.

□ 1045

Mr. Speaker, we have seen this train wreck before.

Republicans shut down the government for over a month in 2018 while they demanded billions in taxpayer funds for Donald Trump's border wall, the same one that Mexico was supposed to pay for.

That shutdown lasted 35 days, hurting families and reducing our economic output by \$11 billion, much of which was never recovered. It only ended after planes were grounded at major airports due to the strain on air traffic controllers, who were working around the clock with no pay to avert a major disaster.

Here we are again. It is Republican shutdown *deja vu*. Extreme MAGA Republicans are once again holding the American people hostage in exchange for dangerous policies and a politically motivated impeachment.

You don't have to take my word for it. Just listen to the demands from my colleagues across the aisle. One of our colleagues, a Congresswoman from Georgia, tweeted that she would not vote to fund the government if Congress doesn't pursue an impeachment inquiry against President Biden. Others are trying to roll back abortion protections for women serving in our military regardless of where they are stationed.

To pretty much no one's surprise, Speaker MCCARTHY has folded like a

cheap suit on every single one of their demands. That still hasn't been enough to get Republicans on board with this new plan, a breakthrough that would slash funding for the home heating assistance that thousands of families in my home State of Massachusetts depend on each winter; eliminate access to Head Start and childcare programs for nearly 200,000 children nationwide; and cut off access to housing vouchers for 20,000 veterans and 90,000 seniors, pushing them closer to homelessness.

This deal hashed out by Republicans for Republicans was a disaster from the start, and the fact that it fell apart even quicker than it came together is embarrassing for the majority of this Chamber.

It is amateur hour, but the stakes are too high, and the American people deserve better.

Mr. Speaker, there are 212 Democrats standing by whenever your party is ready to get serious and do what needs to be done. There are 212 votes standing by to keep our government open, to keep veterans housed, to keep our children fed.

I encourage Speaker MCCARTHY and my colleagues across the aisle to avert this disaster before it is too late. Put a clean funding package on the floor, and let's pass it together.

That is our job. It is your job, and the American people expect you to do it.

#### ENACT STRICTER SENTENCES FOR CHILD TRAFFICKERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Guam (Mr. MOYLAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOYLAN. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to share the introduction of my bill, the CHILD Act of 2023.

This bill seeks to amend chapter 77, section 1591 of title 18, United States Code, by raising the mandatory minimum years of imprisonment for engaging in the trafficking of any person under the age of 18.

The current law states that if convicted of trafficking a victim under the age of 14, there is a minimum of 15 years imprisonment. If convicted of trafficking a victim between the ages of 14 and 17, the minimum sentence is 10 years imprisonment.

Child sex trafficking remains a pressing issue in the United States. In 2021, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children received over 17,200 reports of child sex trafficking in all 50 U.S. States, affecting every type of community, including cities, rural areas, and Tribal land.

According to an NCMEC report from 2021, out of the 25,000 missing runaway children, 1 out of 6 are likely to be victims of sex trafficking.

Offenders often target vulnerable children who are of lower income, live in dangerous circumstances, and seek out better lives for themselves. Victims come from all backgrounds and become trapped in a never-ending cycle

of threats, abuse, false promises, isolation, shame, and debt.

These victims are deprived of something every child deserves—a future.

If enacted, this legislation would make the sentence for traffickers exploiting victims under the age of 18 the same regardless of their age. A child is still a minor, and there should be no differentiation at all.

It would also increase the minimum sentence to 25 years for those who are convicted of child trafficking. This will convey the serious nature of their crime and ensure that traffickers know that they will be punished if they continue to exploit minors.

By enacting more stringent penalties, this bill aims to bring justice for the victims and families affected by child trafficking and issues a strong statement to traffickers, who leave a lifetime of scars on innocent children.

My message is clear: Sex trafficking is a heinous crime that will not be tolerated.

Current laws are too soft on these criminals, and I am committed to ensuring stricter laws and harsher punishments to anyone who harms innocent children.

Lastly, I urge my colleagues in Congress to support this crucial piece of legislation to protect all children.

I also thank my co-leads—Congressman DON DAVIS, Congressman BUDDY CARTER, Congresswoman DIANA HARSHBARGER, Congressman DON BACON, and Congresswoman AMATA RADEWAGEN—for cosponsoring the CHILD Act of 2023.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 51 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Lord of all the Earth, be exalted in the nations. In the cacophony of the crises we face this day, may we stand still and wait on You to speak into the whirlwind that surrounds us on all sides.

In the complexity that is the war in Ukraine and in conflicts across the globe, let not the discord of our disagreement or the ardor of our opinion prevent us from hearing Your demand for peace and justice.

In the impasse of political processes, let not the storms of dispute deafen our

ears to Your direction, but may we yield ourselves to Your guidance in the deliberations that are laid before us in this season.

We need only to look to You and see what You, O Lord, have done in ages past. You have made wars to cease to the ends of the Earth. You have broken the bow and shattered the spear.

Lord Almighty, remain with us. May we learn to trust in You, O God, that You would be our guide and stay in these days of strife. Cause us, then, this day to be still and know that You are God.

In Your sovereign name, we pray.  
Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House the approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. OGLES) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. OGLES led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

#### PRICE TRANSPARENCY FOR PATIENTS

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

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, each year, Americans attend nearly 1 billion medical appointments and emergency room visits and quite often are unaware of how much their treatments will cost until after their appointment has ended.

Now, the House has a chance to pass bipartisan legislation to address this issue and to stand up for our patients.

The Lower Costs, More Transparency Act would immediately benefit patients by providing clear price transparency for medical procedures, allowing patients the flexibility to choose where they will receive their care.

This bill includes legislation that I authored to provide funding for community health centers, which provides care to over 30 million Americans nationwide. From pediatric checkups to dentistry, rural communities rely on these health centers to meet their daily medical needs.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

#### NDAA MOTION TO INSTRUCT

(Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts asked and was given permission to address

the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, a handful of issues have always transcended politics. Our troops, the guardians of our freedom, have always been one of them, but in the MAGA Republican Party, nothing is off the table. Nothing takes priority over their goal of a nationwide abortion ban.

Military promotions, troops' paychecks, our national defense bill: all held hostage because extremists want to tear away the reproductive freedom of the very people fighting for our freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues: Put our country first and instruct the conferees to deliver a defense bill that puts freedom over fascism.

#### MYTHS ABOUT U.S. AID TO UKRAINE

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this month, Luke Coffey of the Hudson Institute addressed "The Top Myths about US Aid to Ukraine," revealing: "Every dollar spent in support of Ukraine is authorized by Congress and used for a specific purpose."

"As of September 2023, the U.S. has provided Ukraine with \$101 billion, or about 0.43 percent of America's GDP."

"The vast majority of this money never leaves the U.S. and instead supports American jobs."

"There has likely never been more accountability in place for U.S. foreign assistance," with the U.S., "Ukraine Oversight Interagency Working Group. More than 160 officials across 20 Federal oversight agencies monitor U.S. aid to Ukraine."

"According to the Kiel Institute for the World Economy's Ukraine aid tracker, total European commitments are now more than double those of the U.S."

"Russia is China's junior partner. A defeated Russia means a weaker China."

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said, "The security of the Indo-Pacific region cannot be separated from the European security."

I support the proven Republican policies of Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan of why not victory over dictators.

#### CELEBRATING THE RETIREMENT OF DAVE ROWLEY

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

Mr. LANGWORTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable individual who has dedicated four decades of his life to the field of broadcasting, and in doing so, has become a cherished