

He was also educated here in the north Texas area.

He was the first Hispanic member of the board of trustees at one of our local colleges. He was also appointed as a regional director of the U.S. Department of Education under President Clinton.

The life and legacy of Trini Garza just goes on and on and on. He is going to be deeply missed by so many because of everything he has done and accomplished. Everything that is going to be said about him and how it will be commemorated will be well deserved.

Great job, Trini. Please rest in peace. My condolences to his entire family.

THE AMERICAN DREAM

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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, we are sitting here on the precipice of entering December, a month in which those of us who profess the Christian faith and belief in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, celebrate his birth into this world to give the world, and each and every one of us in it, hope for eternal life and eternal salvation.

We are immeasurably blessed to live in a country where we can carry out our faith and exercise our beliefs.

It is critically important that we just came out of the weekend of Thanksgiving. At Thanksgiving, of course, we are thankful to live in a country in which we have In God We Trust emblazoned over the dais on which the Speaker sits in front of the American flag.

The Wall Street Journal eloquently prints every Wednesday before Thanksgiving "The Desolate Wilderness" editorial that has run in that paper for—I don't know—probably some 60 years.

It eloquently lays out all of the hardships that faced those Europeans who came to the North American Continent, and what it was like, and what they experienced going out into the desolate wilderness, and what that meant for mankind throughout the world.

I am always struck at how often we, as Americans in this generation and in this day and age, are too often either actually apologetic or forced to be apologetic or taught to be apologetic for being American, for our existence as Americans because of both actual and, frankly, perceived or taught past wrongs.

I started this talking about my Christian faith. My colleagues and con-

stituents and people across this country who share that faith know that we are taught in Romans that we all fall short of the glory of God for we are all sinners.

That is inherently true. It is true in the United States. It is true in Great Britain. It is true in Russia and China and throughout the world. We are all sinners and fall short of the glory of God.

The thing that is unique about this country is that we have set up a system that is designed to protect us against the worst impulses of man in terms of the centralization of power in the hands of a few to be used tyrannically against the many.

That is the great gift that we have inherited from our forefathers who bled, died, and fought so that we could live here and live free, so that we could exercise our conscience, so that we could live according to the dictates of our conscience.

That is why I am thankful. That is what I was thankful for over Thanksgiving because that is what it is supposed to be about.

It is not just about the football game. It is not just about the turkey. It is not just about Friendsgiving or whatever people talk about these days.

It is a specific holiday about our thankfulness as Americans and why that is so critically important to the ethos of being an American because you aren't an American simply because of DNA or blood.

You are an American because of the idea that is embodied in this Chamber, in the people's House. It is for that reason that I came to the House floor on the Thursday before we adjourned for Thanksgiving week, after this body had passed by a suspension of the rules—that is, without the normal debate process, without the regular order that was such a central part of the debates last year in this body—we passed through suspension of the rules some \$400 billion to \$500 billion of additional spending up and through late January and early February of 2024.

I found that then, and I continue to find it to be repulsive, that that is how we would conduct business, that that is how we would carry out the business of the people's House.

I made clear then that I thought that it was destructive and that it was carrying on the continued policies of the previous regime passed last December over the loud objections of my colleagues on this side of the aisle to pass a \$1.7 trillion omnibus spending bill chock full of leftist priorities that are destroying the American Dream—nothing short of that.

A Wall Street Journal poll from this month found that only 36 percent of voters said the American Dream still holds true.

The American Dream is dying because Americans' government is failing them. It is actively working against them, and our people feel it.

Our country, our society, our culture, our people, the people we represent, are

in deep despair. \$11,400. According to "CBS News," the typical American household must spend an additional \$11,434 annually just to maintain the same standard of living they enjoyed in January of 2021.

That is a problem. The average American family in this country is hurting. I watched the Democrat White House press secretary walk up to the microphone and just dismiss it and just pretend that the average American family is totally fine and can walk right out and go buy their Thanksgiving dinner, and there is no harm, no foul. They are all good. The Biden administration policies and the Democrat policies, they are having no negative effect. Ignore these numbers. Ignore the cost of goods and buying food. Ignore the cost of housing. Ignore the cost of car ownership. That is what this administration wants the American people to do.

Our constituents are literally being priced out of the American Dream of owning a home. My staff, making decent money relative to some people in the world, come to me and say, I don't know how to buy a house. I don't know how I can possibly ever buy a house, certainly not in the Nation's Capitol.

Housing prices have nearly doubled since 2010. In the second quarter of 2023, the median home price was \$416,100. In 2010, it was \$219,500.

In May of 2023, median mortgage payments hit an all-time high of \$2,165 a month. According to The Wall Street Journal, the buyer of a typical home faces a monthly principal and interest payment of nearly \$2,200, more than double the level of early 2021. Goldman Sachs' Housing Affordability Index hit a new record low in August.

That is just homes. What about cars, kind of the second biggest expense? Americans can't even afford to purchase a car because of the efforts of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and this administration to ban the internal combustion engine in pursuit of unicorn energy policies that are going to do nothing to actually reduce CO₂, and they are driving the American people into bankruptcy with an inability to afford an automobile to go about their lives and their jobs.

A new car costs \$50,000, nearly double the cost just 10 years ago. Electric vehicles are piling up on the lots of dealers across this country because the American people know they can't work for them. They can't afford them. They can't stop to charge like the Secretary of Energy did when she showed up and made a pregnant woman and her family get out of the way for a photo op while she charged her EV driving across the country.

That is the truth. The truth of this administration and my Democratic colleagues is they are perfectly content, as they have admitted to me in the Rules Committee and on this floor, to drive the American family into bankruptcy so they can pursue climate change reform.

That is absolutely a dereliction of duty on the part of the leadership of this country. When we have 250 coal-fired plants in this country and China has 1,100, and they are building two a week and we are building none, and we think we are going to dent CO₂ by forcing American families into expensive electric vehicles, the batteries for which are produced by our enemies in China with elements that are mined by child labor across the world, that is what this Democratic Party stands for.

They are bankrupting American families, empowering our enemies, undermining our national security, and exploiting child labor, all in pursuit of things cooked up by radical leftists and universities, all enriching, by the way, through the so-called Inflation Reduction Act massive billion-dollar corporations with subsidies from taxpayers. That is the truth.

We are destroying the American Dream through the policies specifically chosen by my Democratic colleagues in the White House, in this body, and in the Senate.

This administration's EPA has issued a rule to make two-thirds of new vehicles electric by 2032. That is in a mere 8 years.

This body didn't vote on that. The administration could do it by fiat. That is not how this is supposed to work.

That was my point in the opening of this speech. This country is designed to protect against power resting in the hands of a few being exploited against the many.

There are 330 million people in this country whose lives are getting decimated and destroyed while this administration tyrannically uses its power in the bureaucratic and executive branch to level the American Dream.

□ 1745

The average EV costs \$16,000 more than an internal combustion engine equivalent.

When I asked my colleagues on the other side of the aisle in the Rules Committee: Well, do you think that is worth it? They say yes. They say yes.

They want every American family to have to cough up another \$16,000 for an imperceptible, ineffective, alleged reduction in CO₂ production. Meanwhile, we haven't done anything to produce nuclear power, which is actually reliable.

The American people fully recognize that their lives have been upended. They are not 100 percent sure why, although I think they are starting to figure it out as they watch the President of the United States dawdling along, completely unaware of what is going on, while the bureaucrats in the administration are cooking up all these schemes to use their bureaucratic powers to undermine the American Dream and drive up the price of cars; drive up the price of oil; vehicles; drive up the goods and services; drive up the price of houses; spend money we don't have; rising interest rates.

The Federal Government spent \$2 trillion more than it took in in fiscal year 2023. We spent a total of \$4.4 trillion in 2019. In 2023, we spent over \$6 trillion. Our national debt is somewhere around \$33.865 trillion, and we are doing nothing about it.

Earlier this week, my friend JODEY ARRINGTON, the chairman of the Budget Committee had a hearing on debt commissions. It is important and it is good that we have those hearings and figure out what we are going to do on a bipartisan basis. However, I have to be very honest, if we cannot in this body figure out how to limit even just the discretionary spending being used to fund bureaucrats and laws and regulations that are undermining our freedom—driving up the price of cars; driving up the price of houses; funding a Department of Justice to go target a guy like Scott Smith, a dad in Loudon County; funding an EPA to go shut down people's livelihoods; arrest a guy on his ranch for building a pond; funding a DOJ to go after some of my colleagues—if we can't reduce that spending as Republicans, then how in God's green earth are we going to sit down and stare an elderly American in the face and tell them that we are going to do something with their Social Security benefits or Medicare benefits.

We are not. I have to be honest, we have been profoundly unserious in this body, on both sides of the aisle, about spending and about the abuse of power that we fund with taxpayer dollars and borrowed dollars to fund a bureaucracy that is at war with the American people and at war with the American Dream. That is the truth.

In my Thursday speech just prior to adjourning for the Thanksgiving recess, I noted fairly explicitly and pointedly that we had not produced a significant win for the American people in this Chamber this Congress.

I asked the question: What have we done? And all of my colleagues that are sitting around the complex, I asked then and I ask now: Come to the floor and come tell me what we have been able to do through this body, the Senate, and the White House. What have we been able to do in the last year to make the lives of the American people better, to make them more free, to secure their border, to make their country more secure, or to make their military more focused on its mission rather than social engineering?

I know what we have done here on the Republican side. We have passed a lot of good stuff through the hard work of my colleagues unifying around passing a strong National Defense Authorization bill that undoes the abortion tourism, the transgender surgery, the DEI, the critical race theory that is destroying the mission and the soul and the culture of the United States military, driving down recruiting and making us less safe and secure.

We passed the strongest border security bill we have ever passed. We did that here united as Republicans. We

passed seven appropriations bills. We are on the precipice of passing more appropriations bills to take the power out of the hands of a few and return it to the body.

We have done a number of great things fighting here as Republicans, but they don't mean a thing if we are not willing to sit down at the negotiation table and look at our Democratic colleagues in the Senate and look at the President of the United States and tell him: This is how it is going to be done or you are not going to get your funding. This is how it is going to be done or don't even think about another dollar for Ukraine.

That is my message to my Republican colleagues who, frankly, are getting a little too wound up at that question I asked: What have we done?

The simplest solution to your frustration about that question being asked is to have an answer.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY), my friend, and wonder if he might agree.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I do agree. Whether it is in your personal life, your business life, your family life—anything at all—your family, the people, your colleagues around you, the people that you work around demand some deliverable. Deliverable might be showing up on time with a good attitude, but at least you delivered something.

I remember that speech from my good friend, the gentleman from Texas, because I watched it. He started out and he said: What the hell is wrong with this country?

Well, nothing is wrong with this country. The problem is with this place.

There are a lot of good people on this side of the aisle, and maybe we haven't produced a deliverable, but I would also say this: There has been no help, no help at all from the other side of the building, the other side of the aisle or down the street at the White House; no help at all.

I have car manufacturers now coming to see me and they are saying: Well, we are forced to build these electric cars; nobody wants them. Then when they don't have anything else to buy, they buy them. And then they don't work, so they bring them back in and they trade them in for something else, and then they sit there and we can't sell them. Congressman, what are you going to do for me?

My goodness, Joe Biden is the President.

The regulators, every single day another rule, another regulation, they just keep coming and coming.

Members of Congress, I don't know that we are irrelevant, but if we are not willing to stop funding these agencies that keep on prevailing against the American people, well that is what we are going to be.

The Founders made each body to jealously guard its own power. Instead of jealously guarding our power, we

have given it to bureaucrats; nameless, faceless people that have an agenda that pass rules with the force of law. These rules that spend all this money make your Thanksgiving dinner more expensive.

My mom went out to get a turkey for our family. My mom makes a turkey for our family and we all get together. She called her son up to say that the turkey costs \$70.

Mr. Speaker, from lettuce to lumber, people can't afford in America just to live their lives. They can't afford their bills; they can't afford groceries; they can't afford gas in their car; they can't afford their credit card payments while they try and just live the life that they have lived.

As the slide or the poster over there shows, their bills have gone up that much. They are paying, between the government and the increased cost, an extra month of their pay; every year an extra month for things that they didn't have to just 3 years ago.

This body is the only one that has the power of the purse. This is the only body that can control the spending that is driving up every single cost, every single cost. It starts here.

If we don't have the courage—we can have the conviction—people vote for their Member saying: Well, this guy said when he goes to Washington, he is going to fight the swamp. He is going to fight the bureaucracy. He is going to fight the spending. However, when the bill shows up on the floor and we see the amendment up there, oh, my goodness, every single time you get 100 votes, 150 votes.

Mr. Speaker, it takes 217 to pass these amendments to cut spending. If you said you are going to cut spending at home, then your opportunity happens right here on the floor. If you are not going to do it here, if you are not going to vote that way, don't go home to your constituents and say, I am sorry you can't afford lettuce and a holiday turkey. I am sorry you can't afford your bills: your car payment, your home payment, your insurance payment, your heating bill. I am sorry you can't afford it—because I didn't do anything to help you. Your opportunity, the leverage, the moment is here. It is now.

We have been working on spending bills for months, and the reason that we can't pass them here is because we are spending too much.

Oh, by the way, that is a fight among this side of the aisle that actually some of us want to do something to save our constituents from this overbearing weight of the Federal Government and the regulatory agencies—and I have to say this to my good friend from Texas—with no help whatsoever from the other side of the aisle. No help.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, my friend from Pennsylvania is 100 percent correct. This was a point that I made in the remarks I made right before Thanksgiving, which is what are we

going to say that we have accomplished, other than to say that we are less bad than Democrats.

That is my question here for my Republican colleagues. When we are getting zero help from our Democrat colleagues, who are intent on spending money we don't have to fund bureaucrats; to undermine our freedom; our way of life; our ability to afford our lives; our ability to have jobs; our ability to have a secure border; our ability to have secure streets; our ability to have education that is controlled by parents and not by leftist bureaucrats; our ability to have a military that can defend our country rather than being woke and socially engineered, we get zero help from our colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

Which means what? It means that this Republican majority has to unite and ensure that we are going to force Senate Democrats and the President to come to the table using the leverage that we have for the things that they want.

The Senate majority leader has professed a desire that we continue to fund a proxy war in Ukraine. It is very well documented. The President of the United States, the Senate majority leader, CHUCK SCHUMER, our colleagues on the other side of the aisle in this Chamber, want us to continue to fund a proxy war in Ukraine.

Now, we can have that debate on the floor of the House. We can debate the merits of it. We can debate how much it should be lethal aid versus not. We can debate how to make it more transparent; debate how to make it more focused, or whether to do it at all, but a fundamental and core question that ought to be asked: Why would we ever debate giving another dollar to Ukraine when our borders are wide open, Americans are being killed and endangered by cartels and fentanyl and violence and terrorists and gang members that come across our border, and this administration refuses to do a thing about it?

Why, to my friend from Pennsylvania, would we even utter the word Ukraine on the floor of the House ever again until we have H.R. 2, the strong border security bill that we passed, signed into law by the President of the United States, metrics guaranteeing and demonstrating that we do not have continued flow and automatic entry and releases into the United States?

Why would we do that?

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, there is no reason that we should do it. There is not a person in this Chamber on that side of the aisle or this side of the aisle that agrees with Vladimir Putin, the Russian Federation, the invasion of Ukraine, the atrocities that have been committed there. There is not one person that agrees with it.

At the same time, our country is under assault, our country is being invaded, and our country can't afford its bills.

Before we have the audacity, the temerity to demand, under force of law,

that our citizens get up in the morning, go to work, and pay their taxes to pay for the pensions and the salaries of government workers in Ukraine—my goodness, are we tone deaf to the fact that the people in this country, the people in the gentleman from Texas' communities, and the people that I represent, can't afford to pay their bills? They can't afford to pay their bills.

None of us agree with what is happening overseas in regard to Ukraine, but we have a duty. We were not elected by Ukrainian citizens. We were elected by United States citizens, American citizens that are paying their taxes under penalty of law.

They will be thrown in jail if they don't pay their taxes. It is the height of insult and injury to tell them you have to pay your taxes and you can't afford a holiday meal, but you can rest assured that that money is going to go over to Ukraine to pay for their salaries and their pensions.

The American people are sick of it. They sent us here to do something about it, and every time we have an opportunity, every single time we have an opportunity, we need to seize that opportunity.

Quite honestly, it just comes down to this, Mr. ROY, when the Senate demands this, when the President demands it, the Speaker of House, this Republican majority, respectfully, just says no.

□ 1800

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I agree with my friend from Pennsylvania.

While he is still on the floor, I will close with a couple of questions.

I assume that the gentleman from Pennsylvania, my friend, when he ran for Congress, and when he has run every term since, he ran under a promise to fight to reduce and cut Federal spending. I assume that is correct.

Mr. PERRY. That is correct.

Mr. ROY. To my friend from Pennsylvania, do you think that it is a fulfillment of your promise and pledge to work here to try to cut spending to pass continuing resolutions that fund government at the preceding year's astronomically high spending levels, particularly that of NANCY PELOSI's \$1.7 trillion omnibus spending bill? Does my friend think that gets it done?

Mr. PERRY. Of course not. My constituents, my bosses, just like your bosses, were vehemently opposed to that last December's cram-down of all this money to all kinds of things, omnibus spending, everything in there. They didn't want it, and as a signal to what we would do if we governed, Republicans, every single one, voted against it.

Now, 9 or 10 months later, we are supposed to act like, well, we didn't get our work done so we are just going to continue that, but don't worry about it. Forget about what happened 9 or 10 months ago.

The American people have not forgotten. Do you know how I know they

have not forgotten? Because I was at the grocery store on Monday before I came here, and a woman came up to me with her grocery cart. She recognized me and said: Don't the people that you work with grocery shop? Don't they know how much this costs?

She knows, and she demands that we do better and that I be accountable and not vote for things I voted against 9 months ago and just act like they are okay. They are not okay 9 months later.

Mr. ROY. That woman, your constituent, recognizes the impact from the policies of this current administration and, frankly, I must say, the policies that are perpetuated by this body, including some on both sides of the aisle that have resulted in families having to spend \$11,400 more just to break even to where they were at the beginning of this administration.

The question is, what are we going to do about it? I mean, I think that is the fundamental question. Did your constituents send you here to file bills, to file amendments, to simply vote, and then say: Oh, isn't it so great that we voted and passed something out of committee? Do your constituents know when we pass something out of committee, as a general matter? Do they know how many bills you have filed? Do they know whether or not you got some amendment inserted in whatever unless you tell them? Or are they looking for results? Do they want the border to actually be secure? Do they want spending to actually go down so there is less inflation and they can afford to live?

Do they want us to have a military that is focused rather than woke? Do they want us to deliver results, or do they just want us to sit up here and pound our chest about how we got certain bills introduced and I got some vote on some measure on the floor of the House?

Mr. PERRY. I imagine my district is just like yours.

I visited a local construction company with 400 hardworking Americans. Men and women come in. They have steel-toed boots on, jeans, jackets with stains on them. They come in out of the cold. They don't have time to worry about what amendment or bill you got passed through the House but there was no signature.

Here is what they worry about, to my friend from Texas, and I think your bosses feel the same way: We sent you to Washington to make our lives better. My prices are going up. My selections are going down, and my choices are going down. The government is imposing itself on me about whether I want to install a gas stove in my home or whether I want to speak out about my political views and not end up on some list, or if I want to go deer hunting today and worry that I got the wrong ammunition or that my gun isn't configured so that the Federal Government doesn't come arrest me.

They say: We are counting on you to do this, so don't come home and talk to

us about amendments and bills and "I had a meeting with," because it doesn't affect my life. All the things that are happening to me every day from this administration are affecting my life. I am sick of it, and I am sending you down there to stop it.

Mr. ROY. I assume your constituents, like mine, totally understand that we don't have both Chambers and the White House. They know that we can't move all the mountains. Nevertheless, they want us not to just shrug and give up and send a bill over to the Senate and say, "Sorry, we don't have the Senate. Blame CHUCK SCHUMER," and then go campaign.

Even when we had the majority in the House, had a majority in the Senate, and had the White House, how many times did you hear the excuse: "Oh, I am sorry, Congressman PERRY. We don't have 60 votes in the Senate." Did you ever hear that one?

Mr. PERRY. There is always some excuse. When we have the House or the Senate, or we have both and the Presidency, there is always some excuse for why it can't be done.

I will tell you this. There is no excuse for the radical march of the left creeping into everybody's life, into every decision that you make, into everything you do. It just keeps happening.

Our bosses are not down here in Washington, D.C. They don't understand committee rules and the process here on the floor. What they understand is that they are getting up in the morning when it is dark outside, packing their lunch, and kissing their kids good-bye before they get on the school bus, and they don't know why this is happening to them, but they sure know it is happening.

They think about the extra costs every single week when they are trying to manage their budget. They are like: "We are making more money, but we still can't afford to live the way we did. We can't afford our food. We can't afford, heaven forbid, if the car breaks down." No, they don't understand why.

What they demand, to the good gentleman from Texas, is results, is some product. They don't care about why it can't be done. They are not asking for everything to change overnight. They know we didn't get here overnight, but they want something, some win, to show them some light at the end of this tunnel, but there isn't any. I haven't seen one yet.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the good gentleman from Pennsylvania. He is a good friend, and I am honored to serve with him. I agree with him.

I will say that our constituents don't send us to Washington to campaign. They don't send us to Washington to run around trying to figure out how we are going to score some political victory and set up votes so we can run against our colleagues.

Our constituents recognize that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle are continuing to leave them behind

and ignore them in pursuit of fantasy energy policies, woke ideology, and radical leftist views of open borders that empower our enemies and endanger Americans. They fully get that.

They expect us to stand up and fight for them. They expect us to do the right thing and then let the voters decide.

I would submit that it is a critical juncture in this country, that we are facing existential threats, that it is critical that the 200 and however many Republicans we have right now unite together and go over to the Senate to tell the Senate that we have to solve problems for the American people, secure borders, strengthen our military, reduce spending, get inflation down, make the American people believe that the American Dream exists again.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, before I go, I will say that the gentleman from Texas is right. We have to unite so that we can be effective against these forces of evil that are destroying the American Dream. It is not uniting for the sake of uniting. It is uniting around a purpose.

Our bosses are very forgiving. They are very gracious. They understand if you fight the good fight and you lose. What they will not accept, what they cannot accept, and what they should not accept is not fighting at all or surrendering before the fight even begins.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that. I know my colleague is about to leave. I know that he appreciates and we share our faith in the good Lord and our faith in Jesus Christ. He will appreciate the words of Paul in 2 Timothy: I have fought the good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved him appearing.

That is obviously a spiritual reference and speaking in spiritual terms, but they are the kind of words that I think my friend agrees with me should be inspiring us as Members of this body, regardless of party, that we advance, that we move forward, that we defend this country.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, that is our job. Our job is to defend this Constitution. My constituents, my bosses, know I carry one with me every day.

It is a piece of paper, Mr. Speaker. It cannot defend itself. It relies on the integrity, fortitude, courage, and conviction of good people willing to come here to serve and fight on its behalf, like the good gentleman from Texas.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Pennsylvania. When I started this speech, I talked about The Wall Street Journal poll from this month finding that only 36 percent of voters said the American Dream still holds true and that our country, our society, is in deep despair and needs help. I talked about the \$11,400, according to CBS, that the typical American

household must spend additionally every year just to maintain the same standard of living that they enjoyed in January 2021.

The fact of the matter is, the American people are suffering. We in this body know it, yet we are doing nothing about it. All we are doing is making it worse by spending more money we don't have, indebting our children and grandchildren.

We are now \$34 trillion in debt, and all I get from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle is lip service about taxes when we have been bringing in revenue to the Treasury at the top level we have ever done in the history of this country, 19.2 percent. We have plenty of revenue. What we refuse to do is deal with our spending problem, promises that we have made but cannot honestly deliver on without printing money.

I talked about the extent to which the average American family can no longer afford a car. A new car costs \$50,000, nearly double what it cost 10 years ago. Why? Because of absurd regulations and mandates coming out of this administration unilaterally, through bureaucrats, backed up by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle passing legislation to mandate EVs that are piling up on the lots of dealerships that people can't afford and that don't allow them to do their job. Debt is piling up. Interest rates are going up. Houses are unaffordable.

With healthcare, Americans are expected to spend \$6,500 for a family policy and \$1,400 for an individual. They are expecting 2024 premiums to increase 8 percent for group rates. Healthcare is completely unaffordable for the average American.

All this is happening as Big Healthcare gets richer, and the Federal Government continues to flood more money into the market. Big Insurance revenue is \$1.25 trillion. The CBO estimates Federal subsidies to health insurance for Americans under 65 will reach \$1 trillion.

Nobody in America knows what these numbers mean. What they mean is you can't afford healthcare, can't go to the doctor, and can't choose the doctor of your choice.

We are enriching bureaucrats and healthcare companies. We are enriching bureaucrats, pharma, hospitals, and Big Insurance. We are doing it through crony capitalism that was inflated under ObamaCare.

I have a constituent who came up to me last week who is on ObamaCare and can't go to MD Anderson for the cancer that is killing her, yet my colleagues on the other side of the aisle pat themselves on the back for coverage.

I would like to know if any of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to call up my constituent and congratulate her for having coverage she can't use. She can't use it to go get healthcare while we enrich the insurance companies at levels they were never enriched before, while we dev-

astate them. She literally can't go get the care she needs under the coverage of ObamaCare, while healthcare companies are rolling in money.

I can't go back to MD Anderson, if my cancer comes back, on the plan that I would have under ObamaCare as a Member of Congress. That is the truth.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle pretend that it is not devastating the American family that we are driving up the cost of healthcare, making it impossible to get the doctor of your choice, making it impossible for people to live and enjoy the American Dream.

On the southern border in Texas, my constituents text and call me every single day—every day. I have constituents and friends in south Texas calling me about the devastation being wrought in south Texas.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle don't care. They don't care about the little girls getting sold into the sex trafficking trade, the almost 1,000 migrants who died along the Rio Grande and southern border last year. They don't care about the fentanyl pouring into Texas that is killing my constituents. Last year, I had six kids die in the school district I live in from fentanyl poisoning. It is pouring into our communities through wide open borders, and everybody knows it.

Mayorkas goes down to the border and won't even apologize to the Border Patrol agents he accused of whipping people, which didn't happen.

□ 1815

Mr. Speaker, there have been 6.6 million illegal aliens since January 21 and 1.7 million known got-aways. That is bigger than the entire population of San Antonio, Texas, which I represent and is the seventh largest city. We don't know who they are.

I had members of the Texas legislature showing me videos of people they saw over Thanksgiving weekend in south Texas, single adult males running away from Border Patrol. If you are running away from Border Patrol in 2023, I assure you it is because you are up to no good.

The entire world knows that if you come here and you go up to Border Patrol and you say the word asylum, you are going to get released into the United States.

Texas is under siege. We spent \$12.5 billion of our own money to do the job the Federal Government refuses to do, while my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, Secretary Mayorkas, President Biden, Senate Democrats, and CHUCK SCHUMER ignore the crisis and pretend that sending more money down to process more people will make a damn difference. It won't.

Texas would be well within its rights to tell this Federal Government to go straight to hell. Stop sending any tax receipts and do what we need to do to secure Texas. Frankly, Governor Abbott should do that. Shut off the flow

across the border because this Federal Government refuses to do it.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle don't care. The fact of the matter is, this current Democrat administration and my Democratic colleagues are all too fine while the American family suffers, losing the American Dream. They have \$11,000 of additional costs every year under this administration. Kids die in their schools from fentanyl. People pour into communities in Texas and Arizona and throughout the country. They are piling up in New York, so bad that they had to cut a deal to move them onto military installations and Federal properties.

All of our streets are unsafe because DAs refuse to enforce the laws—funded by George Soros—DAs in Texas and throughout this country. Literally, the DA in San Antonio, it was just reported, has dismissed more than 6,000 criminal cases in the first 3 months of 2023. That is a 50 percent rise in dismissed cases.

One of these dismissed cases led career criminal Michael Kirkland to be free to shoot at police officers and motorists in San Antonio while evading arrest, leading to an officer being injured this past August. Those are the policies of this Democrat regime and of Democrats across this country.

Violent crime is surging, borders are open, fentanyl is pouring into our schools, inflation is up, interest rates are up, and life expectancy is down.

The fact of the matter is, Republicans have a duty to check this administration and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. It is why I demand and implore my Republican colleagues that we answer the question: What have we done?

I can assure you my Democratic colleagues—the answer to what they have done is destroy the Republic by passing legislation that bankrupts the American family, pursuing unicorn energy policies, forcing EVs to pile up on dealership lots, driving families into bankruptcy, and now they are unable to afford houses.

Democrats are actively doing that. Republicans basically say, well, we got elected, we are at least stopping that. We are at least stopping the passage of really bad bills, like the so-called Inflation Reduction Act or the American Rescue Plan. These bills all spend money we don't have. It is driving us into debt, funding and enriching White, elitist liberals in their big, supposedly, green corporations.

Every time Republicans run for office we make a lot of promises about things like cutting spending, shrinking bureaucracy, or securing the border. That is what you do when you run for office, you make a lot of promises. You make a lot of pledges.

We don't have the luxury of grading ourselves on our intentions. The road to hell is paved with good intentions. The American people, the history books, and the good Lord are going to

judge based on the actions we take and the results we deliver and whether or not we deliver for the American people.

To deliver for the American people, Republicans must force the Senate Democratic leadership, Majority Leader SCHUMER, and President Biden, to understand a handful of very key truths. Under no circumstances should we give another dollar to Ukraine. No bills should come to the House floor until H.R. 2 is signed by the President and the flow stops across our southern border.

That ought to be the very clear message that is sent to the President and Majority Leader SCHUMER. If my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and the Senate want to choose to refuse to secure the border, then they can call up Mr. Zelenskyy and the people of Ukraine and explain why.

They can explain that it is more important to keep open borders in America and undermine our sovereignty and our security and our well-being. They can call up Israel and explain to Israel that they refuse to actually fund support for Israel because they are more interested in funding Internal Revenue Service bureaucrats to go after the American people.

That is what our Democratic colleagues in the Senate have chosen to do, and they know it. They know it. We pass a bipartisan bill that chooses to move dollars that were allocated to expand the IRS to go after the American people, take those dollars and give it to our friends from Israel. Our Democratic colleagues in the Senate, on a party-line vote, voted no.

They refused to fund our friends in Israel because they were more committed to the leftist makeover of this country. They are more committed to open borders than they are to securing the communities of the American people and allowing us to have a full and open debate about Ukraine and how we can proceed to fund our government.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are sick of excuses. They want us to do our job. I understand the difficulty of dealing with a razor-thin majority with colleagues on the other side of the aisle who have no interest in doing the things that we want to do to secure the United States, secure our border, reduce spending, reduce inflation, focus the military on what it needs to be focused on, and to do our job under the Constitution in our limited powers. I understand the difficulty of that.

We have done a great job and we have been united as a Republican Party to send good bills over to the Senate. Now we should hold the Senate accountable to doing the work of the American people to follow up on what we have already done. To send a border security bill, H.R. 2, that would do the job of securing the border. Sending a National Defense Authorization bill that would restore our military to its mission rather than social engineering.

There are seven appropriations bills, and others that are ready to go if our

Democratic colleagues on the other side of the Capitol in the Senate will sit down with us to actually reduce spending year over year from 2023 to 2024. We can constrain spending. We can constrain inflation. We can constrain the bureaucrats that are interfering with the lives of the American people and undermining their freedom and their ability to produce and prosper according to their God-given talents.

Voters are watching what we are doing. They are watching whether we are going to stand up and actually do our job, and whether or not we are going to deliver for them rather than engaging in lip service. I think we need to do our job.

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

ISRAELI HOSTAGE CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to lead my colleagues in a Special Order hour.

On October 7, Hamas launched a horrific attack against Israeli civilians, murdering over 1,400 people and taking hostage more than 244 women, children, families, and the elderly. Hamas spared no one.

The hostage crisis has left hundreds of families desperate and searching for answers on the health and safety of their loved ones. This past month has been gut-wrenching. I have never felt this magnitude of pain, shock, and anger burning in the hearts of the Jewish people.

The intentional, genocidal violence inflicted on Israeli civilians and the unconscionable apathy of many nations is a sobering reminder of the fact that Israel remains surrounded by hostility and danger.

For me, and for so many of us, this goes beyond our belief in the survival of the Jewish State. It rises far above politics as usual. It is a moment in history that begs for humanity, unity, and solidarity with Israel.

I am wrecked by how quickly people in this country have forgotten the hostages still being held in Gaza by Hamas. I find myself having to reiterate over and over again that Israel was attacked by a terrorist organization whose mission is the eradication of Israel and the Jewish people.

We must all remember not only the horrifying statistic of 240 captured, but who they are as people. These are real human beings. That is why we are here tonight.

We will continue to come to this floor to call attention to all of the human beings who are brutally being held captive by Hamas in Gaza, until every last one of them is released.

Each of my colleagues who are joining me will speak about a hostage or family of hostages, show their beautiful faces, and remind all of us not to forget these victims who are suffering under terrorist brutality.

Thankfully, Israel has welcomed home many children and some women this week. I am extremely grateful for President Biden's efforts to help make that possible. We cannot and we will not stop until all hostages are reunited with their families.

Tonight, I will be sharing the story of the Bibas family, parents Shiri and Yarden, 4-year-old Ariel, and 10-month-old Kfir from Kibbutz Nir Oz. Look at this beautiful family.

Kfir, the youngest hostage, was just 9 months old on October 7. He had just learned to crawl when he was abducted. His family is worried Kfir doesn't have access to formula. Look at Kfir's beautiful face. How could anyone justify kidnapping and taking hostage a 9-month-old.

As a Jewish mother, I remember when my babies were that age. I remember nursing them. I remember holding them in my arms and being joyful about their first crawling, their first steps, and looking forward to the beauty of their lives unfolding.

Looking at Kfir and Ariel's faces is heartbreaking and is deeply personal. Many of us have had the opportunity to meet with the families of these hostages. Yesterday, Hamas claimed that Shiri, Ariel, and Kfir were killed in Gaza. I pray with all my heart that that is false. The barbarism and cruelty of Hamas knows no bounds.

The Bibas family would never have been in harm's way in Gaza if Hamas did not launch its murderous attack on Israel and take children as leverage on October 7.

□ 1830

On that fateful day, Shiri, Yarden, and their boys were hiding in a safe room when militants fired semiautomatic weapons outside the family's window as Yarden texted relatives: "I love you all." One-half hour later, he texted, "They are coming in," just before communication ceased.

Since then, the world has seen a distressing video of Shiri holding her two young boys wrapped in a blanket close to her chest while surrounded by Hamas militants. Another video depicts Yarden with a head injury forcibly being taken away on a motorcycle.

On Monday, the IDF announced the Bibas family was transferred by Hamas to another Palestinian terror group in Gaza as if they were a commodity to