

### SPEAKING OUT AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out against the ongoing epidemic of gun violence in our cities and towns.

There is no gun violence without guns. From the countless calls I receive from my constituents to the majority of Americans who have voiced their support for gun control reform, something must be done by Congress.

So many Americans are haunted by the gun violence that has taken their loved ones, and that is why we should all be in favor of stronger gun laws to keep these weapons out of dangerous hands.

Too many lives have been stolen. Too many children have been killed.

For this reason, I will be introducing the Safer Neighborhoods Gun Buyback Act of 2023. My bill would provide Federal grants to States, local governments, and gun dealers to conduct gun buyback programs across the country.

We need a national program to give all towns and cities the funds to get guns off our streets. This is common-sense legislation, and if made into public law, it would benefit our Nation greatly.

### RESPONDING TO STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

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

Mr. SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in response to Biden's State of the Union Address.

As a reminder, I do not wish failure upon any sitting President. Whether it is a Republican or Democrat, their success is our success, and when we wish for their failure, then the Nation fails.

We have had 2 years of one-party rule in the White House, in the Senate, and in the House. In those 2 very short years, we watched our thriving economy steer in the opposite direction.

American households cannot afford food and gas. Our wages are failing to keep up with inflation that continues to increase.

Since the President took office, we as a Nation watched the average gas price go from \$2.39 to our current average of \$3.45. However, on day one of Biden's Presidency, he killed the Keystone XL pipeline, which could have been supplying 830,000 barrels per day from Canada to U.S. refineries, and depleted our Strategic Petroleum Reserve to its lowest level since 1984.

Another item that President Biden failed to address was the catastrophic withdrawal from Afghanistan. As a result, 13 brave servicemembers lost their lives, and the Taliban have now taken back control of Afghanistan.

### RECOGNIZING SUE DAUGHERTY'S LIFETIME OF WORK

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, during this week of the State of the Union Address, I rise today to recognize the lifetime of work of Sue Daugherty, a champion for seniors across Ohio.

Sue and I are cheering the 8.7 percent cost of living increase for seniors under Social Security and a cap on insulin costs for seniors at \$35 per month.

Sue serves as the founding executive director of Serving Our Seniors, a non-profit organization located in Sandusky, Ohio, that supports Erie County seniors as they progress in life.

Ms. Daugherty's passion for gerontology was born out of her experience as a nursing assistant in the summer following her freshman year at Ohio University. She went on to receive her bachelor's degree from Ohio University and earned her master of public administration from Cleveland State University.

Sue has utilized her knowledge and experience to create an excellent and friendly network for aging Ohioans to receive better treatment and resources as they age. She helped establish a system for seniors to seek proactive care instead of reactive care.

Ms. Daugherty has received nearly a dozen community service awards of excellence throughout her career, including the 2002 Acts of Caring Award from the National Association of Counties.

I am honored to honor her lifetime of achievement and her work. Today, all of America salutes Ohioan Sue Daugherty. I thank her so much for her service to America.

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### DANGERS OF E-CIGARETTES

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

Ms. BROWN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to emphasize the importance of closing the disposable e-cigarette loophole to continue our progress in reducing youth e-cigarette use.

The danger disposable e-cigarettes pose to our young people cannot be underestimated. Currently, it is estimated that more than 700,000 middle and high school students vape on a daily basis—more than 700,000.

Use of disposable e-cigarettes by our youth has increased by more than 2,000 percent since 2019. Although disguised with flavors like apple and strawberry, the truth is that a single e-cigarette can have the same amount of nicotine as an entire pack of cigarettes.

A loophole left by the previous administration excludes e-cigarettes and disposable e-cigarette products from the tobacco flavoring guidelines, which are at the heart of this epidemic.

Closing the Trump-era loophole will ensure the flavor ban applies to disposable e-cigarettes. Keeping America's youth safe and healthy depends on it.

### IMPERIAL SUGAR REFINERY EXPLOSION OF 2008

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the Imperial Sugar Refinery explosion in my hometown of Port Wentworth, Georgia, in 2008.

Mr. Speaker, 15 years ago, 14 lives were tragically taken, and several others were severely injured. I want to honor the victims of this tragedy, as well as the first responders and doctors who worked bravely to save lives.

After the explosion, emergency vehicles quickly lined the access road leading out to the refinery. In total, there were around 60 first responders on the scene after the accident, working around the clock.

After survivors were transferred to the Burn Center in Augusta, doctors worked diligently to save lives. Some patients were covered with burns on upwards of 90 percent of their bodies.

If it had not been for the heroic work of everyone involved, the death toll could have been much higher. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with the families of those whom we lost and with those who were injured.

Thank you to our first responders and medical experts for this lifesaving care they gave to all of those involved.

### HONORING LEBRON JAMES

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

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to celebrate a philanthropist, a community activist, a constituent of Ohio's 13th Congressional District, the birthplace of champions, and the greatest basketball player of all time, LeBron James, but we know him as just a kid from Akron, the GOAT, or King James.

Yesterday, LeBron broke the NBA's scoring record previously set by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar with 38,390 points. It was a feat that once seemed almost impossible for anyone except for LeBron, but James has become known for making the improbable part of his routine, including four NBA championships and numerous MVP titles.

Mr. Speaker, LeBron James has scored 38,390 points in his career, making history on the 38th day of the year of his 38th year of life with 38 points.

LeBron, we celebrate you and all of your accomplishments. You have, indeed, earned the title of greatest of all time and cemented Ohio's 13th Congressional District as the birthplace of champions.

From one kid from Akron to another, LeBron, we are proud of you.

#### A MISSED OPPORTUNITY

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

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. VALADAO. 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 subject of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, last night, the President had a real opportunity to put partisanship aside and speak to all Americans, not just Democrats or Republicans, but to all Americans.

Instead of sending a unifying message, we heard even more divisive rhetoric from the President. There were a lot of people who were here willing to work with him across the aisle to get good things done for our people and our constituents all across the country, and I consider myself one of them.

But the President makes it very difficult to do this when he continues to push lies about Republicans and our policies.

My constituents in the Central Valley are struggling to put food on their table and gas in their tanks because of this administration.

Unfortunately, the President failed to take accountability for many problems Americans across the country are experiencing under his failed leadership, from the rising cost of energy to the fentanyl coming across our open border.

One issue that hits home for me in particular was what President Biden said last night about energy. During his address, the President told the Nation that under his watch, energy bills and gas prices are going down.

This is not true for my constituents. Over the last few years, my office has received countless calls from people whose natural gas bills have tripled due to the high price of natural gas in California.

These are the same people who over the summer were paying over \$6 a gallon to drive to work or to take their kids to school. These energy prices are crushing working-class families in my community and across the country.

In my district, the oil and gas industry is critical, not just for energy production but for the entire community.

The industry is responsible for billions of dollars in State and local tax revenue that funds vital community services like public schools, hospitals, and law enforcement.

Kern County is the leading energy provider for the State of California and the number seven oil-producing county in the Nation.

Yesterday, my guest to the President's address was Chad Hathaway. Chad owns and operates an independent oil company in Bakersfield and knows firsthand just how disastrous the energy policies of this administration have been.

Energy producers like Chad not only provide resources to California but the entire country. We have the resources right here in our own back yard, and we can and should be using them.

While we as a country should continue to develop and pursue other sources of energy, we cannot abandon traditional energy sources like the President made clear last night that he wants to do.

The Biden administration's energy policies are destroying affordable energy, high-paying jobs, and energy security for our Central Valley families.

There are a lot more stories to share about the impacts of this administration's policies, and tonight, House Republicans have reserved some time to respond to the President's address last night in this Chamber and to discuss some of the problems currently facing our country and the Republican vision for addressing them.

I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON), my good friend.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO) for handling this Special Order tonight and bringing our colleagues here to talk about the reality of this State of the Union Address that we experienced here less than 24 hours ago.

I appreciate what you said, and I thought it was appropriate that you brought as your guest a constituent who is in the energy industry because you explained how domestic energy production has been decimated by this President and his administration and how it is having an untold cost on the American people.

But I wanted to begin with a quote, and I want to encourage my colleagues to listen carefully to these words of warning. This is really important.

"The tsunami of debt created by the policies of this administration has to go somewhere. . . .

"But as the rest of the world copes with the waves of U.S. debt, we are now all in the same leaky boat. There is just so much of our debt other nations want to hold. The more of it they accumulate, the closer we are to the day when they will not want any more.

"When that happens, slowly or rapidly, our interest rates will go up, the value of their U.S. bonds will drop, and we will all have big problems. We need both more awareness and more understanding of this fundamental threat to our economic well-being and the global economy.

"But the roots of that threat lie in the disastrous policies of this administration.

"Because this massive accumulation of debt was predicted, because it was foreseeable, because it was unnecessary, because it was the result of willful and reckless disregard for the warnings that were given and for the fundamentals of economic management, I am voting against the debt limit increase."

Now, do you want to guess who said that? It was not Speaker MCCARTHY. It was not Leader MCCONNELL. In fact, it wasn't any Republican.

That quote that I just read to you is from Joe Biden himself when he was a Senator in 2006. If he was honest, he would have used that same language right up here last night, but he didn't. Of course, he wasn't honest.

By the way, in addition to his vocal opposition when he was a Senator in 2003 and 2006, Senator Joe Biden joined Senate Democrats in opposing clean debt limit increases.

In 2004, he missed the vote, but he said publicly he would have opposed it there, as well. So three times as a Senator he opposed the debt limit increase.

Well, he is singing a completely different tune now. Everybody heard it.

Mr. Speaker, President Biden's address to the Nation last night was a missed opportunity. Our country is mired in crisis after crisis of the President's own making: at home, at our border, abroad.

Simply put, the President's rhetoric last night didn't match the reality that most Americans have been experiencing since he took office 2 years ago.

John Adams said, "Facts are stubborn things," and the actual state of our Union is more accurately summed up by one word: decline.

Let's talk about just a couple of those facts very quickly. Just a snapshot. When President Joe Biden took office, we had peace through strength.

We had American energy independence—actually, dominance. We had lower consumer prices, and we had inflation at about 1.4 percent.

But since he took over 2 years ago, now we have war through weakness, we have foreign energy dependence, we have sky-high consumer prices, and the inflation rate in December was 6.5 percent.

Now, you tell me. Are you better off today than you were 2 years ago?

No. And that is what the polls indicate.

Most Americans say and respond to the polls that they are doing worse off financially, and in many other respects, since this President took over.

Right now, prices are still rising, crime is rising, drug overdoses are rising, illegal immigration is rising, and our country's leadership looks embarrassed and weak on the world stage.

Republicans urged President Biden to take advantage of the state of the Union to chart a new direction, to get us out of this mess, to reverse the policies that have gotten us into this, to accept responsibility for the declining state of our country, and pledge to do better.