

**SALT DEDUCTION MUST BE  
INCREASED**

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

Mr. SANTOS. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to introduce my bill, the SALT Relief Act.

My bill will increase the State and local taxes cap deduction from \$10,000 to \$50,000. Increasing the SALT deduction is a step in the right direction to lessen the burden of combined Federal, State, and local taxes during these times of economic hardship.

New York has one of the highest tax rates in the country, ranking above—including Federal, State, and local taxes.

In 2018, for Nassau County, the average SALT amount—property tax, income, or sales tax liability—reported among itemizing filers was \$30,227.21, but due to the \$10,000 cap, the average SALT deduction actually claimed was \$9,023.79.

Let it be known that the SALT tax is not a tax break for the wealthy but a tax relief for working-class families. This is about the 118th Congress working to ease the affordability burden in high-tax States like New York.

The cost of living continues to plague New Yorkers. Raising the cap on SALT will provide real tax relief, not just to New York's Third Congressional District but to all in America.

**MATH ALWAYS WINS**

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

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, tonight, we are going to try to do sort of the continuation on the theme, but we are going to actually end it up with a dozen or so solutions.

I know the Parliamentarian said I can't hold my 8-month-old, but I wanted to prove the 8-month-old was real.

Look, there are some realities I keep coming behind these microphones to try to explain, and I continue to be just enraged, particularly to my brothers and sisters on the left, by the avoidance of the math.

My little boy, who is 8 months old, in 25 years, according to CBO, his taxes will have to be doubled. Corporate taxes will have to be doubled. Tariffs will have to be doubled. Everything has to double just to maintain baseline services. That is the math.

How many discussions have you heard here even today, over the last month, the reality of the math? The math will always win.

Once again, I am going to walk through some of what is really going on. For everyone here who says, "We are going to balance in 10 years," okay, I can do it, but you have to understand the amount of bloodletting that is re-

quired to actually make that math work.

The actual structural problem is actually not on the left, not on the right; it is demographics, something we are terrified of.

What the President did in his State of the Union speech was just unconscionable when he basically used Social Security and Medicare as props for his reelection instead of telling the truth. In a decade, the Medicare trust fund is gone. In a decade, the Social Security trust fund is gone.

Does the left plan to help us fix it? If they don't, they get to be responsible for doubling senior poverty in this country. It is the math.

I have started with this board now for multiple years. The new numbers are coming out, and they are actually worse. The United States functionally has \$114 trillion of borrowing, and it is all, every dime of it, Social Security and Medicare. The rest of the budget actually has a positive balance.

We got old. Look, I am a gray hair with a child. Maybe I am pathologically optimistic, but it is hard to fix a problem when you work in a place where your brothers and sisters will not look you in the eye and say: I understand the driver of our debt is our demographics.

For those of you with this up on YouTube, read the comments. About half the folks get it. About half the folks, the absurdities are just heart-breaking. "Tax rich people. That takes care of it." "Get rid of congressional salaries." We actually did the math. The funny thing is, if you get rid of all the Senate salaries and House salaries, it is 28 minutes of borrowing. That was last year's number. In 10 years, it is like 12 minutes of borrowing.

People have no concept. You can get every dime of foreign aid, and it is about 12 days of the borrowing.

Let's actually start to walk through to understand structurally how much trouble we are actually in.

Reducing the discretionary spending to zero—remember, the point I am trying to make here is you just got rid of all the military; you just got rid of the White House; you just got rid of Congress; you just got rid of the Supreme Court; you got rid of the EPA; you got rid of the IRS; you got rid of everything, all discretionary money. The only thing you are paying is Medicare, Social Security, the earned benefits, some of the Medicaid, veterans benefits, what we call mandatory around here.

When you get to about 10 years—remember, you have just wiped out the government; all you are doing is paying the benefits. When you actually remove all the mandatory, you are still having to borrow a couple hundred billion dollars.

When the clown show comes and says, "If we just got rid of this or that, we would be fine," it is not true. Your government functionally is an insurance company with an army, an insur-

ance company that technically is broke.

Let's walk through some of the math. I am going to do this over and over, and maybe one of these slides will actually help it sink in.

I have to throw something out that is just annoying. The room is empty. That is okay. People are in their offices working. We are on thousands of televisions around this place. I have given up on so many of my fellow Members, but maybe the staff, maybe the staff that is sitting there trying to figure out the math and the policy and what is going to go on, maybe they are listening.

This is where we are at. Remember, this was just done last week. The Congressional Budget Office updated a bunch of the math.

Our shortfall over the next 30 years is \$21 trillion on Social Security. Remember, Social Security still has a trust fund, but in 10 years, the trust fund is gone.

I don't think I brought the charts, but I have done it over and over. The average American who works their 40 quarters and those things, you get every dime you put in plus a SPIF.

□ 1915

You would have made a lot more money if you put it in the market or other places, but remember, there were discussions to try to do that 25 years ago. The left went nuts, so it didn't happen. It is mathematically impossible to do today.

But Medicare functionally has \$48 trillion of shortfall because the trust fund on Medicare, which is only the part A, the hospital, part of the doctor portion, is empty in 10 years.

So when you are seeing us talk about a 10-year budget, one of the great little lies around here is we are not telling you that on the 11th year it gets a hell of a lot worse.

Because are you going to backfill Medicare? Backfill Social Security?

Transportation Trust Fund, Highway Trust Fund is also gone at that time, too.

Then you put in these over the 30 years and then add in another \$47 trillion of interest. You start to understand when you are seeing the new scoring, looks more like a—if you do a 30-year math on it, on this latest CBO update, you have to do a little bit of imputing of the math, you're probably approaching about \$128 trillion, not that \$114 trillion on the first slide.

It is actually over the next 9 budget years—I know one says 10—just Medicare goes up another trillion dollars in spend. And then it really starts to take off because the trust fund is gone.

So when the President basically said we are not going to touch Social Security and Medicare, I agree. They are earned. They are earned. But where was the next sentence saying: And I plan to work with Republicans to keep them, to keep them solvent, to keep them here, instead of the clown show

that is going on right now and saying, well, we are not allowed to talk about it.

I had protestors at my office a couple days ago saying don't touch Social Security.

Okay. We don't touch it in, what?

Now it is, what, 9½ years. Are you ready for your 23 percent cut?

Because that is what the actuaries say is coming. Then the next year it gets bigger, and the cut gets bigger, and the cut gets bigger, and the cut gets bigger. And our back-of-the- napkin math is at that time you functionally double senior poverty.

So the clown show around here goes: You can't talk about Social Security. It has become a political issue. The President actually used it in the State of the Union.

Okay. I am going to show you some of the Democrat solutions and the absurdity of the math.

I need my brothers and sisters all here if you give a damn. Put some batteries in the calculator, hire a couple competent actuaries. Actually, try something even crazier, and for anyone that is watching or listening, go grab—you have to two different documents out there. The one is really an easy read, high school math. You will be fine.

The Congressional Budget Office, about 6 weeks ago, did an update on Social Security. It is an easy read. A little harder read but actually much more impactful. Go actually get the copy of the Social Security Medicare actuary report—or is it Medicare Social Security actuary report? Either way. Dig through that, and you will understand the demographic curve.

I am going to show you some demographic slides. And I promise you, I am going to upset some people, and maybe it is a little too geeky.

My father used to have a saying: For every complex problem, there is a simple solution.

That is absolutely wrong.

We are talking trillions of dollars. We are talking about millions and millions and millions of our brothers and sisters.

Guess what? Solutions are complex.

Is this body capable? I don't know if it is anymore.

Part of the problem is we have politicized everything to the point that we are incapable of telling the truth, because often telling the truth either gets you unelected or screws up the fundraising or other things.

I just continue to be enraged. Does my little boy—do you deserve a retirement? Does he deserve a future?

Because the wheels are coming off.

I just showed you a slide that said 10 years from now I can wipe out everything you think is government, and you still have to borrow money.

And no, China has actually been dialing down its bond holdings for a decade. Japan has been dialing down their bond holdings for decades.

We now finance most of our borrowing ourselves—actually almost all

of our borrowing ourselves. Single fail bond auction. You want to talk about hell?

At a future time I will actually walk you through scenarios of what happens when we go to sell U.S. sovereign debt and it is undersubscribed and watch the interest rate go through the ceiling because you have to sell it.

So let's take a quick look, just to understand the baseline structure of what has happened to Social Security. And once again, no one stole your money.

That was a rhetorical thing that politicians did to sound like they cared because they didn't want to tell you the actual math, and the actual math was demographics.

Social Security by the numbers: In 1960, I had 5 workers for every retiree, for every beneficiary.

How far away is 2030? Come on. Seriously, can anyone help me do some math here?

How far away is 2030?

Think of that. At the end of the decade, if you are married, you and your partner, your spouse, you got your own retiree.

Does that help explain part of the math problem? Understand in the early days for a working male on the very first year of Social Security, I have seen it documented that the average life expectancy was 64 years old, and you didn't get the benefit until you were 65.

You see some of the design issues?

Yes, it was a major update in, what, 1983. Tip O'Neill sitting in that chair over there; Ronald Reagan in the White House. They did difficult things. They shored it up. But now we have hit the baby boom curve.

We have divided government again just like we did back in the 1980s. What a magical time for us both to hold hands and save it, because you have a math problem. You got two workers for every beneficiary.

How much did you see the President in the state of the Union show like he gave a damn for anyone that is on Social Security?

I am not going to touch it.

Then what was his next sentence that is going off the cliff?

There are some very creative structural ideas, almost setting up either a sovereign wealth fund, some incentives where you actually get benefited to stay in the labor market and other things. We can save it with no one taking a cut. It is just going to require math and a lot of explaining.

This is pretty much another way of seeing the same slide of how many workers per retiree.

This is for my Democrat brothers and sisters. And I know this is done as a percentage of the economy which, believe it or not, when you actually look at the actuary reports, that is how we actually structurally look at programs like this that require trillions of dollars to finance.

We actually sort of say, here is the percentage of the economy that actu-

ally goes to that benefit. Total tax revenues raised in combined Federal, State, and payroll taxes approach 100 percent for wealthy taxpayers as a percentage of GDP.

It is basically saying what would happen if we functionally took 100 percent of the income from the wealthy. Once again, let's try this again, because there are a couple trolls out there saying, well oh, BERNIE SANDERS had this idea.

Okay. He does. If you can read through it, the amount of all the wealth income is just to shore up Social Security, and then they forget three-quarters of the borrowing is Medicare. You get 4 percent of GDP if you take all the taxes we are already paying and then add in functionally 100 percent tax on the income for the wealthy.

The problem is, the spending on just Social Security and Medicare is 6 percent, so you still got 2 percent of the entire economy as a shortfall.

And how much do you think if we took every dime of the wealthiest income, what do you think the economy would look like?

What would the growth be?

What would the investment be?

You have to understand, I do these things, they are absurd. But the discussion around here is absurd.

“Well, if we just tax the wealthy more.” Well, maybe we should, but don't think it actually fixes the problem.

And here is where it gets more uncomfortable, but let's do some demographics.

First point: I think our math says in like 19 years or 19½ years, the United States has more deaths than births. So in less than 20 years, the United States has more deaths than births.

I need you to think through that. Remember, a Social Security actuary is modeled for 75 years. In less than two decades, I have started having more deaths than births in this country.

And you start to understand what they call—it is actually a demographic term—a dependency ratio. And it turns out the three biggest economies in the world—the United States, China, Japan—and this is a little hard to read but it is worth the concept. I also am an outlier in my belief that much of what China does is because this curve collapsing down here is China. It is basically what they call dependency ratio, the number of folks they have that will be dependent on a worker.

Right now, today, they are healthier than the United States. They have more workers than dependents but their curve folds incredibly hard.

This one is the United States. We basically sort of fall and fall and fall and sort of flatline.

Japan is already in just a miserable state.

This is happening all around the industrialized world. We don't have enough kids. It is math. It is demographics.

So are we ready to embrace some pretty radical concepts?

There are some great authors out there that talk about how the 1970s and 1980s, and maybe even through part of the 1990s, the world had competition for what they called hydrocarbons: oil, natural gas.

In the previous decade and right up to today, it may be a world sort of competition for rare-earth elements because of electrification and batteries and those things. The next couple decades it may be an international battle for smart people.

Take a look at how many of the countries we compete with that have changed their immigration codes to actually recruit people who have skill sets. And it is not all just Ph.D.'s or electrical engineering. It is if you are a skilled carpenter, if you are a skilled programmer; if you are this or that. It is actually a really interesting and uncomfortable debate.

But as you are going to see, as we talk about these charts, I can make the numbers work. On one hand of the ledger, we need economic growth, and we need a lot of it.

Well, the way you get there is through fixing the regulatory system. The way you get there is from an economy that starts to become incredibly competitive again instead of the protection racket it has become today. We also have to fix the immigration system where you are not importing poverty, but you are importing talent, so you have economic growth.

Remember, the trick here is over the coming decades I need the debt to not grow faster than the size of the economy. You need that, too. We all need it, and so does my little 8-month-old.

We are going to compete against the world because the rest of the world is also—at least the industrialized world—is facing the same demographic collapse.

And now we get into the stuff that becomes really uncomfortable to talk about, and I have to find a way, but it is math and it is policy.

There is something really crappy going on in our society right now, and it is uncomfortable. I may be the only idiot who is dumb enough to walk up behind these microphones and talk about it, but we have a problem.

We have young males entering universities, almost similar to females, and then not graduate. I didn't bring all the charts, but the number of young males, particularly under 35, who just are functionally not showing up in the economy.

And why this is important?

I am not talking about a few. I am talking about millions and millions and millions. We are actually even looking at some of these charts. And where this gets to be a tricky conversation is when you start to see college enrollment by gender and then the males basically falling off the cliff here, particularly the last few years, where females graduated.

Great. This is wonderful over here. This is a real societal problem.

□ 1930

There is a cultural concept called marriageable populations, and I will see if I can weave this into this unified theory.

If I have a young woman that has worked her heart out, she has graduated, and the pool of available spouses are people that did not graduate, we are actually seeing what we call a marriageability gap. And we see that across the board, across ethnicities, and now it is really starting to show up in our economic data of slowing down our economic growth projections.

When you get someone who says, well, I can do this, I will do a tax cut here, I will do this here, and I get all this economic growth, I got a problem. I got a whole bunch of my society that is not entering either the workforce, they are not forming families, they are not having kids. The basic structure that builds both a society, a healthy community, but also actually builds that economic underpinning of that society. It is worth studying. It is worth digging in to.

We got to understand what is happening with young men, because it is such a large number now. We see it in our economic data as basically stultifying—if that is a word—the economic growth.

You have a world now where my brothers and sisters on the left, my Democrat colleagues run around saying, well, we have this low unemployment. And then you look at the available populations that should be in the labor force, but they don't show up in the data because they are not even looking.

Remember, we have fewer people today in the labor force than we did before the pandemic, by millions. Then I stand up here just pissed off trying to say, does anyone care about the math? Because at the end of the decade, the wheels are coming off and they don't need to.

This is just more of the same, just sort of showing that the participation of prime age males, basically, continues to decline, decline, decline. The other chart actually may have done a better job of showing the cliff.

What have I tried to argue here? I have debt that is exploding and it is substantially healthcare costs. It is substantially our demographics. We got old.

I have a seesaw here that if we could get both sides in balance, there is a way it works, but you have got to over here have growth. I got to have labor force participation. I have to have encouragement for people, whether you are older and we incentivize you, saying, hey, we are not going to take your side of the FICA tax if you stay in the labor force and you are 70 but you feel that you want to work. Great. We love you. Please. Thank you.

How do I get young males back into the labor force, to get them to actually

graduate college? This is important. If you are a university, please pay attention to these numbers. There is something that is almost crisis level going on out there.

The adoption of technology in regulation. Do you need buildings full of file cabinets and paper to regulate the environment, or could you actually do it through technology? We are all walking around with a supercomputer in your pocket. Stick the little sensor on it and you could do air quality monitoring. I no longer need a building to file paperwork. I always know what is going on. You can crowdsource it.

There are ideas like this that both disrupt, shrink the size of government. Government is just far too massive, and you can replace much of it with technology. The battles I have in Ways and Means over the IRS. Do you hire an army of unionized workers or do you use technology? If you believe there is a bunch of tax cheats out there, use technology to find them, or do you think an army of unionized workers is a much better way to do it? That is absurd.

Growth ledger. What I am going to talk about now is some of the disruptive ideas. Maybe a number of these won't work. Maybe they are just techno utopianism, but it is the thought process. It is the mental discipline to start thinking through the basic idea of, if I had a vibrant, competitive, disruptive economy that is actually crashing the price of healthcare over here and growing over here, I can do the math on that. I can show you that we can flatten out this debt bomb that is about to wipe out your retirement and my kids' future.

I want to give just a simple thought experiment, except it is real. Do you remember a half an hour ago, the Democrats touting in the Inflation Reduction Act, we are going to spend billions and billions and billions and billions of dollars subsidizing insulin? We are going to give the very companies that they used to come to the floor here and scream about that they were pillaging people with the cost of insulin.

We are going to give that Big Pharma money. That is how the brain trust on my left here works. Right over here in Virginia, there is a co-op. Remember, most of the insulin formulas are off-patent.

This group over here—and it is insurance companies, it is hospitals. I think a couple State Medicaid systems got together and said, screw it. We don't like the price the market is giving us. We are going to build a co-op and do it ourselves. We are going to make eight types of generic insulin. Oh, by the way, they are doing it less than the government subsidized price the Democrats pushed through where they are handing out billions of dollars.

Why didn't they turn around and say, let's bring this to market much faster? No taxpayer money. Cheaper prices. Competition. Instead the Democrats'

version was, let's just subsidize Big Pharma. How dare they act like they did something? They basically almost screwed up competition because they started subsidizing the very organizations they used to complain about and then made it so competition actually had to now compete with subsidized companies.

Does anyone else see the absurdity around here? If you want competition in the pharmaceutical world, get more people making them. The majority of the pharmaceuticals we all consume are off-patent. There are some crazy articles out there that I saw this summer of super high-speed 3D printers that you no longer need a couple hundred million dollar clean facility to make your generic drug. There are alternative ways to produce it.

What could we do regulatorywise, tax incentivewise, other things here to actually say, we want everyone and their cousin making safe, affordable, competitive pharmaceuticals if that is part of the fight that we have here saying these drug prices are too high?

What are you going to do? The Democrats actually decided they are going to regulate price cap, subsidize. As a supply side conservative, I come back and say, screw that. Let's grab today's technology and get the competition flowing.

I do not know all the details on this. I only saw part of the article this weekend, but this is the thought experiment I need from you.

How many of you saw the article this weekend that Apple basically believes they have broken the code for a glucose monitor in the watch?

Think about that, if you are a thinking person. If I came to you tomorrow and said, you can put something on your wrist—maybe it is not, because they are expensive, but it is the concept of the technology.

I can have something on my wrist that knows my oxygen, knows my blood pressure, knows my heart rate, knows my temperature, and now knows my glucose.

If you had all those datapoints, what could you run as an algorithm and also your ability to take my data 24 hours a day, 7 days a week?

Could you keep me much healthier? Could you keep our brothers and sisters healthier? Remember; diabetes is 33 percent of all healthcare spending. It is 31 percent of all Medicare spending.

If it is true this technology may be coming, just a thought experiment. You are all smart people. Think about it.

What would happen if I could take my prediabetic population, even some of my diabetic population that may not now be on insulin and said, we are going to work with you so you understand what is going on?

I represent probably the second highest per capita population in the world with diabetes; one of my Tribal communities in Arizona.

Incredible people, and they are not poor. They are a gaming tribe along-

side Scottsdale. They are very entrepreneurial. They have done great.

The data may be the disruption in the price of healthcare. Why am I the first idiot to walk up to the floor and say, I saw this. We should actually investigate it. We should understand what this could mean.

If we invited the scientists in to talk to us and say, what does the future look like? What would happen if it is true?

I am going to show another thing about a stem cell treatment that is going on from a San Diego company that believes they may have found a way—I think they have cured, like, six people of type 1 diabetes, but it is less than a year, so you don't know the efficacy.

The concept is there and the ability to stop someone from ever screwing up their islet cells.

The reason I show this stuff is instead of saying we are just going to walk in, and we are going to have to cut Medicare by trillions of dollars, how about the crazy thing of curing people and making the healthcare prices dramatically lower through technology, through disruption?

You have got a choice. This is not just a blunt, troglodyte approach. This is actually something where the society gets healthy and more prosperous.

I am just going to go through some of these because for some of these, I have done whole presentations on the floor.

When you start to actually read some of the literature, that we may be on the cusp of—I think, actually, there is a paper being presented in this coming week on the first data sets for a cancer vaccine, some of the drugs that are having just incredible success in curing people.

You have the ability to actually have that supercomputer you carry around in your pocket basically actually help you manage your personal health.

I have hypertension. I have to take a calcium inhibitor. I came here a couple weeks ago and showed, once again, another thought experiment.

Mr. Speaker, 16 percent of all healthcare spending is? Sixteen percent of all healthcare spending is? This is \$550 billion a year, so over a half a trillion dollars a year. It is calculated to be people not taking their pharmaceuticals.

So you have hypertension like me. I take my calcium inhibitor. I take one pill every day, and I don't stroke out.

They say 16 percent of healthcare spending is people choosing not to; darn it, I forgot. I didn't take the pill.

Now, I know some people are going to say, well, you should eat healthy. You should exercise. Trust me; I do. I haven't touched ice cream in a couple years. I really miss it.

But walk through just the concept with me, instead of your preconceived conceptions or notions. So 16 percent of healthcare spending is people not taking their pharmaceuticals appropriately so they stay on their rhythm.

Grandma forgets to take her pill. You need a statin. You forget to take it. How about a \$0.99 pill cap that beeps at you when you forgot to open it up that morning?

Is that \$0.99 worth what it would mean to go at \$550 billion? What if you could just shave off a couple points of it? \$200 billion; is that worth it?

These are just trying to be creative instead of the folks who want to run around here with a chainsaw hacking apart things. Start saying maybe the idea is using technology so we are healthier.

There is another article I picked up a couple days ago just to show the revolution that is about to be here. This now has FDA approval.

Functionally, you can blow into it from your home medicine cabinet, and guess what? It is a flu test. It is a COVID test. There is another version coming that is actually going to be two or three other things.

You can have it in your home medicine cabinet, and you can blow in it. You don't have to go to the urgent care center. You don't have to go to the doctor's office. You don't have to go to the emergency room. You don't have to go to the hospital.

The technology is the disruption. The disruption actually crashes the price.

□ 1945

These are uncomfortable. I had this really neat article. It is a bit geeky, but it basically talks about the ability to use an X-ray. Now, with some of the predictive AI looking at it, it can actually do amazing—amazingly accurate, cheaply—diagnostics on whether you are going to have a risk of heart disease or other things.

It is here, and it has gone through the efficacy trials. Do we set up the policy where we make these things reimbursable? Do we make these things so we take down the barriers because, remember, Washington often is more like a protection racket.

I have done whole presentations on this from a couple of years ago. Yes, it has actually moved forward to some of the immunotherapies for some of the types of cancers. These are coming about.

Now, the one that I talked about a couple of weeks ago was that possibility in regard to diabetes. We are actually bringing a couple of their researchers here, I think sometime next month, to talk about the mechanisms.

The reason I walked through all of these, the first part of this presentation, is to understand how devastating the debt is. It is not pretend. You can't just say, "Well, we will just pretend. We will print a \$1 trillion coin and walk away from it." You have to stop the clown show.

Yes, there is a whole bunch of government that we can do without, but you saw the very first couple of boards that basically said, 10 years from now, you can get rid of all of what you think is government, and you still have to

borrow money. You got rid of all of defense; you got rid of all the discretionary; and you still have to borrow money to be able to cover Medicare. The punch line there was it is the next year. That was all a 2033 number.

The next year, 2034, the Social Security trust fund is gone—23 percent cut. Is that going to be allowed to happen, or do we have to take it out of the general fund?

Next year, 2034, the Medicare trust fund is gone. The next year, the transportation highway trust fund is gone.

The second half of this was hope. I know some of this stuff is hard to process. It is hard sometimes to think, “Oh, I am going to disrupt. I am going to functionally legalize disruption.”

I have used this before, but it is the easiest. How many of you went to Blockbuster Video last week? Come on, work with me here. How many of you went and got that little silver disk last weekend? Of course not. “Schweikert, that is absurd.”

The fact of the matter is that technology came along. We started streaming. Now, you have how many choices? You sit there saying you have too many choices, that you can't make up my mind, instead of standing in line for the disk that wasn't there that you really wanted that you promised your family, so you come home with some crappy one, and they are all mad at you. That is not that long ago.

We have these types of disruptions in our society all the time. Stop being afraid of it.

Congress, damn it, stop acting like a protection racket where you protect incumbency—not incumbent elected, incumbent bureaucracies, incumbent business models.

Design the tax code. Design the regulatory code. If the Democrats continue insisting that they subsidize everything, fine. Design it so there is competition, not the chosen favorites that they want to hand a grant out to. That competition, I think, actually becomes the disruption that saves us.

If you have a better idea, one that makes Americans healthier, more prosperous, fixes your future retirement, fixes my little kid's future, I want to hear it. Right now, this is some of the best I have, and we have a whole portfolio of these things.

I beg of this place, please buy a calculator. Work through the math. Understand how devastating it is. Then, just try to think of a future. Try to think of a future that actually is incredibly hopeful, incredibly optimistic.

You can't have the sort of dystopian State of the Union speech we had, if you actually break it down, where they know these programs are going off the cliff, and the left cares so much more about winning the next election, they are not telling the truth to their own voters, let alone the people who are really dependent.

It is a level of cruelty. It is a cruelty that might work through the next election, but it is coming. The math always wins.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President and to direct their remarks to the Chair.

## PUBLICATION OF COMMITTEE RULES

RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON ETHICS FOR THE 118TH CONGRESS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
*Committee on Ethics, February 28, 2023.*  
Hon. KEVIN MCCARTHY,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives,*  
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to clause 2 of House Rule XI, I submit to the House the Rules of the Committee on Ethics for the 118th Congress, adopted February 28, 2023, for publication in the Congressional Record.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL GUEST,  
*Chairman.*

### FOREWORD

The Committee on Ethics is unique in the House of Representatives. Consistent with the duty to carry out its advisory and enforcement responsibilities in an impartial manner, the Committee is the only standing committee of the House of Representatives the membership of which is divided evenly by party. These rules are intended to provide a fair procedural framework for the conduct of the Committee's activities and to help ensure that the Committee serves well the people of the United States, the House of Representatives, and the Members, officers, and employees of the House of Representatives.

### PART I—GENERAL COMMITTEE RULES

#### RULE 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

(a) So far as applicable, these rules and the Rules of the House of Representatives shall be the rules of the Committee and any subcommittee. The Committee adopts these rules under the authority of clause 2(a)(1) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, 118th Congress.

(b) The rules of the Committee may be modified, amended, or repealed by a vote of a majority of the Committee.

(c) When the interests of justice so require, the Committee, by a majority vote of its members, may adopt any special procedures, not inconsistent with these rules, deemed necessary to resolve a particular matter before it. Copies of such special procedures shall be furnished to all parties in the matter.

(d) The Chair and Ranking Minority Member shall have access to such information that they request as necessary to conduct Committee business.

#### RULE 2. DEFINITIONS

(a) “Committee” means the Committee on Ethics.

(b) “Complaint” means a written allegation of improper conduct against a Member, officer, or employee of the House of Representatives filed with the Committee with the intent to initiate an inquiry.

(c) “Inquiry” means an investigation by an investigative subcommittee into allegations against a Member, officer, or employee of the House of Representatives.

(d) “Investigate,” “Investigating,” and/or “Investigation” mean review of the conduct of a Member, officer, or employee of the House of Representatives that is conducted or authorized by the Committee, an investigative subcommittee, or the Chair and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee.

(e) “Board” means the Board of the Office of Congressional Ethics.

(f) “Referral” means a report sent to the Committee from the Board pursuant to House Rules and all applicable House Resolutions regarding the conduct of a House Member, officer, or employee, including any accompanying findings or other supporting documentation.

(g) “Investigative Subcommittee” means a subcommittee designated pursuant to Rule 19(a) to conduct an inquiry to determine if a Statement of Alleged Violation should be issued.

(h) “Statement of Alleged Violation” means a formal charging document filed by an investigative subcommittee with the Committee containing specific allegations against a Member, officer, or employee of the House of Representatives of a violation of the Code of Official Conduct, or of a law, rule, regulation, or other standard of conduct applicable to the performance of official duties or the discharge of official responsibilities.

(i) “Adjudicatory Subcommittee” means a subcommittee designated pursuant to Rule 23(a) that holds an adjudicatory hearing and determines whether the counts in a Statement of Alleged Violation are proved by clear and convincing evidence.

(j) “Sanction Hearing” means a Committee hearing to determine what sanction, if any, to adopt or to recommend to the House of Representatives.

(k) “Respondent” means a Member, officer, or employee of the House of Representatives who is the subject of an investigation.

(l) “Office of Advice and Education” refers to the Office established by section 803(i) of the Ethics Reform Act of 1989. The Office handles inquiries; prepares written opinions in response to specific requests; develops general guidance; and organizes seminars, workshops, and briefings for the benefit of the House of Representatives.

(m) “Member” means a Representative in, or a Delegate to, or the Resident Commissioner to, the U.S. House of Representatives.

#### RULE 3. ADVISORY OPINIONS AND WAIVERS

(a) The Office of Advice and Education shall handle inquiries; prepare written opinions providing specific advice, including reviews of requests for privately-sponsored travel pursuant to the Committee's Travel Guidelines and Regulations; develop general guidance; and organize seminars, workshops, and briefings for the benefit of the House of Representatives.

(b) Any Member, officer, or employee of the House of Representatives may request a written opinion with respect to the propriety of any current or proposed conduct of such Member, officer, or employee.

(c) The Office of Advice and Education may provide information and guidance regarding laws, rules, regulations, and other standards of conduct applicable to Members, officers, and employees in the performance of their duties or the discharge of their responsibilities.

(d) In general, the Committee shall provide a written opinion to an individual only in response to a written request, and the written opinion shall address the conduct only of the inquiring individual, or of persons for whom the inquiring individual is responsible as employing authority.

(e) A written request for an opinion shall be addressed to the Chair of the Committee and shall include a complete and accurate statement of the relevant facts. A request shall be signed by the requester or the requester's authorized representative or employing authority. A representative shall disclose to the Committee the identity of the principal on whose behalf advice is being sought.