

that under the reckless spending and failed policies of this President, their country has become weaker and more vulnerable, both at home and abroad.

Madam Speaker, if you think that the State of the Union speech was disconnected from reality and the needs of the American people, read his budget. He just introduced it yesterday.

In the midst of record spending-induced inflation, interest rates, and the cost of living that is crushing working families, and a fragile and uncertain economic future for the American people, and the slide toward socialism, the slide toward a sovereign debt crisis, here is his answer:

Double down on the borrowing and the spending and the taxing.

In fact, his budget proposes the highest sustained levels of spending, borrowing, and taxing in the history of the United States of America.

Adding \$16 trillion to the debt over 10 years, \$5 trillion from hardworking tax-paying Americans to attempt to pay for it, taxes on energy and agriculture producers, taxes on working families, taxes on our job creators who are competing not just here at home but in the international marketplace.

Then he expands mandatory spending. Understand that we have 75 percent of our budget on auto-spend. That is the driver of the debt. If we don't rein in mandatory spending and grow this economy, we will never get out of this dangerous and unsustainable fiscal path that will end with irreparable harm to this country, that will end with our children being robbed of their freedom and their opportunities.

It will upend the Republic and our leadership in the world. The whole world order will change, and China won't have to fire a single shot. Madam Speaker, he expands mandatory spending because he wants more climate subsidies and clean energy, green energy tax giveaways to corporations. It is more cradle-to-grave welfare without work, trapping more people in dependence on government and generations in poverty.

This is his vision for America.

One thing that is not in there is any consideration for this current fragile economy or our children's future.

Madam Speaker, I am concerned as the budget chairman of the United States House Budget Committee. I am concerned as a family man with three children, who are hoping to have the American experience that we have had.

Madam Speaker, the Republicans put forward their budget, their blueprint, that would put this Nation on a path to balance. Instead of adding the \$16 trillion in debt over 10 years, we take that debt away. We reduce trillions of dollars in debt, we reduce our debt-to-GDP which, by the way, is the highest indebtedness in the history of our country, surpassing World War II when we were fighting Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany. We are in relative peace and prosperity, and we have higher indebtedness than we did in World War II, and it is going to get exponentially worse.

Today, our debt is 25 percent higher than the total economic output of the greatest and biggest and most robust economy in the world. It will be twice that in 30 years—\$120 trillion on top of the \$34 trillion debt that we are in now.

Now, if you can look at those CBO projections, if you can look at the unfunded liabilities 30 years in the future and not shudder to your core for the future of your country, then you are not reading from the same documents I am reading from.

Madam Speaker, look at the contrast between Biden's budget and the Republican budget. He says, show me your budget, I will show you your priorities. Look at his priorities and look at ours. I think you will understand that we choose economic freedom and fiscal responsibility and a bright future for our children.

God bless America and go west Texas.

#### MOURNING THE LOSS OF ITAY CHEN

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

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in sorrow, one that sears me not only as a Member of Congress, not only as a supporter of the State of Israel and its people, not only as an American, but as a parent.

Since October 7, I have become close with Ruby and Hagit Chen. They are the parents of Itay Chen, a brave American who was serving in the IDF when he was taken hostage by Hamas on October 7.

When last I saw Ruby and the other families of the American hostages held in Gaza less than a week ago, I repeated the refrain: "Send not to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

Sadly, Madam Speaker, we know that bell tolls for Itay.

Just this morning, intelligence emerged indicating that shortly after Hamas took Itay hostage on October 7, they executed him; an unarmed, defenseless hostage. It was an act of supreme cowardice, terror, murder.

Theirs was a crime that violates every international law, every rule of war, every moral ideal, and every principle of basic human decency.

His murder satisfied only one tenet, the one Hamas laid out in its own charter, which states their terrorist organization was put on the Earth to "fight Jews and kill them," and to eliminate Israel.

These terrorists robbed Itay of his future. He was only 19 years of age. They robbed Roy and Alon of their brother. They robbed our Nation of a great American, a young American, an idealistic American, an American who loved his country, the United States of America, and loved his family's homeland, Israel. Crucially, they robbed our world of a generous soul.

Madam Speaker, there is no sequence of words, no order of syllables that

exist in any language that can dull the pain that Itay's family feels this hour, but they ought to know that our commitment to secure their son's return is unbreakable.

We will not yield until we have recovered his remains, for his family cannot put him to rest and sit shiva until his body is returned. We will not relent, Madam Speaker, until we get every last hostage returned home.

Madam Speaker, I wish Itay's family strength as they grieve this terrible loss—the same strength that they have shown throughout this grueling ordeal. Many of you have met him, and Hagit, his mother, and maybe his aunt.

Indeed, the bell tolls for them and their son today, but it tolls for all of us, all of us who are vulnerable to the acts of terrorists and murderers and those without conscience.

May the Chens take comfort in knowing that bell's peal resonates in the hearts of every person who cherishes the human decency, courage, and generosity that Itay displayed.

May Itay's memory be a blessing.

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#### AMERICANS CANNOT AFFORD PRESIDENT BIDEN

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

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, during President Biden's State of the Union Address, we saw a desperate attempt to jump-start a failing Presidency.

After 3 years of weak and ineffective leadership, the American people continue to suffer under soaring inflation, increased crime, and a wide-open southern border.

Now is not the time for more empty promises from a President who is unable to deliver. It is time to address these challenges head-on by cutting back on spending, giving law enforcement the tools they need, and returning to border policies that keep our Nation safe.

Pennsylvanians cannot afford a President who cannot rise to meet these challenges, and Americans cannot afford a President who continues to rely on the far-left policies of his radical base.

#### CONSISTENT INFLATION

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, just this morning, it was reported that consumer prices rose by more than 3.2 percent in the month of February alone.

This consistent inflation is continuing to force American families to make difficult decisions about what they can afford and what they cannot afford.

Right now, a gallon of gas in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, costs \$3.66. Instead of addressing these rising prices, President Biden has continued to attack American energy producers, stifling new development and making it more difficult to open new refineries.

Energy prices now cost Americans over \$3,000 more each year than when Joe Biden first took office.

It is clear that the President's failed policies are to blame for the skyrocketing cost of gas, oil, and electricity. It is time to rein in these runaway prices by returning to the energy that is underneath the feet of my constituents.

#### COMMUNITY FUNDING PROJECTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. NICKEL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NICKEL. Madam Speaker, on Saturday, President Biden signed a government funding package into law. This bipartisan slate of bills will make meaningful investments in Federal programs that North Carolinians rely on. It will help lower the cost of living, create good-paying jobs, and grow our local economy.

I am particularly proud to have secured over \$14 million in Federal funds for 15 community-supported projects throughout North Carolina's 13th District. This will go a long way in getting local priorities moving, and I am proud to have gotten this funding across the finish line.

For transportation infrastructure, I secured nearly \$1.8 million for two different projects. This funding will help GoTriangle purchase 16 zero-emission vehicles and will also allow the city of Raleigh to make streetscape improvements to enhance connectivity and public safety on Tarboro Road.

For economic development, I secured \$2.2 million for three different projects. This funding will help the I-95/I-40 Crossroads of America Economic Development Alliance complete an advanced manufacturing and biotech training center, getting North Carolinians back to work. It will help the city of Goldsboro to demolish and dispose of the Herman Park building, which was closed due to contamination issues and safety concerns. It will help the town of Garner with the partial removal of a deteriorated dam and facilitate a lake and stream restoration improvement project at Meadowbrook Park.

For water infrastructure, I secured nearly \$7.3 million for six different projects. This funding will help the city of Raleigh to install stormwater infrastructure within the Cottages of Idlewild Affordable Housing Project and bring the project closer to completion. It will help the town of Apex to complete a sewer interceptor project, which will improve service delivery and reduce maintenance costs for public utilities.

It will allow the town of Benson to make pipe repairs and water system upgrades as part of its water system improvement plan. It will help the town of Cary to improve stormwater management and water quality in the Walnut Creek watershed. It will help

the town of Fuquay-Varina purchase a new 1-million-gallon elevated water storage tank to improve water quality, quantity, and pressure. It will help the town of Holly Springs to make water infrastructure improvements, specifically a water conveyance system that is so needed in the region.

For public safety, I secured \$1.3 million for three different projects. This funding will help Wake County purchase body-worn cameras, radars, and other technology upgrades for the Wake County Sheriff's Office. It will help the town of Smithfield to purchase body cameras and more data storage resources. It will help the town of Selma purchase police equipment and make technology upgrades. In the fight for justice, body cameras aren't just accessories; they are tools of accountability.

For agriculture, I secured nearly \$1.5 million for North Carolina State University to continue corn and soybean research at the Central Crops Research Station in Clayton.

Madam Speaker, I came to Congress to get things done. This funding will alleviate the burden and expense on our local cities and towns and get these projects closer to the finish line by putting our Federal dollars to good use in North Carolina. I am going to continue to work across the aisle to find solutions and deliver for the people of North Carolina's 13th District.

#### RECOGNIZING JAYLENE EVERHART

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jaylene Everhart of Centre County, Pennsylvania. I had the privilege of meeting with Jaylene last week while she was in Washington, D.C., for the national Agriculture's Promise forum.

Jaylene is a junior at State College Area High School and currently representing Pennsylvania for the National Young Farmers Education Association. Her passion for agriculture started at a young age as she grew up going to her grandparents' farm for chores before heading to school.

As a member of the Little Lions FFA Chapter and 4-H, she advocates for agricultural education on a wider level, encouraging educators to include agricultural education in classrooms.

In December, Jaylene was one of two high school students from Pennsylvania selected to compete at the National Young Farmers Education Association Institute and Agriculture Communications competition in College Station, Texas, at Texas A&M University.

The association works with local FFA chapters and 4-H organizations to help raise the next generation of agricultural leaders and advocates.

During the event, Jaylene attended educational tours to learn about the

variety of agricultural opportunities and what Texas agriculture is all about and competed in a variety of agriculture advocacy and communication competitions against college- and high-school-age students from across the country.

Jaylene placed first in the Agriculture Expressions contest, which consisted of a 500-word essay on a current agricultural topic, a personal biography, and a release statement for publication. She also participated in the Agriculture Communications contest, where she created social media posts, radio, TV, and newsprint submissions throughout the week to exemplify the impact and education of the institute.

Madam Speaker, as chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture, I take great pride in meeting with our next generation of agricultural leaders. Jaylene has an incredibly bright future ahead of her, and she is an inspiration to other young farmers looking to get involved with the industry.

Without students like Jaylene, who have such a passion for the agricultural field, we risk our future food supply. I am also looking for ways to lift the voices of her generation in Congress and encourage our next agricultural leaders. We must encourage their participation in the agriculture industry.

Madam Speaker, I congratulate Jaylene on her accomplishments. They are truly outstanding. She is a talented young lady, and I look forward to seeing all that she will accomplish for the agricultural community and beyond.

#### TIJUANA RIVER POLLUTION NEAR SAN DIEGO

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

Mr. PETERS. Madam Speaker, I rise once again to address what could very well be one of the greatest ongoing environmental disasters in the United States. I am referring to the billions of gallons of raw sewage, industrial waste, and other pollutants that flow down the Tijuana River and into San Diego's coastal waters.

These flows sicken our communities, shutter our local businesses, harm our tourism industry, endanger wildlife, and threaten our servicemembers and Border Patrol agents stationed in San Diego.

Just last month, researchers at San Diego State University released a report that shows that this pollution also poses a massive public health threat. The studies they cite reveal extremely troubling findings, like the fact that cancer-causing chemicals banned in the United States decades ago, including DDT and PCBs, have been found in the soil.

Waterborne contaminants include viruses like SARS-CoV-2, salmonella, listeria, hep B and C, and pathogens carrying antibiotic-resistant genes.