

money to be able to support a new system of construction, as well to be able to pay for it.

So here is the real story. Tragedy struck the Baltimore Harbor some weeks ago. We saw not only the Maryland delegation come together, but we saw the Nation come together.

The Nation has come together to be able to speak to the pain of the people that are in Maryland, that are in Baltimore, and in particular, in the city of Baltimore. That is what happened.

So I am standing with and supporting Mr. MFUME who comes to represent the Maryland delegation to ensure that those funds are forthcoming and that they are not dismissed. I think it is extremely important that we know to help our various communities that are suffering from hurricanes, suffering from a particular type of disaster that no one had ever heard, which is the disaster of the collision of a cargo carrier, if you will, going into the Francis Scott Key Bridge that many of us remember as the source of the Star Spangled Banner.

So I would not be here if I didn't think the value that I stand for is to stand alongside Mr. MFUME to recognize that we are Americans first and that we are here to help those who are in their time of need who cannot help themselves.

That is why the President immediately went to Maryland in terms of his voice, immediately spoke up on behalf of the people of Maryland and the people of Baltimore and immediately spoke up on behalf of the Maryland Congressional Delegation which Mr. MFUME now will continue to lead. He immediately stood up because he is going to be a man of his word. He stood up because he is a man of his word that he was going to be here to stand with the great people of Maryland.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to indicate my support for the funding efforts to help the great people of the great State of Maryland. Let's do it together. That is what Americans do. We help each other, and we work together.

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

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY BRIDGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. MFUME) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, let me begin by thanking the gentlewoman from Texas for her opening remarks of

this Special Order hour dedicated to make sure that we underscore the sense of tragedy, the sense of loss, and the sense of damage that has occurred as a result of the bridge collapse in Baltimore. I thank her again for sitting in and standing in. Your remarks were very well received. We appreciate it.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today shortly to welcome other Members again who will be coming over to be a part of this Special Order. I want to call everyone's attention to the fact that somewhere around 1:30 a.m. on March 26, the Dali, a large 985-foot cargo ship weighing 95,000 tons when empty, collided, as we all know now, tragically with the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore.

□ 1445

The *Dali's* collision with the Key Bridge caused its fatal collapse into the Patapsco River and has forced the Port of Baltimore to suspend vessel traffic until further notice. All of the shipping lanes, with the exception of the ones that the Coast Guard was just recently able to open, have been closed, and we don't expect that to change until sometime around the end of May, if we are fortunate.

Aside from that, I think it is always important to recognize that it was not the collapse of the bridge alone that troubled us, but it is also the loss of human life. Our hearts continue to go out to the families who lost their loved ones on that bridge on that fateful evening.

This unimaginable disaster claimed the lives, as we know now, of six men: Alejandro Hernandez Fuentes, Maynor Yassir Suazo Sandoval, Miguel Luna, Dorlian Castillo Cabrera, Jose Mynor Lopez, and Carlos Hernandez.

Those stories and those lives have yet to be fully understood or told, but those men, most of whom had been in this country 16 or 17 years, working in most instances two jobs, married with children and raising families, paying taxes, and doing what a lot of people would not want to do at 1:30 in the morning that high up on a bridge, filling potholes.

We, in the State of Maryland, continue to mourn them, as do people all over the country, and we know that they were, indeed, as I said, husbands, somebody's father, somebody's brother. Their passing serves as a solemn reminder to cherish our own lives and the lives of those that we really deeply care about. These men gave their heart, they gave their sweat, and ultimately gave their souls.

They leave behind six grieving families and loved ones that will never see them again. So those families can never get enough of our condolences and our prayers and our sympathies. I thank the largest Latino and immigrant organization in the Mid-Atlantic, CASA de Maryland, its Executive Director Gustavo Torres, and all of those who worked so hard to support those grieving families the day of the col-

lapse and every day since then, both financially and emotionally. I ask that we continue to lift them in prayer in a time of great tragedy that all Americans, regardless of where they are, to some extent feel, understand, and grieve for.

I would be remiss if I did not thank President Joe Biden, who called the Governor and myself and other members of the delegation that morning to express his profound regret and his unflinching and unwavering support, to find a way to make things whole again, to rebuild that bridge, and to allow those shipping lanes of commerce to be open.

President Biden, since the beginning of this, has not wavered in his support of replacing that bridge, and not just for the sake of replacing a bridge, and to open, as I said before, the channels of commerce, but to also find a way to give hope to all of the many people who are affected, the thousands of long-shoremen, thousands of dock workers that do odd jobs, all of those in the communities of Turner Station and Dundalk, Maryland, who are right at the mouth of the bridge, as well as all those small businesses and businessowners, the truck drivers and others—everyone affected when all commerce came to a halt.

I thank President Biden. We have appreciated the simple eloquence of his example in this tragedy. We pledge to work with him and with the appropriate members of the Appropriations Committee here in the Congress.

In addition to the President, I thank Secretary Buttigieg, who also reached out early that morning as the sun rose and who was one of the first boots on the ground by noon.

Secretary Buttigieg was initially responsible in making sure that the cleanup funds, the initial dollars, got appropriated and let right away. They were sent and are being used now in cleanup of the massive amount of debris, which I am going to talk about, which is almost unthinkable when you consider a bridge of that size.

Administrator Guzman and the SBA, we thank you and we thank all those SBA officials who came over and who started working with small businesses who are severely impacted by this, as was the case with Acting Secretary Su of the Department of Labor.

Now, one of the things that we believe is very important, and I think it is important to mention right now, is that the United States Coast Guard and the Army Corps of Engineers immediately stood up a command team on the scene, immediately began working with Governor Wes Moore of Maryland, who, by the way, has done an excellent job in marshaling all of the State's resources. That command team, made up of the Coast Guard, the Army Corps of Engineers, the State police, the FBI, and so many others that were involved from the start of this, really has made a difference in terms of the progress that has been made thus far.

The Maryland Department of the Environment and the Transportation Authority also were very much a part of what took place.

Mr. Speaker, this unified command, as I indicated, were some of the first boots on the ground, and they have responded to these crises day in and day out with diligence and with precision. Their work around the clock, 24/7, does not go unnoticed by our city, our State, or our Nation. We owe much dedication to those servicemen and servicewomen who, even at this hour as I speak, are still very much involved, as they had been in trying to find a way to open those channels.

There are 51 divers in the water right now, going through the wreckage and trying to assess the danger in very dangerous, dark, and murky circumstances.

We still have three individuals who have not yet been recovered, and so the work of those divers is particularly important so that these families might be able to bring closure to all that is going on.

I mentioned Governor Wes Moore. I want to speak more about him and his team and the members of the Maryland delegation who have worked in lock-step with one another to get us to this point.

My thanks to both Senators in the other body, Senators CARDIN and VAN HOLLEN; the entire House delegation, Congressman HOYER, Congressman RUPPERSBERGER, Congressman RASKIN, who you will hear from in just a minute, Congressman SARBANES, Congressman ANDY HARRIS, Congressman TRONE, Congressman GLENN IVEY, and myself.

I would like, if I might, before I talk more about the State's effort and what we are really dealing with when we think about this collapse, it is more than just concrete and bricks and steel falling into the ocean. It has disrupted supply chains across this Nation that we hope to reopen and reestablish.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN), my fellow Marylander, and the ranking member of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, Mr. MFUME, for yielding me time. I am grateful to him for his extraordinary leadership through this catastrophe and for leading us through this Special Order hour this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak about the devastating collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge in our beloved home State of Maryland.

In times of catastrophe across the country, from earthquakes in California to hurricanes in Florida to flooding in Louisiana to wildfires in the West to terrorism in New York or Washington, D.C., we come together as a country to help our communities recover and rebuild, and we cannot allow any of the political divisions in America today to interfere with this process

of coming together to help a community struck by catastrophe in this way.

Disasters befall all of our States and all of our districts, and they are not partisan in character. We have to stick together to support all of our communities, and that is what we are going to do in Maryland, and we are going to do as a Nation to rebuild the Baltimore Francis Scott Key Bridge.

I thank Governor Moore's administration, the Coast Guard, Secretary Buttigieg, the Army Corps of Engineers, first responders, the Maryland Transportation Authority, and everyone who is working overtime to address this disaster. The Unified Command convened by the Coast Guard has been hard at work in removing the bridge debris from the river and restoring access to the port, salvage and recovery operations are ongoing in a very difficult and complicated process.

The Dali vessel, weighing 213 million pounds, is the same size as the Eiffel Tower with pieces of bridge weighing as much as 4,000 tons laying on top of it. The water is frigid and murky, complicating the ongoing and heroic rescue efforts that began immediately.

I thank President Biden and his administration for their exemplary leadership in the face of this catastrophe and its characteristic commitment to help the local community rebuild.

The President has directed his administration to move heaven and Earth to rebuild the bridge and to recover the port as rapidly as possible, and within hours of receiving Maryland's request, the DOT and FHA swiftly approved \$60 million in initial aid.

Mr. Speaker, I also acknowledge the devastating loss of the six construction crew workers who were killed in this nightmare when they were working what seemed like a routine nighttime shift fixing potholes. Our thoughts continue to go out to their families and all of their loved ones.

We have a long road ahead of us to rebuild the bridge in Maryland, and our bipartisan Congressional delegation stands ready to do everything which needs to be done to restore full access to the port and rebuild the bridge.

Mr. Speaker, I again thank Mr. MFUME for his extraordinary leadership and thank all of our colleagues who have expressed their support and their sympathy for the people of Maryland dealing with this crisis. Thank you for standing with us.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) whose district is miles from where this happened but who has been with us every step of the way.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES).

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman MFUME for organizing this very important and special tribute. It is a tribute, as you have already heard, to the six hardworking men who lost their lives during this collapse of the bridge on March 26.

They got up that morning—early, early in the morning—because they were out there in the middle of the night on this shift not knowing, obviously, what was going to happen. Their families could have no inkling of what was going to happen on that tragic day, but they were just out there doing their job.

I thank the gentleman, in particular, because in every setting now, every public statement he has made, he has led with concern and focus on those six workers that were lost. They were husbands, they were dads, brothers, friends, and our deepest condolences go out to their families who are feeling that incredibly profound loss.

This is also a tribute to the first responders who sprang into action, and, as a result, were able to save other lives on the day of that collapse, and they continue, these first responders, to search for the remaining bodies of those that were lost under very dangerous conditions because they want to reunite them with their families and their loved ones. They will be remembered as heroes, and they deserve today's tribute.

□ 1500

We also want to pay tribute to the response, the immediate response. Within minutes of this disaster, President Biden made clear that the Nation was going to step in and step up. He put his team, led by Secretary Buttigieg and others, on the task. In Baltimore, we could feel that embrace and that support right out of the gate.

This is a tribute to the executive branch response. It is a tribute to President Biden and his team. It is also a tribute to Governor Moore, who also stepped up that day, and, frankly, every day since, to show the solidarity of this response and this unified command.

We are going to push through this. Baltimore gets knocked down sometimes, but we always stand back up. That is the grit of Baltimore. In this case, we know we can't stand up by ourselves. We need President Biden, we need Governor Moore, and we need the United States Congress to be part of a national response for a national project to restore the channel and the Port of Baltimore, which is so critical to the economy of our city, our State, our region, and the Nation, and then, ultimately, as we know, to rebuild the Francis Scott Key Bridge.

That is why we are here paying tribute in the way we are today. Again, I thank my colleague Congressman MFUME for organizing this opportunity for us today.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his interest, his work, and his dedication to this mission that is before all of us, to rebuild this bridge and open the lanes of commerce once again so that our Nation's economy is not affected in ways that would cause us unwanted and unnecessary harm.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Ms. PELOSI),

the Speaker Emerita of the United States House of Representatives. She is a native of Baltimore, the daughter of a mayor and the daughter of a congressperson, but a daughter of the city.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I especially thank him for his leadership to the great State of Maryland and the city of Baltimore, as well as for calling for this Special Order this evening so that we can come together and express the heartbreak that we all felt and now to commemorate the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge and these six beautiful souls, in loving memory of them, who lost their lives on that dark morning.

I thank Congressman MFUME for organizing the Special Order. I join him and Congressman SARBANES in recognizing the leadership role of the Governor of Maryland, Wes Moore. I want to pay tribute to the mayor of Baltimore, Brandon Scott, and to all of our congressional delegation for uniting together in a bipartisan way in response to this tragedy.

Just to remind you, it was 2 weeks ago, in the dark of night and braving the cold, a crew got to work making repairs to the Francis Scott Key Bridge. They were doing their jobs so that 30,000 people a day could go to theirs, to do their jobs.

Our love and prayers are with those who lost their lives in this collapse and with their families who lost a husband, a brother, a father, a son.

Our gratitude is with the heroic emergency responders who responded so quickly and saved lives, as well as the teams working quickly to clear the channel.

The magnitude of the collapse cannot be understated. Six families shattered, first and foremost. Tens of thousands of commuters rerouted, paralysis of a port that handles \$80 billion in commerce, sending a shock wave through the entire economy. Inspired by the love, unity, and resilience of the Baltimore community, Baltimore will rebuild.

President Biden, as has been mentioned, and the Congress must be there with resources to support every step of the way.

On that score, I would say, having been in Congress for a long time, sadly, we have been witness to many natural and other disasters that have befallen our communities, whether it was the bridge in Minnesota, whether it was the storm in Florida, whether it was Katrina in New Orleans, or whether it was water damage in Iowa. The list goes on and on, but we have all been there for each other. Maybe not all of us, but most of us have been there.

This is a big, big tragedy, but in terms of cost, much smaller than many of the hurricanes and the rest that have happened in the rest of the country. We can learn from them. Whether it is unemployment insurance for the workers, whatever it happens to be, we

want to make sure that we utilize every resource at our disposal to bring people together.

The Governor has pointed out, as has Congressman MFUME, Congressman SARBANES, and members of the delegation, the mayor, and our Senators BEN CARDIN and CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, that this is a national challenge. If you are a restaurateur in Tennessee, you are affected by this. If you are an auto-worker in Ohio, you are affected by this. If you are a salesperson in West Virginia, you are affected by this, because of the products that come through and the jobs that are affected by it.

In closing, my father was mayor of Baltimore my whole life. When I was in first grade and when I went off to college, he was still the mayor of Baltimore. That is where my heart is.

I always was so proud of the fact that the National Anthem was written in Baltimore. Francis Scott Key, in the War of 1812, wrote the National Anthem. My brother, Tommy, who also was mayor of Baltimore, was always fond of singing it in his way.

The line in the song that I always liked the best, and I think that applies here, is when he says: "Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there." That is when I start cheering at the game, not at the end, but at that point, as I just did at opening day in San Francisco. Those were the words penned by Francis Scott Key as he gazed upon the ramparts. Now a bridge bearing his name is near where those ramparts were.

As we rebuild, we will, indeed, give proof through the night that our flag is still there, our flag being our unifying symbol of our country that we are all in this together. We will be there. We will learn from other disasters. We will teach other disasters in the future by how we, in a new fresh way, in the Baltimore way, Baltimore strong, rebuild the Francis Scott Key Bridge. Proof through the night that our flag is still there.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Speaker EMERITA both for her leadership in the greater San Francisco area and also for her love for the city of Baltimore. Both cities are very, very fortunate to have her. I can only say thanks to Speaker NANCY D'ALESSANDRO PELOSI.

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maryland has 29 minutes remaining.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. IVEY).

Mr. IVEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for organizing this Special Order hour.

I also join with the comments that have already been made with respect to condolences to the families of the six lives that were lost. I remember, when I heard about it that morning, there

were eight, I think, missing initially. I remember praying at that time that they would survive. Even though the emergency services made immediate efforts to try and save them and blocked off the road so that no other people were going to meet that fate, I know that we have lost six at this point.

It is a sad moment, a tragic evening, and we certainly want to extend our condolences to their families and their communities. Gustavo Torres and some of the other leaders and officials in those communities recognize the impact that was had, and we certainly want to tell them that we support them and we are going to work hard to help them make it through this tragedy in every way that we can.

I also want to commend Governor Moore who has been outstanding in the way he has handled this event. The leadership he has provided has been quite impressive. He has really risen to the occasion. I knew he was a talented leader, but he has demonstrated that repeatedly during this time.

I thank the Biden administration, too, for taking immediate steps. The President himself came out I think that same day and made the commitment to make sure that the bridge got rebuilt, that the Federal Government was going to make 100 percent efforts to cover those costs, and that he was going to do everything in his power to make sure that that happened quickly, that we weren't going to wait for the litigation to take place. I think the last time there was a bridge collapse, the litigation took 10 years to resolve. Thank goodness he has decided to move it forward immediately because we need that money now. We need to rebuild it. You have heard about the economic impact on the region. I think that is certainly the case, so making initial and quick steps to make that recovery happen, I think, is critical.

I did want to say this, too. That morning, I got calls from reporters about the tragedy, and some were asking for initial responses. Some also asked me about comments that people had made with respect to the collapse of the bridge.

One candidate for Congress said DEI did this, and he called Mayor Brandon Scott "the DEI mayor."

One rightwing provocateur said foreign agents of the United States attacked digital infrastructures.

Another individual said: Looks deliberate to me. A cyberattack is probable. World war III has already started.

Lastly, a Utah State Representative said: This is what happens when you have Governors who prioritize diversity over the well-being and security of our citizens.

I told that reporter then, and I want to say it on the House floor now, that I thought those comments were disgusting and irresponsible. I thought it was a sad moment. I know we are having very partisan times here in the United States, and certainly here in

the House, but I think this is a moment where we need to rise above that.

I thank my Republican colleagues who just did that and are doing that just now. ANDY HARRIS stood with us. Congressman ANDY HARRIS stood with us yesterday. We had a press conference where we had the Biden administration present, the Governor present, and the House and Senate delegation from Maryland were all present. He was there, too, and voiced his support for full recovery of the bridge.

I say this just to end. The voices that I just mentioned a moment ago, those were not the representative voices of my colleagues here in Congress. I think they understand that this is not about red States or blue States. This is a moment where this is about the United States of America. It is times like this where we have to turn to each other and not on each other so we can rise above the tragedy and move forward together.

I know we can do better. I know we will continue to do better, and I want to commend all of those who have done better so far with this effort.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments, for his leadership on this, and for his steadfastness as we all try to work together to move beyond this American disaster and to create in its place a new bridge, new lanes of commerce, and new opportunities economically for people who relied so much on that port and, by the way, on every port in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RUPPERSBERGER), a senior member of the Appropriations Committee.

□ 1515

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, the first thing I want to tell the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. MFUME) is that I represented Sparrows Point and the Key Bridge for over 20 years. We just had redistricting, and all of a sudden, the gentleman is the new person. He jumped in with both feet, and I appreciate the gentleman's leadership in pulling people together.

The funny thing is that the bridge is located in Baltimore City, but Baltimore County is right next to it. I grew up and went to school in the city, and the gentleman went to Turner Station, which is in Baltimore County.

It is really, I think, unique that the gentleman is here now to move forward and do whatever he needs to do. He is doing a great job, and I thank him for his leadership and all that he is doing.

Mr. Speaker, as I said before, I proudly represented the port for over 20 years until the recent redistricting, so I literally watched the port grow into one of Maryland's and our country's strongest economic engines.

Today, the port supports more than 51,000 direct, induced, and indirect jobs and another 346,000 related jobs. These are jobs associated with the cargo mov-

ing through the port, companies that export and import cargo through the port, as well as the end-stage businesses like manufacturers and auto dealers.

All of this activity generated \$5 billion in personal wages and salaries for Marylanders last year alone and brought in \$647 million in State and local tax revenues. In total, the economic value of the Port of Baltimore to the State of Maryland just in 2023 was more than \$70 billion. Let me say that again: \$70 billion.

Now, with the development of Tradepoint Atlantic in nearby Sparrows Point at the foot of what was once the Key Bridge, the opportunities for even more employment and economic growth are exponential and unlimited. We are anticipating a tremendous surge in manufacturing jobs as well as jobs in retail and hospitality.

That is why we have invested smartly and strategically in the port over the years at the local, State, and Federal levels. We added an impressive 50-foot berth and massive Neo-Panamax container cranes. We upgraded terminals. We are expanding the Howard Street Tunnel so it can handle double-stacked trains going to and from the port with cargo.

Last year, the Federal Government awarded the port \$47 million for a new roll-on, roll-off pad, an offshore wind project, and other upgrades for the Key Bridge and Port Baltimore.

This, of course, was part of the massive investment that came out of the bipartisan infrastructure bill that this body wisely passed in 2021 to help us compete with ports around the world.

These investments are paying off in dividends. In fact, last year, while ports nationwide were returning to their prepandemic baselines, the Port of Baltimore was the only U.S. port to see a container volume increase. We handled record cargo.

Clearly, investing in our infrastructure is a safe return for our taxpayers. It is creating jobs, making our supply chains more resilient, and curbing inflation.

Rebuilding the Key Bridge as quickly and safely as possible is a top priority for me, for our State, and for our country. It is a top priority for the Maryland delegation, and it should be a top priority for all of us.

Our delegation will soon be introducing legislation to require the Federal Government to make good on the President's commitment. We thank the President for his commitment, 100 percent, to cover the cost of rebuilding the bridge. We are going to do it quickly, and we have a lot of individuals throughout the country working to do this for us.

This is consistent with the catastrophic loss of other major infrastructure elsewhere in the country. There is no time for partisan politics or unreasonable demands. We must pass this quickly together.

We also cannot lose sight of the human toll of this unimaginable trag-

edy. It is not only the port workers who will be unemployed or underemployed but the six construction workers who lost their lives.

Our hearts go out to them and their loved ones.

They were doing dangerous, gritty work, filling potholes in the middle of the night to support their families and serve their community. They deserve our respect and gratitude.

Finally, I thank our Governor for stepping up on the State level, and our local government, our mayor and our Baltimore County Executive, John Olszewski. We really have come together as a team.

My hope is that in rebuilding better, we can prevent a tragedy like this from ever happening again and prevent other families from experiencing the same grief that families are experiencing right now.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support us in the effort.

Mr. Speaker, I have been here for a while. This is my last term. I am not happy with where this Congress is now on both sides of the aisle. They are not working together to get things done. I hope that this negative experience will turn into a positive experience, where Republicans and Democrats will work together for the benefit of the United States of America and for my home of Baltimore.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his words, and I thank him also for his service to this body for almost two decades. We wish him well as he goes forward. One thing we are all sure about is that his heart remains in Baltimore.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to another gentleman from the State of Maryland (Mr. HARRIS), who is also a senior member of the Appropriations Committee and a Member whose entire district is the Eastern Shore of Maryland, the entire coastline. He has always worked diligently on behalf of issues affecting the bay.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Today, I rise, as fellow members of my delegation have, to speak regarding the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge and especially to honor the memory of the hardworking men who lost their lives the morning the bridge collapsed.

These hardworking men were fellow Marylanders: husbands, fathers, brothers, and friends. Their passing serves as a solemn reminder to cherish our own lives and the lives of those we love deeply.

Mr. Speaker, the Maryland congressional delegation stands united as we mourn those lost and extend our heartfelt condolences to their grieving families.

I also want to take a moment to recognize Maryland's brave first responders whose heroic actions saved lives the morning the Key Bridge collapsed. Once that mayday call was issued from the approaching ship, Maryland Transportation Authority Police acted

quickly and, in less than 2 minutes, stopped traffic from coming over the bridge. There is no doubt these immediate actions saved lives and averted an even greater tragedy.

We thank those officers who protect us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, even in the middle of the night while most of us are asleep, as was the case that day.

Mr. Speaker, the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge and the closure of the Port of Baltimore has caused serious economic consequences for our State's economy. The Baltimore Port is the largest U.S. port for handling farming construction machinery. It handles agricultural products. It is also a large export facility for American coal.

Mr. Speaker, 15,000 jobs directly depend on the Port of Baltimore.

I especially thank the Army Corps of Engineers for their quick and tireless work to get the channel cleared so that the port can reopen as soon as possible.

As we continue to work on the clean-up phase of the bridge collapse, it is important that we seek maximum liability from those foreign companies that owned and operated the ship that crashed into the bridge. As I have long said, American taxpayers in both Maryland and across the country should not be held responsible to pay for the cost to rebuild a bridge if, indeed, there was negligence on the part of foreign-owned shipping companies.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, tragedy knows no partisanship. The Key Bridge collapse wasn't a Republican tragedy, and it wasn't a Democrat tragedy. The solution to clearing the channel, reopening the port, and building the bridge back even better than it was before won't be a partisan solution. It will be a bipartisan one.

As we navigate the necessary legislation going forward, we all commit in the delegation to working in a bipartisan way to cut through Federal red tape, clear that channel, open that port, and construct an even better, safer bridge so that our fellow Marylanders, Maryland's economy, and those affected by this tragedy will come back stronger, safer, and united.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland for his comments and to underscore what I said earlier and what was said by several other people, that this disaster is not a partisan disaster. It affects all of us in this country regardless of our political label. I commend the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HARRIS) for his steadfastness on this.

I am going to take a few minutes to talk about several other Members on both sides of the aisle who have, through their example, demonstrated the best way to go about dealing with a disaster like that, and that is to do it in lockstep together.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the other gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER). He is the former majority leader, and he is, for those who don't know, the dean of the Maryland delegation.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, late at night, a ship being guided by people working for the Port Authority of Baltimore lost control of a gigantic ship. Unable to propel it or guide it, they immediately called the Transportation Authority, as Mr. HARRIS pointed out. The good news, for we don't know how many people, but perhaps hundreds, was that the Transportation Authority acted quickly.

We had a tragedy in the loss of six lives working on that bridge to keep it in good and safe shape. Tragically, for them, that gigantic ship that had lost power and the ability to steer took down a significant portion of the Francis Scott Key Bridge and caused their deaths.

For that, we lament, and we send our thoughts to their families.

That was the immediate tragic effect, but the effect on this bridge and the sections of the bridge falling into the channel and precluding ingress and egress had international consequences, certainly consequences to the State of Maryland and certainly consequences to the United States of America.

This port is one of the busiest ports in America. As the previous speakers have said, it carries a variety of critically necessary products and creates a dynamic economy not only around the port itself and in Maryland but internationally.

I rise to join my colleagues. You might be surprised, Mr. Speaker, that this is bipartisan and nonpartisan in approach, but it is because, as Mr. HARRIS, again, said: This is not a partisan tragedy. This is a tragedy for those who lost their lives and for those who have lost their immediate economic means of support, whether they were owners, shippers, or longshoremen and others working for the port.

As a result, we in Maryland believe this is, as we would believe if it were another port that had been so damaged, a question that the entire country needs to address.

We have done that before. We did it when a Minnesota bridge fell on an interstate. We acted. We acted as a nation, 100 percent paying for that Minnesota repair. We hope and believe that the Congress will do the same.

We are pleased that, in a very short time after the accident occurred, President Biden said that is what the Nation would do and that is what he would recommend.

I congratulate our Governor, who has essentially set up a command center.

I think every American citizen would be extraordinarily proud not only of those people who acted within 1 minute to stop traffic upon hearing the danger from the ship itself, but also the Coast Guard.

The Army Corps of Engineers acted within literally hours of the accident, putting in the machinery to fix and open this port and to take care of the people who work for and are advantaged by the port.

□ 1530

They are on the job today. They will be on the job tonight. They will be on the job tomorrow morning.

Our secretary of transportation, who oversees the Port Authority, indicated to us just a few days ago when we had a hearing that they are hoping to open this port to 80 percent of the shipping that would use this port—not this big tanker; they need a deeper draft, but a 30-plus-foot draft—by the end of May.

That is government at its best.

I will close with this: In the press conference we had, the biggest tragedies in many instances bring out the best of government, the best of people in helping one another overcome that tragedy.

I thank the gentleman for taking out this Special Order. This happened in his district, but it affects 434 other districts, the Nation, and countless countries. Therefore, I thank him for his leadership, for his strong voice, and for galvanizing the Maryland delegation along with the Governor of our State, Governor Moore, to meet this challenge and make it better.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland, the former majority leader of the United States House of Representatives, for his comments, his friendship, and also for the effort he has put forward as a part of what we call Team Maryland, again, a bipartisan effort to correct this tragedy.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GARCÍA).

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative MFUME and my colleagues from Maryland for organizing this Special Order hour.

I bring heartfelt condolences from Chicagoland. Next to me is a picture of the six men who died in this accident. They were doing construction work on the bridge as it collapsed. All six of them were immigrants from Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala: Dorlian Cabrera, Miguel Luna, Maynor Sandoval, Alejandro Fuentes, Carlos Hernandez, and Jose Lopez.

Like far too many immigrants, they encountered tragedy working in the country they came to seeking a better life. Immigrants keep our country moving. Immigrants power our economy, but immigrants are more than just their labor. Latinos are disproportionately in high-risk jobs like construction, and we cannot wait for tragic accidents or death to recognize immigrants' humanity.

Therefore, as we rebuild the Key Bridge, we must also advocate for stronger workplace protections for all workers, including immigrants, regardless of their status.

Rebuilding the Key Bridge is a national imperative. There is precedent for the Federal Government footing the bill in situations like this, and, as a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I will fight to make sure that this happens. After all, the Key Bridge has regional, national, and international significance.

Mr. Speaker, my thoughts are with the families of those who perished working on the bridge. My thoughts are with the people of Baltimore and Maryland.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 3½ minutes remaining.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I want to do a couple of things here. Number one, I thank Speaker JOHNSON for the conversation that we had shortly after this bridge collapsed and for his full understanding of the impact on the Nation and why this is so very important that we, again, allow commerce to flow through that port.

I thank ROSA DELAURO, ranking member on the Appropriations Committee, and HAKEEM JEFFRIES, our minority leader, for their understanding on this issue, particularly Leader JEFFRIES, who went above and beyond a commitment personally to try to get this thing done and to make sure that we did it together.

I would be remiss if I did not thank TOM COLE, the new chair of the Appropriations Committee, who spoke with me just 2 days after this happened and who understands completely the economic impact that this poses for our Nation as well as to Members on both sides of the aisle as we try to find a way to make sure that we move forward.

Mr. Speaker, let me be redundant and underscore the fact that this is one of the Nation's top ports. It is the largest estuary that it sits over, meaning the Chesapeake Bay and the Patapsco River, but the port itself is a significant contributor to our economy, and it is the number one port in terms of roll-on and roll-off of new automobiles. It is a great exporter of titanium, sugar, coal, and a number of other imports, as well as exports.

I will also say it has been a pleasure working with our Governor; Mayor Brandon Scott of Baltimore; County Executive Johnnie O of Baltimore County; Bill Ferguson, the president of the senate in Maryland; and Adrienne Jones, the speaker of the house, who have pushed through emergency legislation to help us to assist all of the dock workers and small businesses that are affected and helping us to move toward some sort of resolution of this issue.

I began my remarks by saying that we must not ever forget the human souls, the lives lost that day. Again, as we think about this well into the future, I hope that all of us remember that this was a bridge, but this was more than just a bridge. It became a graveyard also.

So because of the suffering that these families have endured, I would ask everyone all over the Nation to join us in understanding that this is not a partisan issue, that we must find a way together to get through this, that we must protect our Nation's supply

chains and all of the risk that it poses for consumers in our society, and we can do it together.

There will be a process to determine the funding mechanisms and the funding ratios. That will all be a part of some of what the Appropriations Committee will do, I am sure, but more than anything else, this becomes a milestone. I hope that we look at it as a problem that occurred that was solved by the work, potential, and input of everybody who cared, no matter where, in fact, they were or are.

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

Ms. BARRAGAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Baltimore for today's special hour.

On March 26 in the early hours of the morning, I remember watching in horror as a cargo ship ran into and collapsed the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore.

As we all assess what happened, how we will rebuild and what the impact of its collapse will have on trade and ports like mine in Los Angeles, let us stop and take a moment to recognize the lives lost that night.

As we watched in horror, we did not know that 185 feet above the river on that bridge in the dark of night that there was a construction crew bravely working to fix potholes so the 30,000 motorists who crossed the bridge each day could do so safely.

Six members of the construction crew died or are presumed dead.

We have come to learn something that is of no surprise to me, they were immigrants who came to America for a better life, for an opportunity to provide for their family—much like my own parents.

Today we stand in solemn remembrance of them. In their honor, we not only mourn their loss but celebrate the invaluable contributions that immigrants like them make to the American economy and society.

Let us first remember, Maynor Suaza Sandoval, a father of two from Honduras. He came to the U.S. when he was 18 years old. He was an entrepreneur who came to the United States and worked three jobs to provide a better life for his family. He was described by family as "a joyful person" and "a generous man" who sent money to his hometown soccer team in Honduras. He also contributed to his community by working with the nonprofit immigrant organization, CASA. He is survived by his wife, and two children, ages 5 and 18.

Jose Mynor Lopez, also left behind his homeland in Guatemala to seek a better life in America. He worked hard to provide for his family and was a wonderful husband to his wife, Isabel, and a caring father and stepfather to his four children.

Miguel Luna, from El Salvador, was a proud immigrant and father of six, who worked in his spare time with CASA to help other immigrants from Central America create a better life for their families in the United States.

Dorlian Castillo Cabrera moved here from Guatemala to support his mother, Marlon. He loved his job and worked hard to give his mom a comfortable life in America.

Alejandro Hernandez Fuentes, a father of four from Mexico, was working to help his sister join his family here in the United States.

And finally, we remember Carlos Hernandez, a 24-year-old construction worker

from Mexico, who is the nephew of Alejandro Hernandez Fuentes. He died with his uncle on that bridge.

Minutes before the bridge collapse, Carlos left a voicemail for his girlfriend, Jasmine saying, "yes, my love, we just poured the cement and we're just waiting for it to dry." His shift was almost over, and he was looking forward to heading home to see her. They had planned to get married in a few months and start a family.

These men came to this country in pursuit of a better life and to support their families.

They made a critical contribution to maintain our Nation's infrastructure.

Their loss underscores the risky jobs Latinos and immigrants endure to build and maintain our infrastructure, produce food, and keep our country running.

Latinos and immigrants are often demonized for political purposes. It is wrong.

As Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, we will continue to advocate for comprehensive immigration reform that prioritizes the safety, dignity, and rights of all immigrants, regardless of their status.

As we reflect on the lives of Jose, Miguel, Maynor, Dorlian, Alejandro, and Carlos, let us also recognize the countless other immigrants who, like them, contribute immeasurably to the fabric of our Nation. From the fields to the factories, from the construction sites to the corner stores, immigrants are the backbone of the American economy.

Let us honor the memory of those who lost their lives in the bridge collapse by committing ourselves to building a nation where all people, regardless of their background, can pursue their dreams and achieve their full potential.

We say to those lost: "May you Rest in Peace." "Decansen en Paz."

ADVANCING IMPORTANT MEASURES ON THE FLOOR

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

GENERAL LEDGER

Mr. MOORE of Utah. 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 the Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans are advancing important measures on the floor this week. We continue to work hard for our constituents and the American people.

We continue to push the Biden administration to address the ongoing crisis at the border and increase our domestic energy production capabilities.

We are standing by Israel and denouncing President Biden's efforts for a one-sided pressure on Israel with respect to Gaza. This is a Hamas-led