

and the Senate came up with a bipartisan plan to secure the border and reform our immigration system. House Republicans refuse to even call a vote. Why? It is because Donald Trump doesn't want us to solve the problem. He wants to campaign on it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to get serious about working together on real immigration reform, securing the border, providing a path to citizenship to those who earn it, stopping the grandstanding, and getting to work for the American people.

LIBERAL BIAS FOUND AT NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO

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

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, one of the problems we have in society that came to light is that people who influence public opinion are, particularly when funded by the government, too much, in my opinion, in favor of the left. Public universities certainly should be giving a very even distribution of information.

Recently, in an under-published story, a great guy, a liberal guy, Uri Berliner, a senior business editor at NPR, reviewed the party designation of 87 members in the local NPR office.

I asked people how many they think are registered Democrat and Republican. People laughed and said all 87, or they would bet 84 are Democrat and 3 are Republican. Actually, it is 87 and zero.

Now, I respect Uri Berliner, a liberal, for digging out this information.

Be that as it may, Mr. Speaker, can you imagine that, right now, there is such a complete lack of diversity in the type of people who disseminate how to deal with the issues today that the NPR local office is made up of 87 Democrats and zero Republicans?

I hope everybody in this Chamber, not only in the field of education but apparently also in the field of broadcast news, realizes we have a fundamental problem in this country and that we have no diversity in the newsroom or in the faculty lounge.

□ 1730

MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

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

Mr. BOWMAN. Mr. Speaker, we are facing a mental health crisis. Yesterday, I introduced the ACCESS in Mental Health Act to highlight an issue that is critical to our democracy and our collective mental health.

Everyone deserves access to diverse mental health professionals. That is why I introduced this legislation, which will invest in HBCUs, TCUs,

MSIs, and HSIs, to create and expand graduate programs in mental health fields and support students pursuing graduate degrees in mental health at these institutions.

I am grateful to have the partnership of Maria Alfaro from Que Paso Latinx in Westchester County, New York; the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities; and the American Psychological Association in moving this bill forward.

As an educator in the Bronx, I saw how powerful it was for students to have mentors that looked like them. Everyone deserves to turn to someone that they can trust who reflects their identities. We need to diversify and expand our mental health workforce to meet the needs of every American, especially our most marginalized communities.

CITADEL OF DEMOCRACY

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I first start by indicating that all of the hostages should be brought home in this heinous crisis that we are facing, and the innocent women and children and others in the Palestinian crisis should be fed and protected. Additionally, we must find peace, security, and democracy in the area.

At the same time, I want to come home to America and apprise the American people that we must be concerned about having a fair and equal election season. We must be afraid of election intrusion from Russia. We must be afraid of the attack on our technological systems of elections.

Additionally, I am calling on the FBI and other Federal law enforcement agencies to protect the Federal elections that are coming up in the near future. Those are congressional as well as the Presidential election.

We must recognize that we are the beacon of democracy. The citadel of democracy is this place where I stand. It will not have that name unless we call upon all of our resources to make sure that we are not attacked by forces that want to change democracy in front of our very eyes.

I close, Mr. Speaker, by saying to the Attorney General: It is imperative that we have voting rights now in this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I will talk more next week.

FAKE MESSAGING

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OGLES). 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, I yield to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. KIGGANS).

SUPPORTING U.S.-ISRAEL RELATIONS

Mrs. KIGGANS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the importance of the U.S.-Israel relationship. I urge Congress to support our ally now more than ever, and stress the need to defeat Hamas and all Iranian proxies.

Israel is a strong and resilient country. Born in the aftermath of the horrors of the Holocaust and the Second World War, Israel's short history is full of successes. Israel has become one of the world's leading nations for innovation and technology. Its contributions to fields like cybersecurity, healthcare, and agriculture benefit Americans every day. Most importantly, Israel is and always will be our closest ally in the Middle East.

I recently returned from a trip to Israel last week with several of my House colleagues, where we saw with our own eyes the devastation of the October 7 terror attacks. We visited the Nir Oz Kibbutz miles outside of Gaza and also visited the site of the Nova music festival, where hundreds of young people were murdered or kidnapped.

We heard from the parents of an Israeli-American hostage who has been held captive by Hamas for 188 days. We saw burned homes with posters of hostages on the outside. We saw children's toys scattered throughout yards. We could almost feel and smell life there, the life that had been, that was no longer.

Everything I saw and everything I learned verified the brutality of Hamas' unprovoked attacks and reinforced the need to support our longtime ally. The message we all walked away with was the same: Hamas must be eliminated.

During our trip, we met with President Isaac Herzog and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who shared with us the importance of continuing a strategic partnership between our two nations.

The U.S.-Israel relationship is truly the embodiment of peace through strength. By standing together, we demonstrate to our adversaries that we will not be intimidated and that we will defend our shared values and interests.

As malicious regimes like Iran continue their quest for nuclear capabilities and ramp up their backing of radical terror organizations, it is essential that America remain committed to ensuring a strong and secure Israel. This starts with defending Israel's right to self-defense. Israel did not start this war, but they have a right to defend themselves from brutal terrorists.

Hamas' horrific October 7 attacks, as well as the more than 170 attacks against our own Armed Forces by Iranian proxies that have occurred since, are concrete evidence that our enemies are emboldened. Because of weak foreign policy choices made by this administration, starting with the chaotic Afghanistan withdrawal, I worry that

our friends don't trust us as much, and our enemies certainly aren't fearing us as much. We must make smarter choices on the world stage to fight the evil that unfortunately exists in the global arena.

As a Navy veteran who deployed twice in the Persian Gulf, I know how volatile this region is and understand that a key element of our own national security is the strength and security of Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East.

Now more than ever, the United States must stand with Israel to ensure the safety of not only one of our closest allies, but also that of America and all freedom-loving people across the globe.

I remain steadfast in my support for Israel and will do everything in my power to provide the Israeli people with the military and security assistance they need as they fight to defend their nation. In a world that gets more dangerous by the day, we cannot fail to project strength abroad. Standing with our allies and providing unwavering support is the right place to start.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. OBERNOLTE), my friend.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ROBERTA DARLENE MCCARTHY

Mr. OBERNOLTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and mourn the passing of a dear friend of mine and my wife, Heather, Roberta Darlene McCarthy.

Roberta, who was known to her friends as Bert, was born in Los Angeles and moved to Bakersfield, California, in 1946. She attended East Bakersfield High School, where she met her high school sweetheart and her future husband, Owen McCarthy.

Owen was a captain in the Bakersfield Fire Department, and Bert spent much of her time in service to her community. They were two people who deeply wanted to help their friends and neighbors, which was a core value they passed on to their children, Michelle, Mark, and last but certainly not least, one of this Chamber's very own, the 55th Speaker of the House, Kevin McCarthy.

Bert was instrumental in getting the Anti-Graffiti Program for Kern County started, and she volunteered for many charities in Bakersfield. Her passion for helping others meant that she often worked with some of the people who needed help the most, patients suffering from cancer.

She regularly volunteered at the Comprehensive Blood and Cancer Center in Bakersfield and at the American Cancer Society, where she helped patients and their families fight cancer and overcome the many difficulties related to treatment.

Bert was a strong mother and grandmother, whose family and their needs always came first. She loved her community and helping others, and she made everyone who met her instantly feel like they were talking to a family friend.

Bert had such a gregarious and warm personality that even people in Washington who didn't care for her son, Kevin—and there were a few—cared for Bert. She was always willing to lend a helping hand to those in need. Her selflessness knew no bounds, and her acts of kindness reverberated far beyond the confines of her immediate circle.

Bert put her faith in God, and she knew one day she would be called to go up to Heaven and meet her creator.

Bert's spirit will continue to live on in the memories of her children and their partners, her grandchildren, and everyone her life touched, including me and my wife Heather.

Mr. Speaker, I urge that we not mourn her passing but, instead, celebrate the incredible legacy she left behind and carry forward her kindness, strength, and boundless love for others.

I will miss her.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I am going to try doing something this evening. This is going to be difficult because I am going to try to explain something that has been annoying me and has me concerned that what I am learning is actually really dangerous to our society. Then we are going to walk through some of the latest budget numbers.

If you don't have a life and you are someone that watches C-SPAN, you have had to deal with me coming up here once a week and functionally doing economic lectures. I don't mean to sound like a jerk. I am just trying to make it so there is an understanding of the actual fiscal situation we are facing as a country.

A couple weeks ago, I did one, and boom. I didn't believe there were this many people that don't have a life and watch YouTube, but there were about 960,000 views. I have been blessed. This has happened multiple times over the last couple of years.

Then I made a mistake. I actually looked at some of the comments. This started a couple years ago, and you are going: Well, that is not true. Well, that has to be a robot. Well, that is a bot. Well, why is that one written in horrible English?

So we actually started a little project in our office a couple months ago trying to understand what foreign infiltration is doing in our ability to communicate in our society. How many bad actors are basically filling up our phones with crap, with things that are completely not true?

It turned out we found academic article after academic article; Microsoft doing huge data analytics. There are all sorts of things that are out there that show, in many ways, we are at war. We don't actually understand it, but we have a war going on, and it is a war for hearts and minds. There are bad actors all around this world.

The number of data points we have here is showing, particularly China, Russia, and Iran, and they are getting weaponized at a level I don't think any of us are intellectually ready for. AI is

here, the plain language is here, and they are moving off of just your Facebook page or your social media accounts. It is now moving into fake text messages, all sorts of other ways where they are going to try to pollute and take down the West.

We are not the only ones. We have map after map of what China just did to Taiwan. Now, Taiwan actually has built a policy on how to help combat it. When they get attacked on social media with fake stuff, they have teams that turn around and say: Okay, here is what they said. Here are the documents. Look it up yourself.

I don't think we are ready for this. How do you and I and our brothers and sisters on the left and anyone that actually cares about this country have honest debates, honest discussions about, in my case, my fear of the crushing debt—we are going to walk through that—but other policy things where you actually lay out facts, lay out the information of what is going on, and 1½ minutes later, there is a bot that basically is putting out absolute crap?

How do you hold a society together when you can't even agree on the baseline facts to build the debate from when article after article—some of these are huge. These are the executive summaries. Some of the ones we have gone through are hundreds of pages of tracking entire troll farms. There is one document here saying that China may be spending multiple billions of dollars in influence operations here in this country to basically distort reality.

The point I am going to right now—this seems like a weird place to go for a guy that wants to talk about the numbers and what is happening in our government—I am incredibly frustrated because I do not know how we have an honest debate when we have a disinformation wave coming at us from governments, let alone the private troll farms that do it just for clickbait to make money.

However, how do you have an honest debate when our brothers and sisters or constituents at home or activists see things that are absolutely not true?

We are going to have to find some way for us to have a commonality of these are the facts, or, as I hate to say, how do I make the public absolutely cynical?

Don't believe me. Don't believe half the crap on your phone. Look it up yourself. Find things you trust and confirm it. We have article after article here documenting the troll farms, documenting the new bot farms, documenting the use of new AI. This one is actually sort of scary because it is going to be industrialized.

□ 1745

If you think things are screwy right now, wait a couple more months when we are in the middle of the election season. This government here has already decided they are—look what Russia has done to Ukraine. Look what the

Palestinians and their teammates in Iran and, oddly enough coming through China, are doing to Israel.

We are going to have to grow up and deal with the reality that as much of the information that is smashing into this country isn't real, and we are going to have to become much more discerning on it.

Look, that is my caveat because we have such incredibly difficult things to deal with and there is hope, but it is hard. I have said a dozen times behind this microphone, a family saying, for every hard, difficult problem, there is a simple solution. That is absolutely wrong.

It turns out complexity often requires complexity, but we have hope if we just get off our heinies and actually start to deal with the reality.

Let's walk through some of the reality of United States math right now. We made this chart today. It is accurate, but it is also missing a couple things.

The point I will make here is—you see this blue area? That is what a Member of Congress gets to vote on. That is Defense and what we call non-defense discretionary, such as the Park Service, the FBI, the State Department. You see all that red? None of that gets a vote from a Member of Congress.

The vast majority of our spending is on autopilot, and this interest number here is actually the net number, not the gross number, because there is another \$300 billion or so that is actually borrowed from the trust funds that we still have to pay back. We still have to pay interest. We sort of hide that where other European countries actually have to tell the truth about their total borrowing.

How do we as Members of Congress go home and explain every dime you as a Member of Congress vote on is borrowed?

If you use my projections on the borrowing for this year, \$800 billion of Medicare is borrowed, and the economy is actually okay. How can we be at the current GDP—and I didn't check GDP now on the Atlanta Fed before I walked in here, but I think it was like 2.4, 2.5, which is actually a fairly decent GDP growth considering where interest rates are and those things.

Yet, a couple days ago, we were breaking in—forgive me. I am going to do this slightly out of order to make a point—nope. I don't even have it. Somehow the board come.

In the last week, we have had two times where we went over \$100,000 a second in borrowing. Every second, we were borrowing over \$100,000. It came down a little bit today. Today, I think we are back to \$98,000 a second, and that is over a 12-month period. That is 365 days of borrowing, averaging it out, dividing it down so you know what it is per second.

If I had come to this body a couple years ago and said, "We are going to be borrowing \$100,000 a second," you

would have thought I was out of my mind, but we are doing it. \$100,000 a second is our borrowing, and there is my anger. We will have honorable debates here on this and that, but we are often debating over a couple minutes' worth of borrowing because we are unwilling to talk about the driver of debt. It is interest and healthcare.

There is not a lot we can do about interest because here is how bad the interest numbers continue to be for us. I did this board a month ago and I was saying my math is gross interest, which will be \$1.67 trillion and I got some crap for it: "How can you say that?"

Well, you will be happy to know that yesterday the Treasury announced that I was wrong. Interest will be \$1.1436 trillion. I underestimated it, and if you saw what interest rates did this week with the higher inflation data, the number is going to go higher.

Let's understand the hierarchy right now. Social Security is going to spend \$1.450 trillion, but that is off tax receipts and the trust fund.

Now, the trust fund is going to be gone in 8, 9 years, but right now it is self-contained. Interest is the second biggest spend in this government. The third is Medicare. Defense is now number four. Now because I know every Member of Congress sits around and doesn't have a life and reads—this is the MedPAC report from last week. Yes, I am an idiot. I read it.

There is one thing in here and I wanted to make the point because I am trying to get my head around this. In 2022, way back then, Medicare was 13 percent of functionally income tax, corporate tax receipts.

In 5 more budget years, Medicare spending will be 22 percent of all income tax, all corporate taxes. That is a remarkable movement.

We had a data point a couple days ago saying Medicare spending is up 10 percent this year, but we are not allowed to talk about that. It is an earned benefit. You worked in America—it is just like Social Security. You worked your 40 quarters, you earned it, but that doesn't mean we have to lie to each other.

Just as I am angry about the foreigners polluting our information set, we do something similar. We avoid telling the truth because the math is uncomfortable, and we are talking trillions and trillions and trillions of dollars here. Maybe the debate on this floor shouldn't be rounding errors, it should be taking on the actual drivers of our debt.

Now, back to the point. Even here I am actually having to adjust, so now we actually believe what we call net interest. Let me explain the difference between gross and net. Net interest is where we have to sell bonds. We have to get your pension system, your personal wealth, a nice family in Japan buying U.S. debt.

Gross is where we sell the bonds over here and then over here we are bor-

rowing from the trust funds, even though we have a little technical problem. The transportation trust fund, the Medicare Part A trust fund, the Social Security trust fund, all are gone this decade. Well, in the next 9 years, they are all gone.

It is math. Is it acceptable that this has become a math-free zone? And these numbers, when I was starting to show these a couple months ago and the inbound silliness we would get, "stop making up numbers." Yeah, you are right. I missed them. I wasn't dark enough.

CBO will be updating all these numbers because it turns out interest has gotten more expensive. Today's interest rate, we are back up to the highs, almost to the highs of last November. They haven't been going down, they are going the other direction.

You all saw the head of Chase Bank, Jamie Dimon, in part of his report to shareholders this last week, saying his economists believe there is a very good chance that interest rates are going higher.

Look, I will put these down and I will try not to hit anyone with them.

Please look at this chart. Please look at this. You see this line over here? This is 1975 to 2001, the average on U.S. sovereign debt was 7½ percent. The average for all those years was 7½ percent. That was actually the average considering—now, I accept that has some of the 1980s, Paul Volcker, but that was the average.

Then we go to 2001 to 2022, absolutely suppressed interest rates. We lived in a fantasy world. It was down to 2.2. Okay. That is your juxtaposition. What is the real interest rate? What is the real cost of money here? We are only right now at 3.3. Our economists and the Joint Economic Committee, Republican side, and even myself, we are trying to figure out where it is going. We don't think it is going down.

We need to somehow understand the reality. If you are borrowing \$100,000 a second, do you think there is lots of liquidity out there to see your interest rates come falling? What would happen to the United States debt when you functionally have a total of 34.7; actually in May we go to 35, in September we will be over 36, because we are clicking off about a trillion dollars of borrowing about every 110, 115 days right now.

We need to think about that. What happens if the interest rates go anywhere back to the historic norm? Are we allowed to tell our constituents the truth? It breaks my heart because there is a path, but you have to be willing to be disruptive, almost revolutionary. You have to be willing to be moral in saying, if these are the cost drivers, the actual cost drivers, not the theatrics—I always love it when I go and read some of the comments like "if you just got rid of your salaries," fine. Maybe we are overpaid—trust me. For our work product, we are—but it is 2.6 seconds a day of all borrowing. Foreign

aid is about 5 days of borrowing. There is the fantasy. And then there is the other side, the Democrats. "Well, tax rich people." Okay. Fine. Have at it. I have done the economic studies multiple times here on the floor showing that you take your own plans, \$400,000 and up and maximize every tax. Maximize estate tax, capital gains tax, income taxes, just do it all. Maximize it to the revenue producing maximum and then do the economic adjustment, you get 1½ percent of GDP. That is the studies, 1½ percent of GDP. We are borrowing over 9.6 right now.

If someone out there is brilliant and you have an easier way to explain this, please send it to me because I feel like I am just treading water here while people look at me and go, "Oh, SCHWEIKERT, you did another speech on the floor. That was interesting. I didn't watch, though."

You start to understand that when you do the comparisons of where we are heading—this is one—when you start to see numbers saying in 9 budget years you are going to have \$60, \$62 trillion of borrowing—that is what we are trying to compare.

We are slicing the difference between our projection and the CBO baseline, but the punch line here, the President's budget in 9 budget years has us at \$70 trillion and the CBO has us at \$62 trillion. That is 9 budget years from now.

Am I the only idiot here that is terrified? This is moral? But we are going to engage in theatrics that is not even a days' worth of borrowing, maybe minutes' worth of borrowing because that is what we are willing to debate over because we are terrified to stand in front of our audiences and say, unless we revolutionize the cost of healthcare, I can't make the numbers work.

So what are you willing to do?

And that is with all the leftists taxes. You start to also look—because the other day, I was taking inbound from one of my Democrat friends—well, you had the tax cut. Have you seen your own numbers on even just the Inflation Reduction Act? Seriously, where you are right down here, oh, that is only going to cost \$20 billion and the next year will be \$14 billion, and the actual now number projections where some of the years it is over \$120 billion outlays. That is cash money, subsidies to corporate America, they basically bought the love of multinational corporations. God bless them.

□ 1800

It is more than the entire 10-year cost of tax reform, which actually spread out wealth, but they can't admit that.

I am breaking one of my own rules because I keep coming here and saying maybe we should spend less time litigating the past and deal with the reality of our demographics and the math right now. Let's take a look at some of the things that we are up against.

Why is the public so cranky? Seriously, I try to have this conversation with folks at home. I am blessed. I represent the Phoenix-Scottsdale area. If you have to represent a district, I represent one of the most beautiful spots, particularly in the winter months. I represent a fairly prosperous district. I represent a really well-educated district, a really entrepreneurial district.

A lot of my folks appear, on the surface, to be doing fairly well in life, but they are stressed out of their minds because, in my district, we have had the highest inflation in the continental United States. If you do not make 23.6 percent more money today than you did the day President Biden took office, you are poorer.

No matter what economic data the clown show—excuse me, body of Congress—wants to talk about over and over: Oh, jobs are this. Unemployment is this.

This is what matters. When you actually look at the data of those who are nonsupervisory or supervisory, today they are poorer, even when you put back in wage growth. Our brothers and sisters in America are poorer today.

In my district, it is worse. I have a prosperous district. Do you want to understand why people are struggling, angry, and frustrated? Maybe an honest conversation that we made them poorer.

Here is a bit of an intellectual tease: What is the biggest tax hike in modern history? Come on, what is the biggest tax hike in modern history? Let's work through this. If I came to you right now and said the thousand dollars, the hundred dollars, the dollar you have saved up, and over the next 3 to 3½ years we are going to basically take away almost a quarter of its value, we made you poorer, right? That is called inflation.

Where did that value go, though? It went to the debtors. Who is the biggest debtor in the world? The United States.

We functionally transferred your wealth through inflation and devalued the debt. The problem is now we hit the interest rate cycle, so we were devaluing the debt by inflation. The financing of our debt explodes, as well as the fact—and this is one that is a little trickier to talk about. Social Security, Medicare, these other things have kickers for inflation in there. You get a short-term benefit. You saw a little spike about a year, year-and-a-half ago when debt to GDP, even though the debt was higher—the GDP had sort of grown, but it is because of the differential because of inflation.

Now, all that benefit is gone. Now, it is getting really ugly because the financing of the debt—I just showed you—if you do the gross number, is on its way to \$1.2 trillion just this year. Interest now is the second biggest expense in our government.

In a little while, you have to understand—back to my fixation that we need to find some way to add technology, disruption, cures to disrupt the

cost of healthcare because guess what, Mr. Speaker? In a few years, Medicare even passes Social Security in total spending.

The hierarchy used to always be Social Security is number one, defense is number two, Medicare is number three, and interest was actually way down here. Now, interest is number two, but Social Security is number one.

In just a few years, healthcare costs will be the number one expense in this country—just Medicare. This isn't adding in the Indian Health Service, the VA, Medicaid.

Now, look, much of it is demographics. This is where maybe there is a problem that we are so busy attacking the left, and the left is so busy attacking us. The fact of the matter is, people getting older, moving into their earned benefits, is that Republican or Democrat? It is demographics.

We know it is going to happen. We have known there were 67 million baby boomers for how long? Sixty-five years. We did brilliant planning for it, didn't we? Understanding charts like this, it is coming, it is in front of us, and we will do everything we can to ignore it.

This chart is a little hard to read, but I am trying to make a point. This uses some of the math from our colleagues on the left. As we get near the 8-year window, 10-year window, we get back closer to 18 percent—this is just structural, 18 percent of GDP coming in as taxes. Yet, the debt continues to grow even with that because interest keeps growing as well as the other expenses, particularly driven by, once again, healthcare costs.

Unless we are willing to tell the truth, how do you take on the problem?

This one is a little more for my Republican brothers and sisters. In 2023, how many times have you heard one of us get up and say "growth"? Growth is incredibly important, and you can spike growth by cleaning up the immigration system and moving to a talent base, not importing massive poverty. You can do other things, such as getting regulations—adapt to using technology as much of your regulator instead of armies full of bureaucrats and file cabinets.

There are dozens of things you can do policywise to create growth, but if you had someone who said, "We will just grow ourselves out of borrowing \$100,000 a second," they are not good at math.

Here is the basic simple rule: GDP, the size of the economy, in 2023 grew a trillion and a half dollars. However, you do understand, for that growth, you only get 17, 18, maybe even 19 percent of that in tax receipts. The growth is wonderful, but it is not dollar for dollar. I will get people who say, okay, you guys borrowed \$2.5 trillion, but the economy grew \$1.5 trillion. Yes, it did grow \$1.5 trillion, but I only get 17, 18, 19 percent of that in tax receipts. Do you understand the scale of growth we would have to have for the tax receipts to come close to the borrowing? That

would require elementary school math, wouldn't it? Sorry.

Back to the baseline. Our brothers and sisters are struggling. If you are in markets like I am, where housing costs have gone up dramatically, parts of your food budget have gone up dramatically, we have Americans who are struggling. I showed the inflation numbers, and into that headwind, we have to find a way to stabilize the borrowing to that growth of the economy. At the same time, we have to find a way to get beyond the liars out there that are trying to pollute the debate because they want to see this country fail.

If we don't step up and do our job, start telling people the truth, realize there is a path to stabilize our debt to GDP—and this could be a stunning century for America, but my fear is when I look at the debt spiral that is coming, if interest rates continue to go where they are going, you have maybe 3 years, 5 years. At that point then most of what this government does is we have handed over the power of this government to the bond market because the bond market will be in charge of us. The bond market will decide what our priorities are. They will control the price of our debt. They will control our resources.

Make a decision: Are you willing to act like adults, digest facts, vet, double-check your facts, and then demand Members of Congress start thinking like—it is impolite to curse behind the mike—start thinking in a way where they are willing to do difficult things that are accurate on their calculator and not their feelings? You can't make public policy with feelings and have it actually work out on your calculator. As the old family saying for the Schweikert household goes, the math will eventually win.

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

GUN VIOLENCE IN AMERICA

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

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGARVEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, I rise this week, with a heavy heart.

It is exactly 1 year since tragedy struck my community in Louisville, Kentucky. It was just last year, a Monday morning, the day after Easter, the first day back from spring break.

You know what kind of day this was. It was a Kentucky spring day. The air

was crisp. The sun was bright. It was perfect. The type of spring morning that had families heading back into school and had us heading back into work with a sense of rebirth and renewal.

Unfortunately, it didn't last. Spring's ritual beauty was shattered by the unfamiliar booms from an AR-15, the acrid smells of smoke, the sounds of sirens, of screams.

It was a Monday morning, April 10, 2023, that a lone gunman took an assault rifle into the Old National Bank on Main Street in Louisville, Kentucky, and opened fire on his colleagues. He took the lives of five innocent Louisvillians: Josh Barrick, Deana Eckert, Jim Tutt, Juliana Farmer, and my friend, Tommy Elliott.

Eight other people were injured, including officer Nick Wilt. He was in just his fourth shift as a police officer when he ran headfirst into gunfire. His heroism saved lives, but he took an AR-15 round to the head. Miraculously, he survived, and he continues to recover and get stronger every day.

That wasn't it. Just hours later and just a few blocks away, Chea'von Moore was killed at the Jefferson Community & Technical College. Another young woman was struck by bullets in the crossfire between classes. Thankfully, she survived.

That was a Monday morning. It got worse. There was another mass shooting in Louisville later that week. Combined with the tragedies of everyday gun violence, five more Louisvillians were killed by gunfire by week's end.

□ 1815

It was awful. It ripped into us as a community. The scars are still there for so many to see, especially now, especially this week. I think any decent person hearing this story recognizes that it is tragic. Anyone with an iota of compassion for the families, for the lives lost, for the senseless waste of human potential knows how sad this is.

If I told you this story 20 years ago, the world would have stopped. It would have been all you heard about on the news, on the internet, and in newspapers. It would have been a national crisis that would have demanded urgent action and all of our attention.

Today, it was off the news quickly.

Why? I can answer that.

We have grown accustomed to this. Unbelievably, this is our norm.

Now, Louisville, Kentucky, on a perfect spring morning, the day after Easter, the first day back from spring break isn't unique in the horrors it experienced from a mass shooting that day. No, it just got added to a very long list of American cities experiencing this tragedy.

Gone are the days of recognizing American cities for their contributions to our culture—Motown, the City of Brotherly Love, the Big Apple, the Gateway to the West, the City of Angels, the Big Easy.

No. Now we define our cities by their tragedies, Aurora, Uvalde, Las Vegas,

Highland Park, Newtown, Orlando, Buffalo, Nashville, El Paso, Monterey Park, and Louisville, Kentucky.

It was one of those moments as a lifelong Louisvillian you will always remember. I know where I was when I got the call. I was still with my family. In these jobs there are times you try to shield your children from some of the things you have to deal with here, but it was too shocking. I looked at my wife and I said: "There has been a mass shooting." My elementary school daughter heard me. Her face sank. She was ashen. She just looked at us, and she said: "Which school?"

Of course that was her first reaction. In elementary schools they now do active-shooter drills instead of tornado drills. Gun violence is the number one killer of kids in America. We can't be shocked by that reaction.

Even though it broke my heart—and maybe it should—we can't let it break our brains.

I actually think we agree that 20 years ago these tragedies would have hit much harder, that they would have been an anomaly instead of the norm.

What has changed? Why is it different?

Well, I can point to one thing: The assault weapon ban has expired. Since then, the gun culture has exploded, and I don't mean hunting and responsible gun ownership. I mean the toxic culture promoted by gun manufacturers and the NRA. The idea that weapons of war are toys and status symbols. That the right to arm yourself with the capacity to kill en masse trumps our right to live.

America's epidemic of gun violence that takes more than 40,000 lives per year and more children than any other cause almost always has a slew of common denominators: a firearm—often a semiautomatic—purchased under a legal framework that only exists in America.

Nowhere else in the world has seen this epidemic of death and done absolutely nothing about it.

Many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle insist that this is a coincidence, that the very instrument of death for hundreds of thousands of our fellow Americans makes us safer, and that the more we have, the safer we will be, that somehow if every American had a gun, rates of gun violence would decrease.

It would be comically absurd if it weren't so dangerous and so heartbreaking. It should break our hearts, each time, each loss of life, as if it were happening 20, 25 years ago; the gut-wrenching disbelief we felt over Columbine. We can't let it break our brains. It isn't that complicated.

This is not the world we are forced to live in. This is the world we have chosen to live in. We in this body can do something about it.

No, nobody is talking about coming to your house and taking your guns. Nobody wants to stop hunting trips. We are talking about the most basic, commonsense measures: Like safe storage,