

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of National Police Week, a week we set aside to thank more than 800,000 police officers who put on the badge and risk their lives to protect our communities.

We thank them for their brave service. Our police officers play an essential role in our community, working to keep us safe, upholding the rule of law, and responding to emergencies.

Illinois is home to many upstanding, honorable, courageous, and self-sacrificing police officers, including Peoria Police Chief Eric Echevarria and the village of Durand Police Chief Michael Reiman, who are on this poster.

Mr. Speaker, we also take the time to mourn the loss of our fallen officers whose lives were lost in the line of duty. On average, one law enforcement officer is killed in the line of duty somewhere in the United States every 61 hours. We must never forget their sacrifice.

Lastly, I thank the law enforcement support network—their families, parents, wives, husbands, and children—for the sacrifices they make when their loved ones serve as police officers.

At a time when our law enforcement is constantly under attack, Congress must continue to stand with the police and back the blue.

STANDING WITH EELAM TAMIL COMMUNITY

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

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the Tamil genocide in Sri Lanka.

We must stand with the Eelam Tamil community. Their struggle for justice and accountability continues, with survivors and their families enduring ongoing oppression and seeking recognition for their suffering from the Sri Lankan Government.

We must recognize the plight of the Tamil people and advocate for a peaceful resolution that respects the rights and dignity of all. The Tamil community's resilience in the face of adversity is a testament to their unwavering spirit for justice and self-determination.

It was a pleasure to meet with so many who traveled to our Nation's Capital from across the United States and five countries to ensure such atrocities never happen again.

THANKING OFFICERS FOR THEIR SERVICE

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

Mr. BEAN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, as the song goes, if there is something strange in your neighborhood, who you gonna call? If there is something weird

and it don't look good, who you gonna call?

Mr. Speaker, don't call Ghostbusters. Call the police.

Mr. Speaker, I rise during National Police Week to salute the brave patriots who keep America safe. I want to share my appreciation to members of our law enforcement community—our officers, deputies, and troopers, and especially the families of those law enforcement officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty for the safety and protection of others.

It takes courage to wear a badge. It takes even more courage to respond to an emergency, to step into harm's way, to face dangerous uncertainty. For our police, it is just part of the job.

Unfortunately, our law enforcement community doesn't get the recognition and the respect that they deserve. So on behalf of a grateful nation, I want to say two words our incredibly brave patriots don't hear enough: Thank you. I thank them for protecting our families and communities. I thank them for their service.

As Representative for Florida's Fourth Congressional District, I want our law enforcement officers to know we salute them. We will always back the blue.

RECOGNIZING FORT MORGAN FIRE DEPARTMENT

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

Mr. CARL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during National Police Week to recognize the historic acts of Deputy Bellew and members of the Fort Morgan Fire Department.

On April 19, Corporal Boros, Deputy Bellew, and other members of the Fort Morgan Fire Department rescued three distressed swimmers off the coast. The fire department began the operation with special equipment. Once Deputy Bellew arrived, he removed his duty belt and body armor and put on his swim vest, jumped in the water, and saved the swimmers.

That day, three people in the water were saved while swimming. That day, three people were saved from drowning. I cannot be prouder to represent District One, which is filled with brave, dedicated law enforcement officers like Deputy Bellew.

With many voices screaming to defund the police, we must emphasize how vital our officers are to us. Every day, these men and women tirelessly serve the American people, and I cannot thank them enough.

I will always back the blue.

□ 1730

COMPLEX MATH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Ari-

zona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I am going to try to walk us through a couple simple concepts that require really complex math, so wish me luck here.

Last week, and the week before that, I came here and tried to walk through a concept of how fragile we are because of our borrowing, the amount of insatiable borrowing we go through. I made a sarcastic comment that happens to have the benefit of being almost true that the bond market is the one that pretty much will run this country. I actually can prove part of my thesis.

Last week, because we made it a couple weeks without looking like a clown show, we got some decent inflation data. The movement in the U.S. debt market on our interest rates coming down, if you annualize that, do you realize it is more than every dime of foreign aid?

I need you to think about this for a moment, just those ticks. When a single basis point—remember, 1 percent of interest is one one-hundredth of a point of interest. One tick is about \$800 million a year.

Whether this place likes it or not, when we tell the world we are not serious about leading the world, when we don't look serious that we are going to be the country that defends the reserve currency of the world, when we don't look like adults, we pay a price. Many of the folks here, you get your 5 minutes of theater, and then we add hundreds of billions of dollars of additional interest.

I am going to show you charts here where we are approaching \$1.2 trillion in interest this year. I am going to try to walk through a concept that the Democrats did with the Inflation Reduction Act, where we are basically saying over the 10 years, we are pumping out a couple trillion dollars of subsidies to corporate America, and also the fact that because of our debt and these higher interest rates we are also pumping \$1.2 trillion of interest payments out. That much cash flow is going out into the marketplace at the same time the Federal Reserve is over here trying to pull liquidity out of the market to slow down inflation.

For those of us that live in the Phoenix-Scottsdale area, you have the right to be cranky because the day Joe Biden became President, from that day until today, if you are not making a little over 26 percent more in your paycheck, you are poorer today.

For all of us who are elected here, our area happens to be probably the second highest inflation in the continental United States right now. You meet people, and they have done fairly well in life. I have one of the more prosperous districts in America. I have one of the very best-educated districts in America. We are out there knocking on doors, and people want to share with

you that they are stressed out of their mind.

Part of it is they don't completely understand why they seem to be working harder, why their kids can't afford a place, why the price of education for their kids is just crushing them, why they seem to instinctively understand their kids are going to live poorer than they did, which is now fact. That isn't rhetorical. In every data point, if you are functionally under 40, 45 years old, you will be poorer than my generation and my parents' generation. It is the debt that has done this. It is inflation.

Once again, let's do a basic economics class. Inflation is too many dollars chasing too few goods and services. It is also a tax because who is the biggest debtor in the world? It is the United States. Congratulations. We did it. Yay. We are basically kicking off about a trillion dollars every 100, 115 days of borrowing. That interest is helping kick off inflation. Inflation is that tax.

The inflation we have had the last 3 years is the biggest tax in modern history because here is what happened: there is this massive amount of U.S. debt. We are now going to pay it back with inflated dollars, and your savings just became worth less. This country made a decision with the crazy spending that, screw them, and it set off inflation. We are going to reach in and grab the value of your savings, and we are going to transfer it to the debt, and we are going to pay it back with inflated dollars.

Whether you know it or not, the reason you are poorer today is you got taxed. Thank you for your contribution to U.S. debt. Did you know you were even doing it?

The other thing is also the fragility concept. I have talked to dozens and dozens of Members here, and I get that blank stare because we don't often think this way. We are on different types of committees. I do Ways and Means and Financial Services, so maybe my whole world is trying to think about the math.

Today, the world has the highest level of debt since the Napoleonic Wars. You may not remember your history, but after that the world went into a massive depression for years.

Do you know which two countries are borrowing at extraordinary rates? The United States and China. Greece has a better credit rating than the United States. You can sell a 10-year bond in Greece cheaper than the United States. Go and read what the credit rating is. I think the United States is now number 14 in creditworthiness, and we are the reserve currency?

Does anyone care?

The hallways here are just full of people showing up at my door begging for more spending or begging us to set up rules to make sure that competition and new technology can't disrupt their business models.

If you are under 40, I am a baby boomer. I am sorry. I wish we had thought about the math. I wish we had

been more honest with ourselves, but there are ways to deal with this. There are ways to make it work.

The other thing is we have been grinding through the Social Security Medicare actuary report. I am still not done with it, and my economist and the Joint Economic Committee, we are still not done with this because we are all so busy writing the response to President Biden's economic report.

I am going to walk through a few things here where we can't figure out why the actuaries would use the numbers they did because they are completely different than OMB and CBO's numbers. There are other things going on.

Let's actually start to walk through this. Some of these boards, you will have seen before. A lot of them you have never seen. I am trying to build a theme. The theme basically is this: This place needs to get serious and start acting like adults and understanding it is not our feelings anymore. It is not our theater or the troll that is going bang on us. If you are also the Russian troll that is going to be in my comments when this goes on YouTube, screw you, because the fact of the matter is I, we, this country, the world needs us to act like adults and provide a level of stability because when we don't, the price of our debt goes up. When you are clicking off borrowing \$1 trillion every 100, 115 days, interest rates matter.

Remember, if we are going to borrow a couple trillion dollars this year—and actually right now our burden rate is 2.8, 2.6—and our refinancing is several trillion dollars because, as you have seen, Treasury has decided to stay very short on the curve. That means instead of saying we are going to sell a 10-year bond because the market, it turns out, wasn't as excited about buying a bunch of 10-year U.S. bonds because they didn't trust us, we are now offering a 1-year note, a 2-year note. Remember, there are notes, there are bonds, and the definition is on duration.

We have made ourselves very fragile to the world, to the bond market. I used to come behind this microphone and joke that this country basically is an insurance company with an army. Now it is a really in debt insurance company with an army.

Let's walk through some of our realities. Yay.

The first thing I need to walk through is the deficit over the last 12 months is 1.8. If you actually do gross, it is closer to 3 in the last 12 months. Originally, when we built this board, we thought that is what we were going to borrow publicly. Our burden rate is actually substantially higher than we expected.

What is enraging about this is the economy is fairly decent. We just weren't prepared for higher interest rates and higher other expenses. The fact of the matter is, much of the Democrats' Inflation Reduction Act, the most Orwellian named piece of leg-

islation in modern history, its distortion effects in the economy and also the borrowing—when we are handing out cash grants, do you think that money is coming out of tax receipts? It is borrowed.

The point I wanted to make here is when you see this blue, that is what I get to vote on as a Member of Congress. The red, that is mandatory. It is about 74, 75 percent of all spending is on autopilot. Guess what? Every dime I vote on is on borrowed money, plus a sliver of your Medicare.

Every dime a Member of Congress votes on is on borrowed money.

Then we play this game around here. When you are clicking off, we are just shy of borrowing about \$100,000 a second. We have debates here where we are debating on saving this tiny little bit, and the borrowing during the debate was greater than the savings because we are terrified to tell you the truth that the majority of borrowing, every dime of borrowing from this day for the next 30 years—and I am going to say this about a half a dozen times tonight—every dime of borrowing from today through the next 30 years is interest, Medicare, and then 9 years from now when the Social Security trust fund is gone we backfill the shortfall. Everything else is in balance.

All right. So let's continue to walk through this. To give you a sense, that blue area I was just showing you before on the chart that we get to vote on, okay, nondefense discretionary, that is everything you think of as government. That is the FBI, that is the Park Service, that is the State Department. This over here is Defense.

□ 1745

Mr. Speaker, if you come to me and say: DAVID, I want you to cut spending, then I am all for burning a bunch of this down. A bunch of the things we do I have a really weird ethical question that Members of Congress need to think about.

Is it ethical for the Federal Government to borrow money and send it to an entity that has its own taxing authority? When many of those taxing authorities, if they actually had more skin in the game, might be a little more sensible and more disciplined in how they spend it.

Mr. Speaker, you realize that is one of the greatest scams here. We borrow it, we send it, we get love, and then the groups we send it to act like: Hey, we got free money from the Federal Government.

You are paying it back. Actually, Mr. Speaker, your kids, your grandkids, and your great-great-grandkids are going to pay it back because it is borrowed.

Everything else you see is interest, Social Security, and Medicare. Now, remember, Mr. Speaker, Social Security self-finances right now. Social Security is the payroll tax and the trust fund, and every month the trust fund

gets a little smaller. We do pay interest for the cash that the Federal Government and the Treasury have borrowed out of the trust fund. We give them their principal back, and then the Treasury gives them a little bit of interest.

However, that is continuing to shrink.

Then, Mr. Speaker, you look at everything else and you start to realize that we don't run this government anymore. The mandatory programs and the bond market do.

The other thing that also should really annoy anyone who actually pays attention to the actual math instead of theatrics, national debt increased in the first 7 months of this fiscal year. In 2023 at this point we had borrowed about one-half a trillion dollars.

Yea, good job.

Now we are at \$1.45 trillion, the same time period this year. Yet, you have got to work through the problem with me.

Was 2023 economically that different from this year?

What happened?

What happened? Well, our interest rates went up so we are burning through tremendous amounts of more cash. In the last 12 months, I think we actually had 2 or 3 months where we had to borrow money to pay for our borrowing. Forgive me. I have had a stunning amount of coffee today, I haven't slept well, and I am just cranky.

Mr. Speaker, this chart is actually worse now. It is just the only one I have.

Some of these numbers I have trouble believing. We go back and double-check ourselves. We go back and double-check ourselves because the numbers read differently than the CBO report from 4 months ago or 5 months ago or the OMB report from 6 months ago.

That is because if the economy is supposed to be fairly decent, how can we be bleeding like this?

Think about this, Mr. Speaker. CBO and those who are saying: Hey, we are going to be borrowing about 4.5 percent, 4.7 percent of the economy is going to be in borrowed money. However, so far this fiscal year, our borrowing is closer to 9 percent, 9 percent, of the entire economy.

Why is that important?

Also looking at this chart, we are saying: Here are our tax receipts. We will get the Democrats, and we need to talk about this. They keep saying: Well, if we just tax rich people more.

I have come here multiple times and shown the analysis of higher taxes on those who earn \$400,000 and up. We take the left's and this President's proposal, and we say: Let's tax maximize everything. Let's tax maximize their income taxes, their estate taxes, and their capital gains taxes, everything. Then you look at the data, and you get about 1.5 percent of GDP.

Okay, so we have used the Democrats' plan. We are going to tax our

way to prosperity. You get about 1.5 of GDP. Great.

Mr. Speaker, do you remember I showed you the chart of nondefense discretionary?

You take 1 percent of that out of GDP, and it is about 40 percent of all nondefense discretionary you just wiped out. Now you have yourself 2.5 percent of GDP that we either tax or we cut.

Great job, guys.

Mr. Speaker, you are seeing a chart here where we are starting to talk about over the coming decade we are going to be at 31 percent of the economy is borrowed, but, hey, guys, everything we talk about we are going to get 1 percent of cuts and 1.5 percent of taxes?

We are borrowing close to 9 percent of GDP right now. The CBO baseline was up like 5.

Does anyone here do math?

Does anyone own a calculator?

Does anyone have a battery in the calculator?

Mr. Speaker, you can't cut yourself and you can't tax enough to make this work.

Yet, we are so vacuous intellectually around here. The ability to say that we are going to embrace the things that disrupt our cost drivers; we are going to actually adopt technology; we are going to adopt artificial intelligence to change the cost of government; we are going to adopt the things that crush the price of healthcare, not by making it more scarce and not by rationing it but by making it more moral.

We can do that. Except this place will run like hell every time you say: Do you know that we could actually have technology that would cure that disease?

Oh, no. That is our business model.

In a couple of weeks, we are going to do a major presentation from the Republican side of the Joint Economic Committee. The math is not done yet. We are trying to grind through the number one cost driver of this government. I am going to get some really, really interesting comments, and it is mathematically true.

It is obesity. We are starting to chase down some data that says that almost one-half of U.S. healthcare has a relationship to obesity. We are about to have our fifth year of prime-age males dying younger.

It is immoral. It is absolutely immoral what this place has become. The debt is immoral, and what we do in healthcare is immoral.

It is bad enough that we are destroying our kids. Mr. Speaker, I am 62, and my wife is 62. Maybe I shouldn't tell you that. I have an 8-year-old daughter we adopted, and I have a 23-month-old little boy we adopted, who is a miracle. Moreover, they are brother and sister.

Do they have the right to have the same life or even be more prosperous?

Because the American sort of societal contract says the next generation will be more prosperous, and right now that is mathematically impossible.

There is a way I can make it work, there is a way you can make it work, Mr. Speaker, and there is a way this place could make it work, but we are so busy knifing each other over petty crap because we are idiots. We are children here, because doing hard things is hard.

My father used to have a saying: If it is a complex problem, then it is a simple solution.

That is absolutely wrong. Complexity requires complexity. The reason for this portion of this tirade is that next year there will be about \$380 billion a year in tax hikes. You, as an individual, your LLC, your subchapter S, your passthrough business, congratulations, your taxes are already going up next year. It is the law as it is already.

I will argue it is one of the greatest opportunities we have had in modern times because we are going to be forced to actually act like adults and do something.

Now, here is your battle, Mr. Speaker. Will we be smart, creative, and intellectually robust saying: Hey, let's use this as an opportunity to broaden the Tax Code, fix it in a way where we maximize prosperity and economic growth. Oh, by the way, because we don't want to add to the debt, can we do things over here to actually change some of the debt drivers?

We are going to legalize technology in healthcare. We are going to adopt technology to make government smaller but more efficient. We are going to crowdsource our data in a way where it is current, accurate, and more moral.

We have bills on all of this. This isn't just rhetoric. We have done bills on this stuff for years, and they have gotten much better.

Will the vision, particularly for those who have the responsibility of being on the Ways and Means Committee, will we actually step up and say: Is it going to be binary?

Hey, we are going to raise these people's taxes and lower these so it balances out. Hey, screw everyone.

Yea, we did something.

Are we going to use the stressor that is coming with the expiration of those portions of the 2017 tax reform to actually grow the society?

Mr. Speaker, you have to ask yourself that first, because I don't know if many of my Democrat colleagues agree with me that prosperity is moral.

Having a society where every day you have the chance to live a little bit better, is that moral?

Having a society we are not poisoning ourselves with what we eat, is that moral?

Having a healthcare system that is better, faster, and cheaper, is that moral?

All those things are in front of us because chart after chart after chart basically says that when we have had very high marginal tax rates, we get about 17, 18 percent of GDP. When we have had very low marginal tax rates, we get about 17, 18 percent of GDP.

When we have done lots of extra corporate taxes, we get 17 to 18 percent of GDP.

The fact of the matter is there are lots of brilliant economic papers and people have written their Ph.D. theses on this. You all have access to the internet. Maybe go read it. You are going to get about 17, 18 percent of GDP, and a bunch of the Democrat policies are: Well, let's raise these taxes, and we will get 24 percent of GDP.

Really?

Tell me a time in U.S. history on a sustained basis that has happened. It just hasn't.

Unless the Democrats' plan is to do a value-added tax, a VAT tax, which will crush the working middle class, you ain't getting that number. You have got to stop making crap up.

Yet, we know our spending because it is demographics. Remember our point before: interest, Medicare, and backfilling Social Security.

We got old as a society. I am going to show you a couple of charts here that are really rough, and they are absolutely factual.

The only reason I grabbed this chart, and we are going to go through some of these pretty quickly, it is just to show you over the past four quarters, \$600 billion, \$288 billion, \$487 billion, \$258 billion, we are borrowing in quarters where a few years ago that was the entire year.

Here is one of the punch lines: Social Security, \$1.452 trillion. That is Social Security this year. However, Social Security is out of your payroll tax and then part of the trust fund. Interest now, there were a few of our brothers and sisters on that side who mocked me a few months ago when I said: I think we are going to close in on 1.1, \$1.2 trillion in interest this year.

Oh, Schweikert, you have got to stop making crap up.

Treasury's own number, \$1.144 trillion is the interest.

If you want this number to go down, then make us look like a stable government. Make us look like we are adults. Convince the bond markets we are actually going to take on our debt in a meaningful way instead of playing the-actrics.

This is interesting. Right now, there is actually a little bit of squish here, so you have to understand. Mr. Speaker, our most recent Treasury update, defense now is number 3 and Medicare is number 4. We actually think that is going to flip again because last month it was flipped and reversed, but they are almost identical right now. The punch line here is interest now is the second biggest expense in the government. At our current borrowing rate, and if interest rates stay where they are at or go up just a little bit, in a couple of years, interest, interest, will be the number one spend in this government.

Congratulations.

Mr. Speaker, this is a hard chart to read. The point of this one is just inter-

est fragility, what happens with small movements in interest rates on U.S. sovereign debt. The basic point is where we are interest rate-wise right now in 2033. Right now, we are working on the 2025 fiscal year budget; 7, 8 budget years from now, our model at today's interest rates we are at 3, \$3.7 trillion baseline borrowing.

□ 1800

That is already our model. That is without a recession. That is without a war. That is without a pandemic. That is just where we are at.

I have some other articles talking about how fragile we have made ourselves. God forbid, this year or next year, we go into a true recession. Do you have any idea how fragile we have made this government, this country, with our ravenous borrowing?

What would happen if tax receipts started to roll over a bit on us because we went into a recession? Remember, tax receipts are up about 7 percent. Medicare spending is up around 10 percent this fiscal year. If that rolled over and wasn't 7 percent and was closer to 4 percent or 5 percent, do you want to talk about a bloodbath?

Raising interest rates could push the national debt toward 300 percent of GDP within 30 years. How many of you think the bond markets are going to let us get anywhere near 300 percent of GDP with our savings rates? If you are Japan, maybe you can do it. You would have remarkably high savings rates. They can almost finance their own debt. Actually, they do finance their own debt. Do you think the rest of the world is going to keep loaning us money, respecting the sovereignty of the reserve currency that is the dollar?

Why are we destroying ourselves? Why are we destroying your retirement? Why are we destroying your kids, my young kids? Yet, the hallways, once again, are full of people wanting more money.

Let's talk through a couple of things that are even more uncomfortable than talking about the debt. You all saw a week ago Friday the update on U.S. fertility rates. Yes, we are going to have an idiot Congressman talk about how many children we are having in society because it is important.

We sit there in our offices, and I am blessed to have some freaky smart staff, people much smarter than I ever could dream to be, a bunch of economists, and we are trying to figure out, over the next decade, two decades, how do we pay Social Security? How do we pay Medicare? How do we do these things?

The Democrats say that we will just raise more taxes, but then you show them the studies that that math doesn't work.

Are we just going to lie to our voters and survive the next election? Great job, guys, but we have a little problem. A week ago Friday, you saw the updated report on the 2023 fertility rates. I was wrong on my number. It is worse.

It is worse than the speeches I came here and gave.

We are down to 1.62, meaning we are way below replacement rates now. The United States is dying, and one of the things I am frustrated with is the Census Bureau numbers basically say that when we start to get beyond—because, remember, the Census Bureau had us at 1.64, it turns out they were wrong. It is 1.62, and they were projecting as we go through the rest of this century, which is a long time.

Think about your kids. If you have a young child right now, they are going to live, hopefully, with the Lord's blessing, 100 years. We start to collapse populationwise, and we are going to walk you through a couple of why these are such a big deal.

Deaths are projected to exceed births. This chart said 2040. It is a little sooner. If you take last week's fertility number, in about 15 years, the United States will have more deaths than births.

There is no industrialized country that has succeeded in adopting policy that changed their fertility rates in the long run, so you have Hungary and these others that say, in your future life, have a fourth kid, and pay no income taxes in the future. We will buy you a house, and you get a little pop, and then, boom, after a few years, it moves right back to mean.

You have to deal with the reality. It turns out, all over the world, as the world has gotten more prosperous, we have a collapse in fertility, yet we built a social entitlement system. It is earned benefits. You earned your Medicare. You earned your Social Security. They were based on the concept that there would be this many workers because the reality is that today's FICA taxpayer's and payroll taxpayer's paycheck went into your Social Security check today, or your Medicare. It is just the way it has always been.

What happens when that next generation gets smaller? Are we also emotionally and mentally prepared for the number of schools that will be closing? It is starting to happen all over the country because U.S. fertility started to roll over in 1990. It has just now accelerated. We had a tiny little blip during the pandemic, and now it has gone back. The trend line continues to get uglier and uglier.

It is reality. Think about it. You live in a country where, in 15 years, we will have more deaths than births. Are we prepared for that? Are you ready, are we ready, is this body intellectually ready for saying you are going to adopt policies that are child friendly, this and that? There is no other country that has come up with an example where it actually raised the number of children. Are we ready to adopt policy to embrace technology?

This is where it gets really uncomfortable. How many robots are you ready to embrace? How much AI are you ready to embrace? When you call the IRS, instead of having a person, are

you ready to be talking to ChatGPT? Probably, in that case, you might prefer the chat.

We are going to have to adopt the embracement, or whatever the word would be, of technology in ways to keep the economy growing without more people, and this is happening all over the industrialized world.

How many times behind these microphones have you heard any Member of Congress come and say: I actually care about prosperity. I care about the next generation. I care about economic growth. I care about the future. We are going to adopt things where we are going to embrace technology so we can keep having prosperity.

What? The math is the math, and the math will always win.

One of the things I am also annoyed with is, reading through the Social Security actuarial report, they are making crap up. They have fertility numbers in here. They have us growing.

CBO actually has numbers growing, yet we talk about the Census Bureau, and the Census Bureau is down here. Could our government agencies—we spend a fortune with all these actuaries—maybe have a cocktail party, preferably no alcohol? Make it a coffee. We will do a coffee because that is what we need, a bunch of well-caffinated actuaries in the same room from Social Security, from maybe OMB, CBO, a couple of these others, the Census Bureau, all in the same room. Can you give us a number because you are making it miserable around here trying to say what our future looks like because, so far, they keep being wrong.

It is a little geeky, but that is important, and that was my mocking them for the number of times I send them memos saying: Can you explain your number and why it is so different than each other?

I had some questions on this from last week, so I just brought the board back. You had the President stand right there, and he basically said that we are going to do this from Medicare, that we are going to raise this tax and this and that.

The red portion here is when you pay your payroll tax. That is the portion that goes to the Medicare trust fund. The rest, you functionally pay for. This comes out of the general fund, which we are borrowing part of it. Over here, that is actually your premiums, and a little bit of this is some other transfers. Then, we also have a little slice here, which is for dual eligibles, those who are seniors but maybe in Medicare and Medicaid, so we also get a little sliver from the State. Once again, the majority of spending in Medicare is not the trust fund.

I am elated that the current model on the trust fund extended for another few years. That is wonderful. We need to sort of study that, except if you read the actuarial report, the reason it extended is really fragile. This dark blue there, that and interest are the primary drivers of U.S. debt.

Tell the truth. Maybe it will get you unelected, but how do you make public policy in a world where you are not allowed to tell the truth? That is what Members of Congress do.

“Rising Security and Medicare Shortfalls Drive Nearly Entire 2019–2033 Deficit Rise.” That is the fact. That is CBO’s own quote.

Here is the board that I promise will be in the attack ad going at me in the next election, except it is CBO’s own numbers, except it is 2 years out of date. There is a number right here that basically says Social Security and Medicare, \$116 trillion deficit, and the rest of the budget, \$3 trillion, is functionally in balance. Except the problem is, for anyone right now, if you care enough, go grab your phone. Go use a search engine and look up CBO’s report from 6 weeks ago. The 30-year number is not \$116 trillion. It is \$143 trillion that is now our model.

That is what higher interest rates did, \$143 trillion, 100 percent of that borrowing, Medicare and the interest financing on that, backfilling of Social Security and the interest financing on that. We can revolutionize this if we would finally be willing to legalize technology, the morality of moving and pushing cures.

Why does this place seem to like to finance people’s misery instead of working with the FDA, working with biopharma, working with the people out there who are disrupting disease and misery? We seem to have a place around here that wants to build diabetic clinics instead of curing diabetes. What is wrong with the morality of this place?

Another thing we are trying to figure out in the Social Security actuary report is they play this game where, hey, when we get the out-years, things collapse. We will do that in a week or two because it is a little complex.

Another chart just trying to explain, once again, what is the part A trust fund, part B general fund. This here, part D, also is a combination of some of the fees you pay. That is your Medicare.

Back to the last couple of points I want to make here.

When I just told you we are about to have our fifth year of prime-age males dying younger, is it moral to stand here and say—remember, this chart functionally ends at 2020. It has actually gotten uglier.

The U.S. is an outlier in disease and disability trends. We are sicker than the rest of the industrialized world. Is it that we are not spending enough on healthcare? Well, that is absurd because, let’s be honest, we engage in agricultural policy and nutrition support policy where you can take your EBT card and go buy onion rings.

Is that moral? Why isn’t there a fixation in this place when we have States where over half of the population statistically is obese? They are dying on us. We have a society that finances crap in our diets. Why would we do this

to each other? Is that Republican or Democratic? I am just trying to make the arguments. It turns out, if you took it on, it is the single biggest thing you can do for U.S. debt, taking on the very things that are killing us.

I have done presentations before. They were a little geeky trying to explain that if we could make our society healthier, it is the single biggest thing I can do to reduce U.S. debt. You all remember your high school economics class, first-degree effects, second-degree effects, third-degree effects, knockoff effects. Do you remember all the weird language? You want more of our brothers and sisters to be able to marry and family formation and participate in society and be able to participate in the economy. Help us make our society healthier.

Mr. Speaker, I am trying to make the morality argument that the very thing that would be most effective for us to take on the U.S. debt is legalizing technology to crash the price of healthcare, putting technology into this government to make government smaller and more efficient. It requires thinking.

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It also requires really annoying a whole bunch of the people in our hallways demanding more money from us. It would also be incredibly moral. It would actually give our kids a chance, in many ways, for the prosperity that we and previous generations had.

Let’s think about it: We have done this to ourselves. There is a way out. It is not easy. It requires some complexity. Are these Republican or Democrat ideas? They are neither; they are just hard. They are just hard.

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

FACING MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES DOESN’T MAKE YOU WEAK

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CRANE). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentlewoman from Vermont (Ms. BALINT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. BALINT. Mr. Speaker, tonight, my colleagues and I are here on the floor of the U.S. Congress to talk about the mental health crisis we are seeing across the country in each of our congressional districts.

I know this issue can be incredibly hard for many people to talk about. It is personal. It is complex. Many Americans don’t feel comfortable talking about it because they fear the reaction from their friends, their families, or coworkers. But seeking mental health treatment is not a sign of weakness; it means you are human.

The body does not stop at the neck and mental health care is healthcare. Period.

All of us here tonight are fighting for a future in which anyone who wants mental health care gets it when we finally end the unequal treatment of mental health.