

CLOSURE OF MARTIN GENERAL HOSPITAL

(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. Madam Speaker, I rise to reiterate my unwavering commitment to the people of eastern North Carolina, where healthcare is a pressing concern.

Unfortunately, our region faces notable healthcare disparities, and the closure of Martin General Hospital in Martin County has only amplified these challenges.

We recently convened a listening session to hear the community's thoughts on the future of healthcare in Martin County. I expressed my sincere gratitude to all who participated and shared their experiences. The stories shared at the listening session truly underscored the profound impact of the hospital closure.

I want to assure Martin County that I am fully committed to working alongside the county and local residents to establish a new, sustainable healthcare system for this resilient community.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION BORDER POLICY

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

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, we finally have it. The Biden administration today finally said they have a border policy. I hope the press does a good job of explaining what is going on here.

First of all, it is apparent when you put together the 2,500 illegals a day threshold, then 1,500 migrants a day entering the U.S. via the CBP One app, and the 30,000 migrants per month arriving through a mass parole program for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans, we are already up to about 150,000 people a month.

What I am going to focus on here is there used to be some concern about keeping families together. Under this program, we will continue to have 5,000 to 10,000 unaccompanied minors enter this country every month, and nothing will be done to turn them around.

In other words, we are going to continue the Biden policy of weak families, continue the policy of not requiring the parents to be here. I hope the press pays attention to this horrific policy.

DOJ CONDEMNING INSULAR CASES

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak on the decision by the U.S. Department of Justice to condemn the use of the Insular Cases.

Last month, I co-led a bipartisan, bicameral letter signed by 43 Members of Congress, from both the House and the Senate, urging the U.S. Department of Justice to condemn and cease relying on the racist rulings of the Insular Cases that continue to negatively impact Americans living in U.S. territories.

The Department of Justice has finally agreed that the language is, in fact, racist and that the logic of the Insular Cases deserves no place in the law of the United States.

Residents of U.S. territories deserve fair treatment and the opportunity to determine their own political future. I am proud to see that our efforts have come to some fruition and have the Department of Justice clarify and denounce their position on those cases.

We are one step closer. We still have so much work to go to be equitable, to be treated fairly. I am asking all Virgin Islanders and all members of U.S. territories to continue the fight.

I will also continue to advocate for the reversal of the Insular Cases at the Supreme Court level and ensure the fair treatment of all residents living in U.S. territories.

CONGRATULATING TEACHER OF THE YEAR KELLY ACKERMAN

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

Mr. FRY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Kelly Ackerman for being named the 2023-2024 Teacher of the Year for Seaside Elementary School in Horry County.

I am a little bit biased. While her colleagues chose her amongst dozens at this particular school, she is also the teacher of my first grade son, James.

Ms. Ackerman has taught various ages, including kindergarten, first grade, second grade, and third grade. She has 16 total years of teaching, including 11 in Horry County Schools.

Horry County Schools is massive. There are 3,000 teachers, and they teach nearly 50,000 students. At Seaside Elementary, they are lucky to have somebody like Ms. Ackerman who is so passionate about teaching the next generation of American students.

I thank Ms. Ackerman for her role in fostering a culture of learning. My son certainly appreciates it. From a grateful family in the Fry household, we appreciate Ms. Ackerman engaging with our son.

I asked my son last night on FaceTime what he was going to remember most or miss most about Ms. Ackerman. He said: "She is beautiful. I will miss everything about her. She helped me learn 3D shapes. She appreciates me. She makes me feel special. She makes us do performances in class."

On behalf of my colleagues in the House and on behalf of the Fry family, I thank Ms. Ackerman for her selfless

dedication to the students of Seaside Elementary.

CELEBRATING IMMIGRANT HERITAGE MONTH

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

Mr. GOMEZ. Madam Speaker, during Immigrant Heritage Month, I rise to honor my constituent Maria Barahona, a shining example of the resilience and contributions of our immigrant community.

Maria, a home-care provider and TPS recipient from El Salvador, embodies the American spirit through her unwavering commitment to serving others. TPS gives Maria the ability to work and care for her community.

Her story is not just one of personal triumph but a testament to the invaluable impact of immigrants to our Nation. Foreign-born workers drove a staggering 50 percent of the U.S. labor market growth last year.

Maria's story is a call to action. We must support and uplift our immigrant community and expand TPS.

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ONE BARRIER TO PEACE

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

Mr. LANDSMAN. Madam Speaker, I am one of only a few Jewish Members of the House, and I am leading this Special Order hour to help provide some clarity in this time of challenge and confusion. It has been said that there are four barriers to peace in the Middle East, but we are here tonight because there is only one barrier to peace, and that is the Government of Iran.

This war in the Middle East has impacted two historically traumatized people who share a history. They share land, and unfortunately, they share this reality that no one in the world wants either one of them.

Watching this trauma and this history unfold has had a deep impact on caring people all over the world. We want this war to end. We want the hostages returned, and we want a future peace for Israelis and Palestinians. We may be nearing a cease-fire, and I pray Hamas agrees to the proposal that is on the table now. That won't resolve the larger issue of Iran.

Before October 7, we were nearing peace in the region. In fact, over the past several decades there have been major efforts to bring peace between Israel and Arab nations. Historically, Arab nations were united against Israel, launching frequent attacks with the intent of destroying the Jewish state, but things slowly changed, one

realignment at a time achieved through American leadership and American partnership.

However, there is one glaring exception toward this progress, the totalitarian regime in Iran, which remains intent on Israel's destruction and disrupting the path to peace. It creates chaos in the region.

President Carter worked with Egypt and Israel to bring those two states to a sustainable peace. President Clinton worked with Jordan and Israel to normalize relations between those two nations. Four years ago, the United States formed the Abraham Accords, where the UAE and Bahrain recognized Israel's sovereignty. Sudan and Morocco would later join.

Then just days before October 7, Saudi Arabia and Israel were near a deal. It would have brought the region closer to peace. At that point, Iran had seen enough. Hamas, an Iranian-backed army, had seen enough, too, and they attacked, massacred, raped, and took Israeli and American hostages.

People have looked at this war as a David and Goliath story, and in some ways it is. We all know the story; the Philistines were attacking the Israelites in the Valley of Elah. Every morning, Goliath, this giant, challenged the Israelites to fight. One day, David, a young shepherd boy, did what no one else would do: He defeated the giant with just a sling, against all odds.

It is a story about the imbalance of power and strength but also courage and ingenuity. Israel in the last 8 months has been painted as this Goliath in the war today, and if you looked at a map and you zoomed in, you may think that, too. There is Israel, and there is Gaza, very small. However, if you zoom out, you would see the reality of what is going on, and that the Goliath isn't Israel, but it is Iran.

Iran has funded over 20 terrorist organizations all surrounding Israel. They have funded groups that were responsible for killing three U.S. servicemembers earlier this year, funding the Houthi rebels in Yemen responsible for attacking U.S. ships in the Red Sea, and most recently they funded Swedish gangs to carry out terror attacks against Israelis in their embassy.

Today, just like the story, 8 million Jews are in the Valley of Elah surrounded by the Goliath, Iran, and its terrorist-backed armies. Iran is not alone in this effort. It is supported by global chaos agents like Russia. What is happening in the Middle East and what is happening in Ukraine are not isolated events. Putin attacked Ukraine because he believes it is a fictional state, just as Iran and Hamas and Hezbollah believe Israel is a fictional state.

This partnership between Iran and Russia has sowed conflict, chaos. Russian-made weapons have found their way to Hamas for years, and the same Iranian drones that were fired into Israel weeks ago have been used in Russia's offensive against Ukraine.

There are those who seek to put us on a path to a peaceful future and those who seek to disrupt it and sow chaos and destruction. Russia, Iran, Hamas, Hezbollah, Houthi, they are all part of this group.

Following October 7, Israel was suddenly up against Goliath and confronted with an impossible choice:

What was Israel to do after October 7 when their enemy, Hamas, went underground, taking Israeli and American hostages with them?

What was Israel to do when they hid in tunnels and shielded themselves by leaving innocent Palestinians above ground?

What was Israel to do when Hamas vowed to end Israel if they were to survive?

Hamas could cease their actions at any moment to save innocent lives, but they choose not to. If Israel stops now, they would not only abandon their people and Americans, but they would also relinquish the hard-earned stability in the Middle East, opening the door for further chaos.

The truth is, we aren't seeing the forest for the trees. We aren't zooming out to see the Goliath here—the Iranians, the Russians, the terrorists that they support against the global community. They have done this by abandoning innocent people, hiding behind civilians, and stealing aid from Palestinians. Unfortunately, their plan has succeeded.

Recently, Canadian protesters gathered and declared:

What happened on October 7 was the beginning of the great intifada.

It has spread in the minds of people of the free world.

When you scream with a loud voice, Long Live October 7, you will understand that these people decided to end their miseries and this nightmare called Israel.

In response to calls like these, the Iranian Ayatollah has said it is working. That is right. He sees all of these protests against Israel, and the Ayatollah has said, it is working.

Just last week, in reaction to U.S. protests, the Ayatollah praised American protesters in a letter that also contained anti-Semitic tropes and accused Israel of being a terrorist state.

Iran and Russia's goal of terror isn't limited to the Middle East. It is spreading globally. If we want this war to end, which I desperately do, if we want the hostages returned, which I desperately do, and a new future for Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank, which I desperately do, then we have to firmly stand against the ongoing Iranian aggression.

The path forward requires bold, ethical leadership from Israel to urgently end the deepening humanitarian crisis, defeat the terror groups once and for all, and rally global diplomatic support. It is also a requirement that the leaders of the international community and these Arab nations be all in for peace and be willing to stand up to Iran once and for all.

Crucially, the work ahead requires all of us to work together to reject the tactics of terror and chaos and choosing to build a brighter future.

Iranian aggression has pitted two groups with a deep history of trauma into further trauma and pain. Yet, in this shared trauma lies the potential for profound peace. This conflict can be the foundation upon which we build lasting and sustainable stability, where both Israelis and Palestinians can live in peace.

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

UPCOMING CHANGES IN THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Forgive me, Madam Speaker, as we get our boards all lined up.

Madam Speaker, I am going to try something a little different than starting with the debt pie. We are going to actually sort of walk through some of the chaos that is coming next year. For those of you who always hear the saying, hey, the next election is the most important election ever, what I am going to walk you through is going to show, yeah, it probably is, but let's walk through why.

How many of you understand that in December 2017 there was a tax reform bill? It was the first time in 30-plus years that the United States had updated its tax code. Now, within that, one of the basic principles is what could you do to maximize economic growth and what could you do to make the United States competitive again?

Do you remember before 2017 the number of organizations, corporations that were chartered in the United States that were saying, bye, we are going to Ireland, we are going to other parts of the world because the way we taxed international business and those things. We found a way to make ourselves competitive, and I believe since then we haven't had a major organization, major corporation leave the United States.

Could you imagine having gone into the pandemic if we hadn't done the tax reform in December 2017? Also, I have tried in previous presentations to come here and talk about the morality of 2018, 2019, even 2020. We had the biggest movement of closing income inequality in America. It was actually some of the fastest in modern history of wages going up without inflation.

If you love and care for people, particularly working people, particularly those who, as is common, have the lowest quartiles of income, go back to 2018, go back to 2019, go back to the beginning of 2020, and understand the morality of having a revised tax code work.

Here we are. There is something coming next year we need to understand.