

We had two line-of-duty deaths: honorary Chief Michael Fischer and ex-Chief Ronald Nurnberger to 9/11-related illness.

In 1976 we saw an explosion along our waterfront that caused death and closed 63 area beaches for weeks after.

We saw the devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic and, of course, the devastation of Hurricane Sandy as the village of Island Park was one of the hardest hit communities on the East Coast.

However, some of our worst times gave us the opportunity to show some of our best, and the Island Park Fire Department has forever been a beacon in the Island Park community. It is that go-to place where people could find safety and where they could get help. During the devastation of Hurricane Sandy, they found food, they found a place to utilize bathrooms, and they talked to their government officials.

From 1924 to 2024, the Island Park Fire Department has been that beacon in our community, and it is a place and an institution that I am proud to be part of.

In 1978 we swore in our first female firefighter, Phyllis Berotti.

We have seen, I would argue, probably the only fire department perhaps in the United States that actually sent two members to this House. In 1980 the Island Park Fire Department sent Senator Alfonse D'Amato to the United States Senate, and in 2022, they sent me to this great House.

So, Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to recognize one of my true loves, the Island Park Fire Department, in its 100th year of service.

RECOGNIZING THE FAITHFUL SERVICE OF PAUL DIGIACOMO

Mr. D'ESPOSITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize NYPD Detective Paul DiGiacomo who just took his final walk from 26 Thomas Street in lower Manhattan as the president of the Detectives' Endowment Association.

Paul DiGiacomo started his career in the NYPD in 1983, serving over 40 years and earned his beloved gold shield in 1993. He was elected a delegate to the DEA in 1994. He has served as president of the DEA since 2020 and has been one of the leading voices in New York protecting law enforcement. He has stood with those who wear the uniform and has called out the disastrous effects of Democrat policies that have made our country and our city less safe and have put law enforcement in danger.

Paul DiGiacomo is not only a friend and not only a fellow detective, but he has been regarded as a cop's cop. As those of us who have worn the uniform know, there sometimes is no greater attribute than that reference, and that was Paul DiGiacomo.

His lasting impact on the DEA will be felt for generations of law enforcement professionals in New York City.

Mr. Speaker, I wish Paul DiGiacomo a healthy and safe retirement, and I thank him for his dedication to the New York City Police Department.

SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the Nation's number one antipoverty program for the elderly and the number one antipoverty program for our children. That program, Mr. Speaker, as you know, is Social Security.

Mr. Speaker, and for the members in the gallery, I think it is important to understand the statistics that we are dealing with, most importantly, that there are now close to 70 million Americans who rely on Social Security, 40 percent of whom rely on a pension which is the only benefit that they have.

It is a testament to the genius of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. What is required in an entrepreneurial capitalist system is that there be a safety net for people.

Even more so, imagine that 10,000 baby boomers a day become eligible for Social Security. It is disheartening that Congress, the institution primarily responsible for Social Security's enhancement and protection, has not done anything in 53 years. Richard Nixon was the President of the United States the last time Social Security was enhanced.

Five million of our fellow citizens get below poverty-level checks from Social Security, the greatest insurance program in the Nation's history, but Congress has not attended to the program. That is why this is so vitally important that we do so.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, in Idaho in the First District there are 219,000-plus Social Security recipients, 170,000-plus who are retirees, and 21,000 who get disability. There are 10,000-plus widows, 5,600 spouses, and 11,000 children in Idaho who rely on Social Security. It brings in \$388 million monthly to the First District and has not been adjusted in more than 50 years. This is an outrage.

When Members learn of this and when the public is aware of this, they say: Why hasn't Congress acted?

President Biden has suggested, and it makes sense, that in this great Nation of ours, why shouldn't everybody pay the same?

So he said: Let's just simply lift the cap on people making over \$400,000 who don't pay nearly the same that a person making \$30,000, \$50,000, \$75,000, or \$100,000 does who pay into the program.

In doing so, we would be able to enhance Social Security not only in Idaho but across the entire United States.

Even former President Trump now is apparently changing the Republican platform to say that we are going to protect Social Security.

It is not enough to protect Social Security. Congress hasn't done anything in more than 53 years. So that means whether you are in Idaho or whether

you are in Connecticut, those very citizens, those 10,000-a-day baby boomers who expect their Congress to take action on their behalf, need to enhance a program that provides them with the benefits. That money goes directly into every congressional district and every congressional community.

Where do the citizens spend that money?

They spend it at the grocery store, at the pharmacy, and at the gas station. It goes to the essential needs that Americans require. That is why Social Security is the number one antipoverty program for the elderly and also the number one antipoverty program for children.

What Congress needs to do is not talk about it. It needs to vote. Citizens in the gallery and across this Nation should demand that the United States Congress vote on Social Security and correct something that has gone in disrepair for more than 50 years.

BORDER SOLUTIONS

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

Mr. MANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss President Biden's open border.

Since President Biden was sworn in, his open-border policies have created a national security and humanitarian crisis. House Republicans continue to urge the White House and our Democrat colleagues in Congress to work with us to identify solutions. Again and again, we are met with silence.

I understand border security may not be politically convenient for my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, but at some point, they must stop pretending that this crisis does not exist.

I found it telling that over the Fourth of July weekend, the White House touted that illegal crossings along the U.S. southern border decreased following President Biden's recent executive order. What they conveniently left out is that even with this executive order, May was still the 39th straight month where illegal immigrant encounters have been higher than even the highest month under President Trump's administration.

I understand that the White House is in desperate need of good press, but with all due respect, Mr. Speaker, the facts are the facts. Our borders are far from secure, and no feel-good story or graphic from the White House communications team is going to change that.

I spent last week with Kansans in 11 counties across the Big First District, and they were clear: Addressing the Nation's border crisis matters to them.

Under President Biden's policies, cartels have been winners, and innocent children and those who are trying to enter the country legally have been the losers. It doesn't have to be this way. Let's do something to fix this chaos.

First, we need to immediately finish the border wall. Time and time again,

Border Patrol agents have shared that a physical barrier along our Nation's borders, coupled with advanced technology, is extremely helpful in stopping the cartels. We also need to designate the Mexican cartels as exactly what they are, terrorists. These human smugglers get rich by putting lives at risk and pouring fentanyl into our country. It is unacceptable.

We need to implement policies that are actually effective. On his first day in office, President Biden immediately began rolling back the Trump administration's immigration policies for no other reason than they were associated with President Trump's name. President Biden never asked if the policies were helping curb illegal immigration or slow illegal immigrants from entering the country or whether it was good for the United States of America.

It was simply: If President Trump did it, then it is gone. That has backfired on President Biden, and the polls show that. There is a reason President Trump is more trusted on the border than President Biden. We need to reinstate remain in Mexico and end President Biden's disastrous catch-and-release policy.

□ 1115

Finally, we must change our tone to send a clear message: Do not come to the U.S. illegally.

At the start of his Presidency, President Biden promised outright citizenship to more than 11 million illegal immigrants. America is a Nation of legal immigrants, and the President's false promise was a slap in the face to the 2 million people who legally migrate to the U.S. each year the right way. We should make legal immigration easier and illegal immigration harder. Mr. President, this is not rocket science. It is simple.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues again today: What will it take for my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to come to the table to secure the border? We can't keep pretending the current situation is normal. It is the minority's move.

FAILED POLICIES AND RECKLESS SPENDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the Biden-Harris administration's failed policies and reckless spending that have led to runaway inflation and have bled American workers dry.

Since the beginning of the Biden-Harris administration, the essentials Americans rely on daily have become unaffordable and inaccessible for most Americans. Before President Biden took office, inflation sat at 1.4 percent. It went up to 9 percent.

Since then, inflation and prices have increased by a mind-boggling 20.11 per-

cent. At the gas pump, regular gasoline has increased a whopping 55.3 percent, and groceries are up 21.2 percent. Interest rates are at record-high levels, the highest they have been in two decades, impacting every family.

With the average American spending \$12,800 more a year to buy basic needs, Bidenomics has hurt millions of everyday Americans and Iowans living paycheck to paycheck. Biden-Harris inflation is a Biden-Harris tax on all Americans, especially seniors on a fixed income and those working families.

House Republicans remain committed to reining in Biden-Harris reckless spending and taming inflation.

BORDER CRISIS

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the national security crisis that is the Biden-Harris border crisis.

Since the start of the Biden-Harris administration, there have been over 9.7 million illegal immigrant encounters nationwide and 1.8 million known got-aways who have evaded the U.S. Border Patrol. A record 350 individuals whose names appear on the terrorist watch list have also been encountered at the southern border.

Let us not forget it was the Biden-Harris administration that ended the effective remain in Mexico program and allowed for 40 percent of catch-and-release migrants to disappear, and we have lost over 85,000 children.

Across the country, we have seen the impact of a porous border. Fentanyl and crime coming across the border has ravaged communities in Iowa and across America, making drug overdoses the number one cause of death in 18- to 45-year-olds. This is devastating the lives of millions of Americans.

Democrat-led cities, such as New York and Chicago, have become unrecognizable due to the influx of migrants and violent crime.

Mr. Speaker, I call on my colleagues to push the Senate to support H.R. 2, the Secure the Border Act, to protect our American homeland and stop the madness and crisis at our southern border.

EVERY LEGAL VOTE MATTERS

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 8281, the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility Act, or SAVE Act.

The SAVE Act protects and preserves the right of American citizens to vote by requiring States to obtain proof of citizenship, in person, when registering an individual to vote in a Federal election. It also provides States with access to existing Federal databases to clean up their voter registration rolls and remove noncitizens.

Under the outdated National Voter Registration Act, or NVRA, States are not required to ask for proof and are prohibited from asking for proof of citizenship when registering an individual to vote in Federal elections.

While Democrats and their media allies claim their elections are secure, there are a multitude of cases with in-

contestable evidence of noncitizens registering and voting in Federal elections. If you think one vote doesn't matter or one person voting fraudulent doesn't matter, I won my race in 2020 by six votes, and we had a mayoral race in my district that was decided after two ties by drawing a name out of a hat. Every vote matters. Every legal vote matters.

Americans should decide American elections, not illegal immigrants. The SAVE Act is a commonsense measure to safeguard this cherished American right and privilege, and I urge my colleagues to vote for it.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MANN). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 19 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Heavenly Father, we pray Your intervention on behalf of the children of Ukraine, Israel, Gaza, and all other places around the world who find themselves caught in the snares of war, trapped in conflict zones, the innocent casualties of our warfare.

God, how is it that the most vulnerable among us have become the targets of indiscriminate yet deliberate bombing? Holy Lord, how has humanity let its sense of justice erode to the point where even children's hospitals become targets? When did it become commonplace that babies and toddlers are made victims of vengeful kidnapping?

It is clear that Your kingdom alone is the place of safety and spiritual sanctuary for our children. Lord, let Your kingdom come, Your will be done here in this broken world.

Silence our guns and still the weapons which threaten the heritage our children long to receive from our hands.

See that we do not despise any of these little ones but reveal to us the road to peace, that once again we would provide a future for these children that is free from fear, danger, and sadness.

Into the protection of Your everlasting arms we place our children this day. May the strength of Your name be their hope and salvation.

Amen.