

October 7 didn't just impact Jews living in Israel. It impacted Jews around the world, especially here at home. While anti-Semitism was already on the rise after October 7, Jewish hate exploded, reaching record levels of anti-Semitic incidents in the United States.

According to ADL, since it first started tracking incidents of anti-Semitic harassment, vandalism, and assault in the United States in 1979, this past year resulted in the highest number of anti-Semitic incidents on record.

The American Jewish Committee found that two-thirds of American Jews say the status of Jews in the U.S. is less secure compared to 1 year ago, and 62 percent of American Jews report facing anti-Semitism online or on social media in the past 12 months.

This is unacceptable. Anti-Semitism doesn't just threaten Jews. It is an attack on the very foundations of our society, pluralism, religious freedom, and equal rights, endangering all of us.

I am so grateful for President Biden and Vice President HARRIS' moral clarity and leadership in combating anti-Semitism.

In May 2023, their administration took the unprecedented step to release the U.S.' first ever whole-of-society National Strategy to Counter Anti-Semitism.

We must combat this hatred, and I urge all of my colleagues to call out anti-Semitism no matter where it comes from.

Lastly, I have a plea for my colleagues: When you are home in your districts, please check in on your Jewish friends and neighbors.

We are not okay. Local Jewish organizations are planning events around the October 7 anniversary, so I implore you to reach out and show up for your Jewish neighbors and constituents. Speak out against anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism, which is a form of anti-Semitism.

Together, we will stand up against hate and stand up for Israel.

We will never forget the victims, the hostages, and their families. We must bring them all home now.

"Am Yisrael Chai," "The people of Israel live."

□ 1130

#### FOREST FIRES

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I frequently make speeches trying to have the American people know and understand just what we face, especially in our Western States. Every fire season it is pretty much the same thing.

As you see depicted here, Mr. Speaker, this is just one of many fires we would have in California or Idaho or Oregon or Arizona or Montana. In many of our Western States, this is

just a microcosm of what we see each year.

Mr. Speaker, you see these smoke plumes. Not only does it affect the West, but when you get a really, really large fire in the six digits or one in my district 3 years ago known as the Dixie fire which ended up being just under 1 million acres, that smoke plume actually got up into the jet stream and affected the East Coast where there were low health days declared in places like New York City, Philadelphia, and even in D.C.

We experienced it here on the East Coast from Canadian fires earlier on, which is more proximate here just up north of us in Canada. They are affecting the whole East Coast. Even the West Coast fires can affect here. We need to do a lot more about that.

Here is what some of that damage looks like in the very real world in the communities that are affected. I have had several of my communities just in my district, and that is just one of 435 congressional districts, that are negatively affected.

Mr. Speaker, you have heard about the town of Paradise where 85 people lost their lives, as well as about 90 percent of the town.

It is a picture not unlike this town of Greenville a couple years ago in the Dixie fire, or the town of Canyon Dam right nearby in what is called the North Complex fire near Oroville, California, which devoured most of Berry Creek and Forbestown.

This becomes very real to the people who are proximate to these forests.

The Park fire this year consumed at least 70 to 80 homes.

Mr. Speaker, just to give you a quick recap of the acreage we are talking about, I mentioned the Dixie fire just under 1 million acres; the Park fire this year in my district, 430,000 acres; the Bear fire, also known as the North Complex, burned over 300,000 acres. So you can see we are getting really tired of these big numbers. That is just in my own district. Many other Members of Congress can tell you about that.

We see here that 7.3 million acres cumulatively have burned in the West this year. You could say, well, we are getting into the fall; is it going to get better?

It might start tailing off somewhat here as the temperatures come down with the conditions, but fire season is still going to be upon us through the fall, maybe until the first rain and snow starts to fly.

In places like southern California, it never really ends because they have a drier condition down there. Other States, even in the East, are looking at fire conditions that are going to go well into the fall and early winter.

What does all this mean?

It means treatment. It means treatment of our acres. It means the Forest Service needs to engage much more so. I know they are afraid of the lawsuits that the environmental groups always bring, and they are bound up by NEPA

regulations which study to death things that really don't need to be studied. This is not news here, what we need to do to treat our forests.

It is probably hard to see this poster on TV very well, but this area here that is really dark and burned had no treatment. This area in the middle that is nice and green had thinning, removing some of the trees. We still leave a lot of the trees behind.

The left and the environmental groups would have you believe, and scare you into joining organizations and sending dues, saying they are going to cut every tree from here to Canada. That is not the case. That is not even responsible. Nobody wants to do that. It is thinning.

It also says the term "prescribed fire." Fire is a good tool when used properly in the right conditions and the right timeline, et cetera. That actually makes a good condition, getting rid of a lot of the waste material on the forest floor that builds up over time.

We have been putting fires out for over about 100 years under the "Smoky the Bear" type theme, which is good, but we have replaced what nature used to do in the last 50 years of inaction in our forests, and managing those lands needs to be done.

Of course, down here, Mr. Speaker, you see thinning only, which works pretty well and is at least a positive step, but we need to do all these things that are making the lands more sustainable, so to speak, in a fire situation.

We have overcrowding of trees that compete for less and less water in an arid area or a drought period, or if you want to say climate change.

What are we doing about it during climate change?

We are not doing much. We are letting the trees grow 500 per acre when a good forest is healthy at 50 to 70 adult trees per acre, a thin forest. So we need to use these tools such as prescribed fire.

We can't just say: Oh, we don't want the smoke.

Well, we are getting the smoke anyway. We are getting the smoke at 7 million acres at a time and a situation that is not timed or a good structure for doing so.

Fix Our Forests is a bill we passed yesterday. It is going to be a good tool toward getting started on that, and we have a lot to do.

#### PROJECT 2025

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great concern for the people of New Jersey and the future of our country. Project 2025 puts our healthcare access at risk.

The conservative pledge would impose lifetime caps on Medicaid benefits putting coverage at risk for nearly 1 in 40 New Jerseyans.

It also raises prescription drug costs for almost one-half million residents by eliminating Medicare out-of-pocket limits. Even worse, it would block the government from negotiating lower drug prices, lining the pockets of pharmaceutical companies at the expense of our most vulnerable communities.

The attacks on Medicare and Medicaid would be devastating to Black and low-income people's access to vital healthcare. Black women, especially Black expectant mothers who already are facing among the worst infant and maternal mortality rates in the developed world, would face even worse outcomes.

The criminalization of abortion, tracking of miscarriages and stillbirths, and restrictions on access to Plan B would impinge on the freedom of Black women to make their own decisions and eliminate their healthcare options.

That is not all. Project 2025 would eliminate programs like Head Start which provide critical childcare for over 12,000 children in New Jersey alone.

It would force 167,200 student loan borrowers to pay thousands more each year and dismantle the U.S. Department of Education, cutting vital funding for schools serving low-income students and putting nearly 4,000 New Jersey teachers and their students at risk.

Project 2025 isn't just a political pledge. It is a direct attack on our families, our values, and the future of our country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to stand together against the dangerous assault. Let's get back to work not for the uber-wealthy and mega corporations behind the 2025 agenda, but for the people.

#### SUICIDE PREVENTION

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, in 2023 we lost over 50,000 people to suicide across the country. The year before, more than 1.6 million individuals attempted to take their own lives.

These deaths of despair disproportionately affect some communities more than others. Systemic issues such as generational trauma, racism, economic disparities, and historical oppression have compounded mental health challenges leading to an environment that has been devastating to our Black youth.

For example, between 2007 and 2020, the suicide rate among Black youth ages 10 to 17 increased by 144 percent, and from 2018 to 2022, the suicide rate among Black youth ages 10 to 19 increased by 54 percent while decreasing elsewhere.

Every life lost to suicide is an incomprehensible tragedy, and the heart-breaking truth is that these deaths are so preventable. That is why it is so important that we act. Our choices can make a real difference in people's lives. We have a responsibility, especially here in Congress, to ensure that resources and support are available to people who need help.

In 2019, I chaired the Congressional Black Caucus' Emergency Task Force on Black Youth Suicide and Mental Health. The product of that task force, the Pursuing Equity in Mental Health Act, would provide resources to increase access to mental health care among America's youth, as well as help train a new generation of culturally competent mental health professionals.

Mr. Speaker, no matter your race, your background, or your gender, each one of us wants—no, prays for our children to grow healthy. When we see them struggle, we struggle. When we see they are in pain, we feel that pain deeply. Democrat, Republican, or Independent, it does not matter who you are.

However, it doesn't have to be this way. Children who have access to help can thrive. They have shown an ability to bounce back and become strong, happy, and resilient, and to be active and productive in their communities.

We can create the conditions in which all of our children have a shot at happy and fulfilling lives. All that is required is for us to break through the partisan gridlock. Our children's and grandchildren's lives depend upon it.

#### INVESTIGATING JARED KUSHNER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. ROBERT GARCIA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROBERT GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, in the past 18 months, Republicans have gathered 3.8 million documents and 80 hours of witness testimonies on a baseless inquiry against President Joe Biden, but now that Joe Biden is not running for President, they have ended their political impeachment stunt.

The investigation that we should be focusing on is Jared Kushner and his \$2 billion from the Saudis, just months after leaving the Trump White House. New reporting today from The New York Times has noted that Jared Kushner collected \$112 million in fees but hasn't made a single dime for the Saudis through this fund. We don't know if the Saudis expected profits or if they just wanted to reward Jared for his service.

This \$2 billion payment for this investment fund represents the reward of sitting next to former President Trump and pushing for pro-Saudi policies.

During his time in the White House, Mr. Kushner consistently ignored the recommendations of top foreign policy experts at the State Department and even ignored the warnings of Trump's own Secretary of State.

These conflicts of interest and the national security threats are obvious, but House Republicans are not interested in uncovering the truth about Kushner's actions or the suspicious actions of the Saudi Government and other foreign governments.

While the Senate is beginning to finally move on this investigation, the House has done nothing.

Mr. Speaker, we can no longer wait to hold the Kushners accountable for their shady dealings. Our democracy is not for sale, and we need to ask ourselves the question: Why did Jared Kushner receive \$2 billion for an investment fund just months after leaving the White House?

The American people deserve answers, and we should never stop until we get them.

#### LITTLE VILLAGE ARCH

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

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, this Hispanic Heritage Month, I rise to celebrate the iconic landmark in my district, the "Little Village Arch," "el Arco de La Villita."

Since 1990, the arch has become the gateway to the largest Mexican community in the Midwest. It is a symbol of economic, cultural, and social contributions of Mexicans and Mexican Americans in the city and the region. It is a reminder to younger generations to be proud of their roots.

The arch is located on West 26th Street, a commercial corridor which is also the second highest revenue generator in Chicago, with businesses predominantly owned by Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants.

As an alderman in 1987, I had the vision of a marker that would celebrate the growing Mexican population in the city and foster community pride. I wanted a monument modeled after Mexican architecture, something that would make 26th Street stand out.

I got to work and secured the funds with the support of numerous community members, small business owners, and the Little Village Chamber of Commerce, and together we began the process to make this dream come true.

The design was commissioned to architect Adrian Lozano, also an immigrant from Mexico, and the contractors who helped build it were Ron Baltierra and Dave Ramirez, both Vietnam veterans. All of them poured their hearts and souls into the design and construction of the arch.

The Little Village Arch has become the heart of the Mexican community in the Midwest. People come from all over the U.S. to visit it. The annual Mexican Independence Day Parade that just celebrated its 53rd year kicks off from the arch.

Two years ago the city council officially approved the landmark status for the arch, thus beginning the much-needed restoration process. I am proud to say that the clock that hangs on the arch, a gift from the Mexican Government, was successfully restored by the original makers, Relojes Centenario, the oldest clockmakers in Mexico.

It is an honor and pride to be part of the origin story of the arch. Mr. Speaker, when you come to my neighborhood, I will take you to the arch and say: "Welcome to the Little Village," "Bienvenidos a La Villita."