

All of us support upholding international law because it protects our country, but it protects the rule of law in making sure that war crimes are not being committed.

Mr. Chair, I really urge my colleagues to understand we need to be consistent here. If you are going to say we are going to go after universities—because I know what this is really about. Is this really about China and Russia and protecting our interests, or is this really about trying to not protect certain people for speaking up in regard to what is happening in Gaza?

The attack on higher education right now and freedom of speech is incredibly dangerous. The right to dissent in our country, the freedom of speech, First Amendment—you do not have to agree. I was on my campus when I didn't agree with what people said about immigrants and what people said about other countries. I understood the American value of people having their rights and their First Amendment right to speak up.

What we are doing here is attacking and targeting universities because we don't like that their student body read about the atrocities that the Government of Israel is doing. That is what this is about. I think people need to be honest what this is about and not shy around about it.

I will say the international court system that is in place was created because of some horrific history that has happened in our world, and we are trying to prevent it. For us to now say it is illegitimate is wrong, and it is not the direction we should be going in. This is literally the place, again, that is investigating a number of other countries for egregious war crimes and egregious violence on women and children.

Now, because we don't agree that they went after one country—again, many of my colleagues disagree with me—I can tell you it takes a lot of investigation, talking to doctors, nurses, so many people on the ground, NGOs and other international organizations that led to, again, the investigation that has led into International Criminal Court.

Mr. Chair, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Michigan has 30 seconds remaining.

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Chair, in closing, I think it is important to know right now the International Court of Justice is investigating Congo, Uganda, Philippines, Venezuela, and Sudan. These are countries that have been under investigation by the International Criminal Court.

I don't have all the details, but it I think it is important to understand we can't delegitimize when it is a country that we disagree is committing these crimes. The process is there for a reason, Mr. Chair. Again, it is to make sure we uphold international human rights laws, no matter who is committing those egregious crimes.

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

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Chair, I appreciate the concern and the passion of

my colleague from Michigan. I concur that I and sponsors and cosponsors of this bill believe in First Amendment liberties and freedom of expression.

This bill is about specific concerns, not all of the countries of the world. I am not sure if my colleague was here during the debate to hear the actual statistics of the dollars that have been invested by malign actors, countries of concern, in this country that don't compare with any other that was in the list that my colleague read.

Again, this amendment on this bill, outside of the specifics of the bill, is designed to attack Israel for daring to defend itself from terrorists, which they did. This amendment has no place in the bill.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. TLAIB).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan will be postponed.

The Acting CHAIR. The Chair understands that amendment No. 7 will not be offered.

□ 1600

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Chair, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to. Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania) having assumed the chair, Mr. AMODEI, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1048) to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to strengthen disclosure requirements relating to foreign gifts and contracts, to prohibit contracts between institutions of higher education and certain foreign entities and countries of concern, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

FROZEN FOOD

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Frozen Food Month and recognize the vital role that frozen foods play in American households. Frozen food is more than just a convenient option. It is a solution to food waste and a way to save families hundreds of dollars.

Studies show that frozen produce is less likely to be wasted compared to fresh produce that spoils over time, giving consumers access to affordable, nutritious food year-around.

By freezing food at its peak, we preserve both the flavor and nutrients, making it a smart choice for families

looking to eat well while managing their budgets.

For millions of Americans, especially those facing time constraints, frozen food offers an affordable, easy way to enjoy balanced meals. Nearly every American household relies on frozen foods, whether it is vegetables, fruits, breakfast items, or even complete meals.

This March, let's take a moment to recognize the hard work of our Nation's frozen food producers and the critical role that frozen foods play in keeping America nourished.

FEEDING OUR CHILDREN

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

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, at a time when food prices are rising and it is harder for families to make ends meet, we should not be cutting food assistance programs, but that is exactly what is happening. Earlier this month the administration announced a billion-dollar cut to local purchasing for schools and food banks.

Local farms who rely on these programs for consistent purchases of their food no longer have an important market, and it means that locally grown, more nutritious food is no longer available for food banks and schools.

Just yesterday, USDA announced that it was ending part of the Farm to School Program. This program for years incentivized local food procurement for school meals. Dozens of schools in Westchester and the Bronx rely on these programs as a way to provide healthy food to students. Similarly, Feeding Westchester and City Harvest do yeoman's work to provide food for families and kids in need at the best value. If fresh food is no longer available, our community will suffer.

These cuts must be reversed and quickly. Time is of the essence when it comes to our children having enough to eat.

ECONOMIC POPULISM

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mr. DELUZIO of Pennsylvania was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.)

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DELUZIO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection. Mr. DELUZIO. Mr. Speaker, I am honored and proud to represent the people of Pennsylvania, good, hard-working, patriotic people who are pretty frustrated. We are not living in normal times.

This should not be a normal run-of-the-mill Special Order hour. What I

will convene today, my colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle, who you will hear from, these are people who know how to fight for their people. They know how to win. They are not shy or afraid about a righteous fight. They are Members of Congress in this Chamber from across the country, across the ideological spectrum, and may not agree on everything. Certainly we don't, but we agree that too many in our party have lost their way, and it is time to wake the heck up.

Now, don't misunderstand me. This administration and those helping them are wreaking havoc on so much of our country. We see Social Security, and Social Security Administration workers' abilities to deliver the hard-earned benefits that seniors have worked their whole lives for, under attack. We see VA employees on the chopping block, fired, contracts scrutinized and then cut. We see the promise of this country to care for veterans betrayed. We see cancer research, lifesaving medicine trials, and clinical trials interfered with, threatened, with funding on the chopping block.

The American people are mad. They should be mad. This administration's approval ratings are in free fall. The American people are rejecting much of what we see, but too many of our side of the aisle aren't giving a strong enough alternative, a bold enough alternative.

While the President's numbers may be in free fall, we also see favorability of the Democratic Party at record lows, the lowest CNN has seen since 1992. There has not been a strong enough vision from Democrats on this side of the aisle when we have something to say.

Our party needs to change, and economic populism and patriotism should be where we go, standing up for people to revive the American Dream.

Democrats should be fighting hard against corruption and the giant corporations who fund so much of that. We should be fighting against anyone else, any force, any company, you name it, that has made life a rip-off for our people.

Folks are mad and they should be. It is justifiable anger. The American Dream is gone for too many people, people who work hard, who play by the rules, and yet can't catch a break, who see life as too expensive.

People are right. The American people understand our economy has been rigged against so many. I say the American Dream hasn't slipped away; it has been ripped away.

I am 40 years old. My generation and those younger than me, the first generation in a long time, since World War II, have grown up and don't expect to be better off than their parents.

That is what the American Dream is all about. It didn't just happen on accident. There are villains here. Corporate power and corruption have been eating away at the American Dream.

Hedge funds, speculators buying up houses, jacking up the cost of that

housing are becoming lousy landlords, pricing people out of what could be a nest egg for their retirement, their home.

Monopolies are jacking up prices and killing small businesses every chance they can get. Pharmacy benefit managers, or PBMs, are raising the cost of medicine and killing local pharmacies. The list goes on and on.

This President and others on the other side have capitalized on this anger and used it to get power, now lift up their efforts to let robber barons plunder this government, to attack the fundamental bargain with our seniors and veterans and so many others.

Democrats need to wake up and stop defending elites and the establishment. They have failed the American people. Across both parties, those who have been in power have failed at the fundamental task of protecting and strengthening the American Dream.

Today, a group of us are coming forward, coming to the floor, proposing a new way ahead for Democrats, a new way ahead for this country. We need a fighting spirit of economic populism. It is patriotic. We need this patriotism to be at the heart of this fight and our fight against corruption and anyone else that is in the way of our people and who has wrecked the American Dream.

What does this mean, this economic populism? In a sentence, it is fighting for a life that people can afford. It is bringing corporate power to heel. It is taking on the corruption that pervades this town, Washington.

The economy and what life costs people should never be an afterthought for anyone who serves in a chamber like this. It ought to put the people who work their butts off front and center of what our government does and who we think about every day and every action. It is fighting for a life that people can afford, and it is bringing corporate power to heel.

As we know, out-of-control corporate power leads to higher costs, it leads to worse safety, and it leads to lower quality. We see it play out across so much of our economy. It has weakened our defense industrial base, and, thus, it has weakened our military. It has hurt small businesses across Main Streets all over our districts. It has crushed workers. It has led to rising costs that we all live with. We should take on corruption no matter where we see it, no matter the party.

The last thing that we need is a bunch of wimps looking for a win-win every time. Not every fight is going to have a win-win.

There are villains in this story, in this society of ours, who have made life miserable for so many. You can call them robber barons or you can call them oligarchs, whatever you want. We have got to be willing to take them on.

This embrace of economic populism might sound and look different depending on where in the country or who the messenger is. For me, I am a Navy guy.

I served at sea. I served in Iraq. To me, this is a patriotic and righteous fight.

I am from western Pennsylvania, the rust belt, a place where we saw the rich and powerful plot to strip us for parts. We are the people who made the steel that built America. We have always answered this country's call. Those efforts to strip us, to wreck our way of life, are no more.

You will hear from Members across the ideological spectrum and Democratic side today who are united in this: The era of a spineless Democratic Party must end. Now is not the time for wimpy concessions and then call it a win-win, not when the American Dream has been killed for so many people in America.

Now is not the time to shy from a fight against corruption. Our people see it, and they know that our government has allowed the economy to be rigged against people.

Those villains, that corruption, want you to think the problem is some woke college kid or some trans kid who wants their liberty, wants their freedom. That is not why your prescription drugs are expensive. It is not why housing is expensive. It is that corruption and those villains who want you thinking that when they are the ones who made life terrible for people.

We know the real root of the problem is corruption and corporate power run amok. Too many have been pathetic at talking about corruption and showing that they are up for this fight.

Some on this side of the aisle have been complicit in helping corporations plunder this country. That should end. We have to be willing to go to the mat for an economy that works for people who work hard, who play by the rules, and who want the American Dream back.

The roots of this party, that I am proud to be a part of, go back to the New Deal. It is a working-class party at its core. Allowing somebody else to fake economic populism and win power is real and dangerous, and we are living through the cost of it right now.

Again, the people you will hear from today work hard and fight hard for their districts. They get this. They are not faking populism, and they know how to win in places where you have got to win. I am proud to start.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, let me just say a thank-you to my colleague from Pennsylvania, who at his roots understands the plight of working Americans, middle-class families, working families, and the vulnerable and stands tall on their behalf and wants to utilize the good offices of this institution to make sure that it does what the Founding Fathers intended it to do, and that is to provide opportunity for people in this Nation. That is what my friend, Congressman DELUZIO, is all about.

One thing about this current administration is clear. They are doing nothing about the cost-of-living crisis in

this Nation, which is getting worse. President Trump said he will fight for the working class, but instead put Elon Musk and billionaires in charge of our government.

I applaud, again, Representative DELUZIO for hosting this Special Order about economic patriotism, taking on corporate power, as well as for all his work supporting the right to organize, creating well-paying union jobs here in America. High prices are devastating the middle class, working class, and the vulnerable.

□ 1615

Since my very first day in the Congress, I have been focused on lowering the cost of living for Americans who struggle to get by, and I am appalled by how many families are struggling to afford basics while corporations get bigger, richer, and more influential over our lives than ever.

President Trump, as I said, campaigned on lowering prices and pledged to bring food costs down on day one.

Instead, the opposite has happened. Food costs are rising. His own USDA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, recently reported egg prices could rise 41 percent over the next year. Since taking office, he has done nothing to help families struggling at the grocery checkout.

As a result, big corporations are consolidating, creating monopolies, and making unbelievable profits. Cal-Maine, which controls about one-fifth of the domestic egg market and is the largest producer and distributor of shell eggs in the United States, has reported that its profits through the second quarter of the 2025 fiscal year are 342 percent higher than the same period last year.

Instead of doing anything to address this cost-of-living crisis, the President has stacked his Cabinet with billionaire after billionaire, empowering them to slash the programs American families rely on with no oversight and no disclosures about the conflicts of interest. Elon Musk, the unchecked billionaire leading the efforts to end Social Security as we know it, owes the success of his company to billions in Federal contracts and huge factories in China. Yet he refuses to answer any questions from Congress about his investments.

These issues concern every American. Democrats are standing up for them. We are standing up against the blatant corruption of this administration, the giant corporations padding their profits at the expense of the middle class and the working class. The Republican focus is to rip away programs like Social Security and Medicaid.

The fact is that American families today are living paycheck to paycheck. Some of the biggest corporations in the country are taking advantage of it, all while Americans are paying more for less due to corporate price gouging and shrinkflation while the CEOs of the Na-

tion's largest grocery stores and supermarkets rake in record salaries.

I just came from a congressional hearing of our Democratic Steering and Policy Committee on food prices and food stamps. I listened to the stories of working Americans with families who are hard-pressed and were frightened to death of a \$230 billion cut to the Food Stamp program which would end that lifeline for themselves and for their families.

Last year, the FTC identified that large grocery store chains exploited the product shortages due to the pandemic by raising prices significantly more than needed to cover their added costs, and they have continued to increase their profits.

What is the Republicans' response to this cost-of-living crisis driven by corporate consolidation and power?

Why, it is to give out even more corporate tax cuts, of course, \$4.5 trillion worth of them to be precise, paid for by slashing Medicaid which serves nearly one-third of all Americans.

Enough is enough. It is time for this Congress and it is time for Democrats to act to rein in this habitual price gouging from massive, massive corporations, rein in the unchecked billionaires enriching themselves while Americans suffer, and rein in Republican spending while targeting Social Security and Medicaid.

If the Trump administration continues to prioritize tax cuts for the rich over price cuts for the middle class, then I will continue to stand with my colleagues as we call out their broken promises and fight back against their disastrous policies.

There is another path forward, one which Democrats and Republicans could take together. It is a path of economic patriotism where we take on corporate monopolies and the self-serving billionaires who are squeezing the middle class, the working class, and the vulnerable. It is a path that listens to the American people and protects programs like Medicaid and Social Security while lowering the cost of living through proven policies like the expanded child tax credit which lifted one-half of our children in this Nation out of poverty, lowered the hunger rate, and provided a path forward in economic security for millions of families in the United States.

That is the path that I am taking. It is the path that I know my colleague, Congressman DELUZIO, is taking, and I hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join us in this effort.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for organizing this effort.

Mr. DELUZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Connecticut not just for joining us today but for her long commitment to dignity in work, for fighting for people, for better trade policy, and so much else.

I am honored now to welcome in a colleague from California who has strong Pennsylvania roots.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. KHANNA).

Mr. KHANNA. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative DELUZIO for his leadership and for convening this group and focusing us on an agenda of economic patriotism.

The reality is in this country, and as you know in western Pennsylvania, we have watched industry after industry leave the country for China and Mexico.

Western Pennsylvania won us our freedom. They produced more steel than Japan and Germany combined in World War II, and yet today we have got 4 percent of the world's steel. China has 50 percent of the world's steel.

Aluminum left, paper left, and textiles left. Town after town in this country was hollowed out since 2000, and 90,000 factories have closed. That doesn't just mean jobs leaving. We have all heard the stories of people whose families were destroyed. The reality is that these factories left and people faced suicide. One of the folks in Warren, Ohio, told me 13 people, because of these plant closures, took their lives or faced severe depression. Our country has watched for 50 years. ROSA DELAURO didn't watch. She was speaking out against these bad trade deals.

However, for most of American history in the last 50 years we have watched the hollowing out of these communities, and we watched wealth pile up in districts like mine in Silicon Valley and New York. My district has \$14 trillion of wealth. The income inequality in this country soared.

So one of the things this group wants to do is to renew economic revitalization in advanced manufacturing in these communities and to have a real plan for new semiconductors, new robotics, advanced steel, advanced automobiles, and have new factories and new industry come up.

Now, the President and JD VANCE understood that the country was hollowed out, and they understood that people were angry, legitimately angry, and they understood that the ship of America had a huge hole in it.

The problem is they get here and their plan to solve this is to hand the reins to a number of headstrong billionaires who are libertarians. I have known these folks. I have known Elon for 15 years. I don't know what Elon knows about Johnstown, Pennsylvania, or Farrell, Pennsylvania, or Youngstown. He is going to go out and make deals with the UAE, and they are supercharging the private-sector deals. The problem is that is not going to build the communities that have been hollowed out.

We know what builds communities from Hamilton to Lincoln to FDR. We need a government that says: If you make it in America then we will buy it. That is what we did, by the way, for SpaceX. That is what we did for Intel. That is what we did in World War II. We need a government that says: If you skill the factories here we will help finance it. We need a government that

says that we are going to work to invest in the plumbers, electricians, and machinists so we can actually have a workforce that builds the new factories we need.

We need to say that we are going to have housing in this area to have economic revitalization. We need a national economic development strategy, and Senator Rubio and I actually coauthored a bill on that.

That is not what the White House is doing. Instead, they think that just having these billionaires cut deals with the private sector is going to help the working or middle class. It will help my district. We will make more money with AI. It will help more of the financial and technology elites.

I will tell you what it is not going to do, Mr. Speaker. It is not going to rebuild the communities that have had a raw deal in America.

What economic patriots believe, even though we have different ideologies, is that it is ordinary Americans who built this country and it is working-class Americans and middle-class Americans who built the country. The genius lies not with billionaires and technologists. It lies with hardworking Americans. We are going to build this country back from the bottom up. That is our belief.

I appreciate Representative DELUZIO's leadership on this.

My friend, Fareed Zakaria, had this whole spiel on how manufacturing doesn't matter. I like Fareed usually, but on this he is dead wrong. He cited Japan and Germany as countries that did manufacturing and missed the tech boom. So he said: Well, we should do the tech boom and the finance boom, and we don't need to do manufacturing.

He did cite one country that did a bit of both, China. China did a lot of manufacturing. They took all of our manufacturing. America needs to understand if we are going to innovate, then yes, we should innovate on technology, and yes, we should innovate on finance. However, we also have to have advanced manufacturing in this country to remain the world superpower.

People say comparative advantage, but comparative advantage is you get to choose what your comparative advantage is in, Mr. Speaker. If China had just done comparative advantage, then they would have been growing rice for 30 years. That was their comparative advantage. They said: No, we want to build things.

It is time America realizes we want to be building things and realizes the value of advanced manufacturing. Representative DELUZIO certainly gets it. He is one of the brightest voices in Congress.

I also want to recommend his op-ed. It is the best piece written on trade policy in the last 30 years of any that I have read.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's leadership, and I appreciate his convening this.

Mr. DELUZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California who un-

derstands deeply what we need to do on this economic patriotism. The gentleman understands what it means for manufacturing and what it means for communities who saw these jobs not leave but be taken away. They were taken away by this ideology on Wall Street and the politicians around here who helped them, which says that all that matters is chasing the cheapest labor, the weakest labor rules, and nonexistent environmental rules. They made them citizens of nowhere. They didn't care about this country or the communities and the people who worked hard to make them rich, whether they made the steel or anything else as we did in America.

It is a stain on our story in this country, and, frankly, it is not too patriotic.

Our side of the aisle and our party thinks we ought to be dominating the fight to supercharge American manufacturing and jobs, not peddling this crap of telling industrial workers to go learn to code or something. That is nonsense. Let's invest in the jobs here to make stuff. Let's have a more muscular trade and industrial policy. That is how we get back on the road of economic freedom for people.

Members on both sides of the aisle here, both parties, have long embraced this wrong-for-decades neoliberal disaster of unlimited and free trade. I think it has been a failure of government across the board. We should push back on these lousy trade deals. We trade. We trade with our friends, and we trade with others, but we do it on fair terms.

What is not fair is seeing American workers undercut by governments like Communist China that use the power of the state to dump artificially cheap products on our markets. Let's circumvent our trade rules that let the workers be exploited. We have got to beef up trade enforcement on Communist China and others like them. There have to be meaningful consequences. Let's have tariffs be part of that but let's be smart and strategic.

What we have seen this administration do has been chaotic and reckless. Businesses cannot plan. There is no certainty day to day of what the trade environment will be, and it is absent from any full strategic industrial policy that is the heart of economic patriotism. To make more stuff in America, Mr. Speaker, you have to have a full policy that is centered by workers, industrial policy.

One of my colleagues who gets this idea of economic patriotism deeply is Mr. RYAN. He is a West Point graduate. I won't hold that against him too much. He deeply understands the fight that we need and understands that our core of economic patriotism is what we are all about.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RYAN).

Mr. RYAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Mr. DELUZIO, for his leadership on this and for bringing this group

together to remind us that as Americans who love this country, we need that strong, muscular economic patriotism to serve my constituents in my district, which is the Hudson Valley of New York State, and across this country.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today because I love this country. I believe it is the greatest country in the history of the world. I believe it is worth fighting for, and we must fight for it now.

I also believe when you see something that isn't working, Mr. Speaker, you stand up and you do everything in your power to fix it.

Our country and our party are at a crossroads. It is up to us, the people who have the incredible honor to stand on the floor of the United States House of Representatives in this Chamber, to forge the path forward.

□ 1630

Unlike some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, I won't try to deny the outcome of the election in November 2024.

Too many Americans felt Democrats had become the party of the elites and had stopped meeting people where they are, not understanding the pain that they are feeling in their lives and their families at their kitchen tables when they get up go to work and come home exhausted at night.

Democrats need to learn from their mistakes. This moment is not ideological. It is about who fights for the people and who fights for the elites.

I believe first and foremost that if you are using labels like "moderate" or "progressive," you are missing the entire point. I gave former President Biden hell for failing to secure our border. I think that is a nonpartisan issue. That doesn't make me a moderate. I campaigned with my colleague AOC against big corporations screwing over my constituents and polluting the Hudson River in my district. That doesn't make me a progressive.

If the last election made anything clear, it is high costs and economic pain are first and foremost on our constituents' minds.

Donald Trump promised to help with that. He has not unequivocally. In fact, everything he has done in office has helped his billionaire cronies, who, by the way, gave hundreds of millions of dollars to his campaign at the expense of families like the ones that I represent in my district across the Hudson Valley.

Trump's failure to bring down costs is handing Democrats the answer on a silver platter. Our response cannot stop at Donald Trump who works for the wealthy though, which is true. It must go further.

Donald Trump works for the wealthy, and Democrats work and fight for you, the working class and middle class of this country, the economic patriots of the United States of America.

Just over a year ago, I stood on this very floor and ultimately successfully

called on the CEO of a local utility monopoly in my district which had been screwing over my constituents, robbing them blind, literally emptying their dwindling savings accounts due to a failure of their billing practices. I called on that CEO to resign, and he was held accountable, and he did. That company ultimately paid \$62 million back to my constituents in the form of accountability.

Now, Optum, the healthcare company, which is a subsidiary of UnitedHealth Group, the single largest health insurer in our country and really one of only three companies in the United States of America that controls the entire healthcare market has been buying up medical practices across my district.

Just a few weeks ago, I launched a community inquiry. Thousands of my constituents and my neighbors and friends who have been hurt by Optum have responded detailing horrific stories of declining healthcare quality, erroneous billing, and we are continuing to gather this evidence, the voices of the people, the American people, and to ultimately hold this big corporation who has been making record-breaking profits quarter after quarter accountable.

Here is another example. For months, broadcast companies, big telecoms in New York were in a deadlock fight over streaming rights that left over a million New Yorkers, paying customers, staring at blank screens trying to watch sports games to take their mind off of all the pressures in their lives. Knicks fans and Rangers fans who paid couldn't see games. As one of those fans, I was mad as hell that I had paid and couldn't watch a game while a multibillion-dollar corporation kept raking in more profits and didn't seem to care at all about their paying customers.

Thankfully, under pressure, that blackout has ended, and we are now demanding Optimum, the telecom, the main perpetrator of this, pay back the customers who were harmed.

I have also introduced something called the Stop Sports Blackout Act so if this ever happens again, there won't be a question that a company has to pay and give customers the refunds for games they couldn't watch.

Whether in their utility bills, their healthcare bills, or just trying to watch a sports game, that is putting money back in people's pockets when pressure is so high, and that matters.

In closing, there is so much power now in the voices of our communities, but only if we, their elected Representatives, listen and act and elevate it. That is economic patriotism.

I am proud that as a Democrat our party stands with law enforcement and police officers, stands with small businesses, stands with veterans, stands with hardworking families, with nurses, teachers, and truck drivers. Democrats stand with our constituents, whether they voted for us or not,

and, yes, we stand against Donald Trump and his harmful policies, but we stand for so, so much more.

A group of patriots unyielding and unwavering in their dedication to fighting for the people and against anyone who would do them harm, that is the Democratic Party that I am proud to be a part of, and that is our path out of this moment.

Mr. DELUZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York for his fight and his stiff spine in this.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. MAGAZINER), who knows how to take on a good fight and win one.

Mr. MAGAZINER. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. DELUZIO for bringing us together and helping us have an important conversation about how we restore the mantle of fighting for working people.

I was born and raised in the most patriotic town in the country, Bristol, Rhode Island. We have the oldest and longest running Fourth of July celebration in the country. I learned from a young age to be patriotic, but I also learned that patriotism is not just about parades and parties and barbecues, it is about believing in a country where anything is possible for those who are willing to work hard. I know that because it is my family's story.

At the turn of the last century, my mother's family came to America from Ireland and Poland. My grandfather fought in the Pacific then came home and worked in a factory that made airplane parts. His wife, my grandmother, worked in a department store. Their jobs weren't glamorous. They weren't anything special, but they earned enough to buy a house, to raise four kids, and to build a stable, middle-class life.

My father's side of the family had a similar story. They came from Eastern Europe and settled in New York City. My great-grandfather got involved in labor organizing, and my grandfather was a bookkeeper at a company that sold fruit.

They all came of age during the New Deal era, and they voted Democrat because they knew that the Democratic Party had the backs of working people.

Then my parents met, and they started a small business together. They were successful, and now here I am in the United States Congress thanks to the hard work of the generations that came before me.

Today, in Rhode Island, I meet working people every day who remind me of my grandparents: factory workers, house cleaners, nurses, kitchen workers. They are grinding out a living, believing that if they work hard and do the right thing that better days lie ahead.

The more I hear from the working people I represent, they are frustrated with politics. They don't think either party represents them. They are working harder than ever and are having a

hard time paying their bills. They certainly can't afford to save money.

They see billionaires on Wall Street and in Silicon Valley get richer while they can't afford everything on their grocery list. They see Elon Musk, the richest man in the world, gleefully cutting services for seniors and veterans while Donald Trump pushes yet another tax cut for the very rich.

They see a Republican Party hell-bent on taking away people's healthcare and a Democratic Party that means well but tries to be all things to all people and too often fails to deliver.

Our grandparents knew a Democratic Party that not only had good intentions but that knew how to get things done. The working people I represent don't want a handout, but they do expect a level playing field and a fair shot, and they want a Democratic Party with a real plan.

What does that look like? It looks like making billionaires like Elon Musk pay their fair share so that we can give tax relief to the middle class. It looks like passing the PRO Act so that workers in retail and fast food can join a union and earn a ticket to the middle class like my grandfather did in his factory. It looks like universal preschool and affordable childcare, not just because it is good for kids, but because it helps parents work and build their savings. It means passing my bill to guarantee 10 days of paid vacation for all workers because Americans work hard, and they deserve to take some time off every once in a while and enjoy their lives without losing their jobs or their income.

For too long the system in this town has been rigged for the wealthy and well-connected, but that does not have to be our future. There is a new generation rising, people who are tired of being left behind and are ready for something better.

We don't need the Democratic Party to be all things to all people. We just need to reclaim our position as the party for working people. That work begins now, and I thank my colleagues who are here tonight who get it. I thank Representative DELUZIO for bringing us together. I am ready to roll up my sleeves alongside of you.

Mr. DELUZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Rhode Island for his comments. He gets it, and this is not some hypothetical problem. We are living through the cost of losing and what it is to see the chaos and harm that comes from it. The Democratic Party has to do better.

I am honored to introduce a colleague from the other side of the country who has been a bulldog in the fight against monopolies and so much else, a former chair of the Progressive Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL).

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for leading this conversation about how we can stand up

for our people and unrig the economy. That is economic patriotism.

I want to be very clear. Our economy has been rigged by giant corporations and the wealthiest for way too long, and as these corporations consolidate more power, the rich get richer, and everyone else is just struggling to get by just on the basics. They need groceries, housing, healthcare, basic medications.

Private insurance companies are now buying up your local healthcare clinics and doctors' offices. In my home State of Washington, a handful of healthcare systems control 90 percent of hospital beds. What does that mean? It means that people are seeing their costs triple while the quality of care goes down all so that Big Pharma and corporate CEOs can pad their already overflowing pockets.

Mergers are pushing independent grocery stores out of business. Today, just a few supermarket chains control all of the grocery stores in the country. Albertsons and Kroger, two of the big grocery chains, actually tried to merge, and I was so proud to lead the amicus brief with other Members of Congress to actually oppose that merger. Thanks to Democrats and the FTC under Lina Khan, we were able to stop that merger because we know and we have seen that when these mergers happen, corporations shut down stores, they fire workers, and they raise prices.

Look at the housing market. When rents are sky high and there literally is not a single place in the country where someone can afford rent on minimum wage, private equity is coming in to buy up the apartments and colluding to drive up the rents so it is even more unaffordable to keep a roof over your head.

It wasn't always this way.

From World War II to the late 1970s, we actually rigorously enforced our antitrust laws to ensure that mom-and-pop businesses had a chance to compete against these megacompanies. Consumers had choices, and workers had good jobs. You know what? Our economy actually grew.

Starting with Republican President Ronald Reagan, that antitrust enforcement dwindled down, and large corporations took over. Today, income and wealth inequality are higher than they have been in a century.

Mr. Speaker, 2 months into the Trump administration, wages are still low, and prices are still high. It does not need to be this way. In the richest country in the world we do not suffer from scarcity, we suffer from greed, and we have to be willing to take that on. We must take on corporate power and corruption and make a meaningful difference in the everyday lives of working people.

We have to lower prices so that everyone can have a roof over their heads, put food on their table, send their kids for an education, and retire with dignity. We have to have living wages for every worker, and we have to

tax the billionaires so that they just pay a little bit more of their fair share like everyone else is doing.

We can and have to break up the largest corporations so they can't keep screwing regular people. We have got to stand up and fight back against corruption, against greed, against consolidation, and for the American people to have that American Dream.

That is economic patriotism. That is what we are going to fight for, and I am so grateful to my colleague from Pennsylvania for making sure we put that out there.

Mr. DELUZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Washington for her remarks. She is spot on.

I am reminded of a quote from President Franklin Roosevelt who faced the same kind of complaints from then who he called the economic royalists. We can call them robber barons, oligarchs, you name it. They complained and said that FDR was trying to overthrow the institutions of America. President Roosevelt said: "What they really complain of is that we seek to take away their power. Our allegiance to American institutions requires the overthrow of this kind of power." Here we are again.

I think we can no longer allow anyone over here to play footsies with the corporate overlords and robber barons who have their heels on the necks of the American people. We need to restore competition and break the monopolies.

My colleague from the Granite State gets this, having worked in the Justice Department to take on monopolies. She has been in the trenches in the fight against this kind of corporate power run amok.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. GOODLANDER).

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Ms. GOODLANDER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Pennsylvania (Mr. DELUZIO) for bringing us together this afternoon.

Economic patriotism—we are coming from all across the country. We are coming from different backgrounds with different ideas, but we are united by things that are really powerful. We are united by a love of our country, by a belief in our country, and by a belief fundamentally in the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I was born and raised in the greatest State in the Nation, the State of New Hampshire, the State that made the Nation. We were the ninth to ratify the Constitution.

I was born and raised down the road from the family farm that my great-grandfather built when he came to this country. He was 16 years old. He didn't speak a word of English, but he believed in the American Dream. He raised my grandfather, Sam, on that farm.

My grandfather, Sam, was an economic patriot. He really believed that your word is your bond. He believed

that hustle was the name of the game. He milked cows, bailed hay, and got his start as a businessman selling airplane rides at the Nashua Airport. His slogan was: "A \$1 million thrill for a \$1 bill."

He went on to become a door-to-door salesman for Electrolux vacuum cleaners. He worked hard because he believed in the American Dream. He was a lifelong Republican who loved one of our great Presidents with his whole heart, I think maybe the greatest economic patriot we have seen in the White House, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

I was reminded today of a great speech that President Roosevelt gave 81 years ago. "The Economic Bill of Rights," it has been called. He talked about economic rights that are self-evident, but, as with all self-evident rights that we know in this great document, our Constitution, they aren't self-executing.

I want to focus for a moment on one of the rights that President Roosevelt talked about. He said that there is a right of every businessman—businesswoman, too—large and small, to trade in an atmosphere of freedom from unfair competition and domination by monopolies at home or abroad.

It has been said on the floor of this House and on the floor of the United States Senate that monopolies are inconsistent with our form of government. It is true.

The antimonopoly spirit is as old as America. It is rooted in the simple idea that power has to be checked. Just like political power, economic power has to be checked, too, but the fact is that big corporations and monopolies have too much power in America today. I see it everywhere I go.

I come to Congress having worked in the Department of Justice in the Antitrust Division. It is a division full of patriotic men and women, many of them nonpartisan, who come to this work with the basic belief in this country and in the power that must be checked by government.

What do we mean? What kind of power are we checking?

Every day on this job, as I have traveled around the State of New Hampshire, I hear about how big agricultural corporations are screwing family farmers like the family farm I grew up down the road from. I hear about big health insurers who are charging people more for less, big health insurers who are rolling up the entire industry, from providers to hospital beds and to the prescription drugs that people rely on for their lives. I hear about big tech companies that are using your valuable data for their own gain. The list goes on.

As we look across our consolidated economy, we see that corporate power has reached its apex in industries big and small, from door locks to the defense industrial base.

We have always found common ground in this country around the basic idea that, just like political

power has to be checked, economic power has to be checked, too.

Mr. Speaker, I am so grateful to my colleague from Pennsylvania (Mr. DELUZIO) for bringing us together today.

Our antitrust laws are alive and well, but they could use an update, and I look forward to working with everyone here today and in the days ahead to make that dream a reality because it is core to the American Dream.

Mr. DELUZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. GOODLANDER) for her comments.

Mr. Speaker, this corporate power we feel in so much of our economy is also what we feel corrupts this place, our Nation's Capital.

We see it with the unlimited money that runs through our elections, unlimited super-PAC spending that corporations can dump in to buy the favors that they get from politicians.

The people who we represent—Democrat, Republican, Independent, you name it—hate this corruption. They see it. They smell it. They know it is crooked.

It is why you have pharmacy benefit managers extracting profits on the backs of people's medicine, killing pharmacies.

It is why you can't even fix your own stuff and why we even have to fight for the right to repair. What can be more American than the idea that you can fix your own stuff, whether it is a tractor, a car, an ice cream machine, you name it? This right to repair goes to the heart of this.

It is why you see housing costs out of control, with Wall Street buying up housing and then buying influence down here.

It is also why you see the obscene practice of people getting rich in Congress, trading stock on information that they may learn in their job serving the people in Congress. It is corrupt. We ought to end it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield now to a colleague of mine who gets this fight against corruption, who has organized workers, and who leads the Congressional Progressive Caucus, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CASAR).

Mr. CASAR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I am GREG CASAR. I am proud to represent the heart of Texas in the United States Congress and to chair the Congressional Progressive Caucus.

Before all of that, I started my career as a labor organizer, and I saw up close how corporate lobbyists and corrupt politicians would trade campaign contributions for corporate tax breaks and how they would trade lower wages for workers for fatter paychecks for CEOs and their political friends.

They thought that working people could do nothing about this. They thought their workers were too divided to push back. On construction sites, guys who spoke different languages and who came from different places were

pissed off, and they were willing to put their differences aside to come together and fight back, stop the corruption, and demand a fair paycheck.

We didn't win by going on bended knees and begging big corporations for better treatment. We did it by unifying working people around some central ideas that Americans deserve good pay for a full day's work and that taxpayer dollars are meant for the common good, not for corporate welfare.

Those ideas brought workers together to win historic wage increases and better benefits in the heart of Texas. This is what we need today in America. This is what we need the Democratic Party to be all about.

The central goal of the Democratic Party should be to break the unholy alliance between corporate greed and corrupt government. We can't just beg CEOs to please bring down prices. We have to break up the giant monopolies that are screwing over consumers and small businesses alike.

We can't just beg big CEOs to please be nicer to us. No. We have to get big money out of politics so that the ultrarich don't have a bigger say in this country than the everyday person.

We cannot just beg corporations to give people a raise. We have to unionize workplaces and pass laws that protect the American worker and the American worker's wages.

To get there, we have to transform the Democratic Party into a party that fights for working people first no matter what and into a party that is willing to stand up to the powerful special interests that are screwing over working people because, if we love our country, we have to be willing to fight for the people who make it work.

Mr. DELUZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CASAR) for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, if you want to respect hard work, you have to respect the people who do that hard work. That is at the core of this, and respecting the labor movement is so central.

I am from western Pennsylvania, which is sacred ground in that labor movement, where people bled for the right to organize. That fight continues.

Mr. Speaker, I yield now to a colleague from Oregon who gets this, who understands about the dignity of work and fighting for our people, the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOYLE).

Ms. HOYLE of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I am VAL HOYLE, and I represent the central and south coasts of Oregon. I am a proud third-generation union member with a background in sales and international trade, and I came to Congress to fight for working people.

My family's path to the middle class was made possible because of the labor movement. My grandfather emigrated from Ireland and worked as a union laborer building bridges. It was hard work in unsafe conditions. Those conditions are significantly better because of the building trades unions.

My father was a firefighter and became president of his union to fight for

better wages and safer working conditions. The contract that he and his team negotiated while management tried and failed to break his spirit took his members from poverty wages to a family-wage job. IAFF Local 789 is still working under that contract 40 years later.

Mr. Speaker, I grew up going to union halls and picket lines and with my father fighting to elect proworker candidates. Naturally, I became a member of UNITE HERE Local 26 as a union waitress during the AIDS crisis, where fellow union members had the dignity of healthcare and death benefits when they needed them because we belonged to a union. I am proud to say that my son is a Teamster.

I understand what is at stake for the working people of this country and my district because it is my story, too, and I came to Congress to fight for everyday people to have a fair shot, live in dignity, and make a fair wage while they work hard to provide for their families.

That is why I believe in economic populism, which is not just about talking at people. It is about listening to them and truly representing them. The fact is that workers feel left behind and that the two-party system doesn't represent them.

Republicans have tied in with billionaires and restricted the rights of workers to organize and have union representation wherever possible while they are telling them that their enemy is their neighbor.

Too many Democrats show up on a job site seemingly from a sense of noble obligation with wonky academic explanations about why everything is fine, even when everyday Americans can't make ends meet. I had an operating engineer tell me last week that he thinks that both parties are pissing on his leg and telling him that it is raining.

We have to understand that working people do not want a handout. They want a good job, a pathway to the middle class, and a comfortable retirement. Those opportunities have slipped away for too many people.

When people tell us that they are struggling to afford prescription medications, we can't turn around and tell them that they are wrong. We need to listen to them and hold Big Pharma accountable.

When people tell us that they see government as overly bureaucratic and complex, we can't dismiss that experience and say that it is all fine. We need to ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent responsibly.

Of course, addressing waste, fraud, and abuse is important. We also need to make sure that our veterans, our seniors, and the most vulnerable among us receive the benefits that they have earned and not break government under the guise of efficiency.

Democrats are the party that champion and protect the things that working people rely on, like the Affordable

Care Act, Social Security, stronger unions and workplace protections, the 40-hour workweek, overtime pay, public education, and strong consumer protections. However, we need more Democrats whose filter for what they do in Congress is: Will this help working people, as opposed to giving lip-service in some disconnected way?

We should all be fighting hard against corruption and for a real path to the middle class. Young people want to be able to work one job and afford to buy a home and raise a family, and that is not the reality for too many Americans.

That is what Democrats should stand for and be working for every day. Our party must embrace economic populism and fight to revive the American Dream, standing up for working people and giving them a chance to succeed.

Mr. DELUZIO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOYLE) for her comments.

Tonight, we have heard from Members from my side of the party, Democrats from across the country representing a lot of different districts, but we are all speaking out on ways that we are fighting corruption and the excess of corporate power and the ways that the Democratic Party ought to move forward, not for Democrats but for everyone in this country.

I thank my colleagues for joining me here today to say loud and clear that things need to change. Economic populism and patriotism ought to be where we go, standing up for our people, without apology, to revive the American Dream.

Mr. Speaker, I have the honor of representing a battleground, competitive district in western Pennsylvania. In my time here in Congress, I have been dead set on lowering costs, battling corruption, and confronting corporate power. That means promoting competition and taking on monopolies, giving small businesses a shot to compete, and fighting against these lousy trade deals that stripped communities for parts. It means making more stuff in America, cracking down on junk fees and price gouging, and standing up without apology for the union way of life.

These are economic priorities to bring down costs, and they are good policies. The American people support them. We know that.

Everybody hates getting ripped off. Everybody hates working hard yet still not seeing a life that you can succeed in.

If you want American capitalism to succeed, you have to have competition in our economy. There is a tendency by some in politics to try to please everybody. You should take pride in when they get the bad guys—the villains who are screwing over your people are your enemy—it means you are doing something right.

I am sick and tired of folks in Washington or the think tanks or wherever else looking for a win-win when there

is a villain hurting our people. If a railroad sends a toxic fireball into the sky over your community, you don't look for a win-win. You fight them for your people. When PBMs are killing pharmacies and jacking up drug costs, you fight them.

□ 1700

Sometimes, there is a bad guy. There is not a win-win because our way of life is on the line. Our safety is at risk. We have to stand up for our people. You don't cower like wimps. You don't go beg for donations from the people hurting yours.

The goal is simple and popular here. It is to make life better and less of a rip-off and to take on the corporate power and corruption that is hurting people. That is the path back to the American Dream.

This is our vision of economic patriotism and populism, and it is a winning one. It is one that can resonate from the Rust Belt to the Sun Belt and everywhere in between in this great country.

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

TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT MATH

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mr. SCHWEIKERT of Arizona was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.)

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, this one is going to be a little thick, so put on your economics hat, and let's have a ride here.

On Friday, the Congressional Budget Office responded to a request I made in my capacity as chairman of the Joint Economic Committee. I was trying to get an answer to whether the economists' projections from the Joint Economic Committee are correct. You have to understand that there is actually a weird little battle going on here between the Senate and those of us in the House and those of us on Ways and Means.

A number of our brothers and sisters over in the house of lords have decided that we have current tax policy from the 2017 TCJA, the tax reform, which I was on the committee and was one of the people who helped author that, but they expire at the end of this year. They want to play this game and say that we are just going to pretend that there is no cost, that the law is not the law, that the policy is the law. This is when you hear people say, current policy baseline, just do it.

We have been trying to do the math. The Congressional Budget Office, a couple of months ago, actually did a projection saying that if we want to maximize economic growth over the next 10 years, what you do is extend those tax cuts but pay for them. The basic idea is that by paying for them, you don't have government gobbling up the capital stack that is used to finance growth, to finance business, to

finance when you want to buy a truck or a new home or your business wants to expand.

We got an updated letter from the Congressional Budget Office. Apparently, it didn't make me particularly popular with a few people, which actually provides me a perverse joy. If you read it, in the 30-year window, it looks like if we do all this without an attempt to pay for, if we drive up interest rates by 1 percent, in the 30-year window, it looks like you break CBO's budgetary model because you hit 250 percent of debt to GDP.

If I am reading one of the paragraphs here correctly, they are basically saying our computer model doesn't go beyond 250 percent. The point is, you have a government that—here is our baseline. Let's see if I can make this make sense. At the end of this fiscal year, \$37.2 trillion is going to be the country's debt. Over the next 10 years, we are expected to borrow an additional \$22 trillion.

On top of that, if you play with these folks that say we don't really need to pay for things, just keep it going, that is about another \$5 trillion, \$5.5 trillion, another \$1.3 trillion in interest. Then, if we were to be able to make the President's wish list without finding offsets or modernizations—and I am going to walk through a whole series of things where it is not cuts. It is modernization, legalizing the technology that disrupts the costs that makes our society better, happier, more efficient. If you were to do all those things without an attempt to pay for them, without an attempt to adopt policy to modernize the way we deliver services, in the previous 240 years, we borrowed about \$28 trillion from the public. That is from investors around the world, from your pension system, from everything. It would mean, over the next 10 years, it pretty much would double. We are going to double it or come close to doubling it in the next 10 years.

That is the perversity of what you have going on around here, yet the people coming behind these microphones keep having a wish list and want more stuff and more stuff. The people walking through our hallways here are in our offices demanding more stuff. They want more carve-outs in the tax code, barriers to entry to their competition, or just another check.

I am going to walk through just how dangerous the game we are playing right now is because when you look at these charts—this is online. Just go on CBO from last Friday and read it for yourself. It is not a hard read. Why are my brothers and sisters so terrified to tell the truth to the public?

You have a country—I am going to show the charts—that in about 7.5 years, we have more deaths than births. You have a country that when we get out of the extraordinary measures—remember, right now, we are borrowing from our different funds because we are up against the debt ceiling. We may be borrowing almost \$70,000 every second of every day.