

cost of things now instead of the cost of commercial refrigerators in 2029? I don't know what else to say.

Mr. Speaker, I urge opposition to this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, as we have heard today, the Biden-Harris administration DOE's final rule for commercial refrigeration equipment will have a detrimental impact on small businesses and the consumers. If small businesses thought this was going to benefit their businesses, I guarantee you, Mr. Speaker, as a family business owner, we would invest in it. We would not have to be mandated to invest in it.

This final rule does not even meet the statutory requirements laid out in ECPA for new or amended energy efficiency standards. With a cost of at least \$8 billion, questions surrounding the technological feasibility of the standards and serious food safety concerns cloud this rulemaking.

Simply put, the DOE far exceeded the bounds of its authority with this rule. If Congress does not act, this final regulation will harm small businesses, drive up costs for American families, and put already expensive equipment out of reach for many who need it for their livelihoods.

That is why the following groups are supporting this CRA: The National Association of Food Equipment Manufacturers; NATSO, representing truck stops and travel centers; SIGMA, representing fuel marketers; and National Automatic Merchandizing Association, which includes vending machine operators.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose this.

I just want to be clear. I don't have anything in my family business in any of these businesses, but I will tell you what we look at is do we get a return on investment and can we serve our customers better.

The list I just said, they looked at it and said that if they don't get a return on their investment, then they can't serve their customers better by this rule.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.J. Res. 75 to overturn these unworkable energy standards for commercial refrigeration equipment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. VAN DREW). All time for debate has expired. Pursuant to House Resolution 242, the previous question is ordered on the joint resolution.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the joint resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

— HOOR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

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

There was no objection.

— A REPUBLIC IF WE CAN KEEP IT

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

Mr. TRAN. Mr. Speaker, in 1787, after the Second Continental Congress, Benjamin Franklin was asked: Do we have a monarchy or a republic?

He solemnly replied: a republic, if you can keep it.

For nearly 250 years, those immortal words have lived at the heart of our Republic. Representative democracy is not just something that appears, it doesn't happen by accident, and it isn't maintained by sheer inertia. We have to fight each and every day to maintain it.

I am the child of refugees. My parents came to this country from Communist Vietnam in search of the very freedoms that had been ripped away from them in the country of their birth. I joined the Army when I was 18 years old because I wanted to protect the freedoms that have given me so much.

I fear that this President does not share this same commitment to our Republic. He seems not to care whether we keep it or not, as long as his personal political desires are met. This is a trying time for our Republic, and I invite my Republican colleagues and the rest of America to join me in fighting to keep our Republic.

— RECOGNIZING KENNY CHESNEY ON HIS BIRTHDAY

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

Mr. BURCHETT. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize my friend, the legendary musician, American, and east Tennessean, Kenny Chesney. Today is his birthday, Mr. Speaker, and I can't think of a more fitting birthday present for Kenny than the announcement that he will be inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame.

He was born in Knoxville. Kenny is a graduate of Gibbs High School, which is not a mile from my house, where he

had a storied career in baseball and football. He went on to graduate from East Tennessee State University, Mr. Speaker.

Kenny has cemented himself in American history with his timeless hits. While I know the accolades mean very little to a man of his character, I am going to name a few of them anyway.

Kenny has won four Country Music Association Entertainer of the Year awards. He has had 33 number one hits and has been nominated for multiple Grammys.

I wish Kenny a happy birthday. I congratulate him on his induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame. I thank him for making east Tennessee proud.

I will always remember the first time he won Country Music Entertainer of the Year. He took his momma up on stage. I thought that was pretty cool. His dad, Dave, was a teacher at Bearden Junior High School where I attended. His whole family has just been wonderful to me.

— ADVANCING AMERICA FIRST POLICIES

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, the last few weeks have been nonstop. The Trump administration and congressional Republicans have been advancing legislation and policies that put Americans first.

Just last week President Trump issued an executive order that puts decisions about our students' education back where it belongs, in the hands of parents and the States.

As the father of four young boys, I know firsthand that those closest to educating my children—the teachers, administrators, and special aides—are the ones who know what they need to get ahead academically and succeed.

Data shows that our current educational system is failing our students. Our outcomes are not where they need to be. Reading and math scores are not where they need to be, et cetera.

We have got plenty to focus on with this particular issue. I am right in the thick of it. My wife and I are very much in the thick of it. We could not be more grateful for the support that we have back home with our teachers. It has been probably one of the most positive things in our lives as we see those boys progress.

House Republicans are also continuing to assess our education system

this week by advancing the DETER-RENT Act, to protect our higher education institutions from foreign influence by strengthening gift and contract disclosure requirements and potentially banning contracts from foreign entities of concern.

I applaud MICHAEL BAUMGARTNER, a new freshman out of Washington, for his work on this important bill.

We are also seeking to reverse harmful Biden-era energy regulations on essential home appliances, including refrigerators and freezers. Americans deserve the ability to purchase the appliances that best suit their families' functional and financial needs.

I am grateful to Congresswoman STEPHANIE BICE and Congressman CRAIG GOLDMAN for taking the lead on this issue. I will speak more on these later.

This week, we are seeing great progress in getting our reconciliation package to the next step. The efforts seek to serve Americans better by securing our border, supporting our economy, bolstering domestic energy production, maintaining a pro-family and pro-growth Tax Code, and much, much more.

I thank each Member involved in these critical discussions for their work, and I thank my good friend from California (Mr. LAMALFA) for being here today to kick us off with his message.

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

□ 1445

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. MOORE for leading us in these efforts to help enlighten folks on what we are doing here in Congress to give people more choice, more options, and have goods be more reasonably priced and available for them.

As we are coming out of the Biden administration, we saw a lot of devastation to the economic conditions for families, for homes, for small businesses, et cetera. In Washington, there seems to be an obsession with over-regulation. It does make life harder for everyday Americans.

Under the Biden administration, the energy efficiency standards became weapons of control, driving up costs, limiting choices and strangling economic growth.

Under the antienergy agenda that President Biden had, American families felt the pinch every day, every time they turned on a light, heated their home, powered their appliances, or drove their car. These so-called efficiency standards didn't lower costs, they shifted the burden on to local level wallets and bank accounts.

Back in my home State of California we see the impact firsthand, as these ideas seemed to start there first, between skyrocketing energy bills and blackouts caused by misguided policies. Public safety power shutoffs is what they call them. When the wind is blowing and they haven't trimmed the

trees in the forested areas around the power lines they have to shut off the power rather than doing the work out in the forests that is needed, but that is another issue.

All of this causes families to have to pay more for less reliability in their needs.

This is the future that our Democratic colleagues seem to want for the rest of America, one where energy is not affordable nor dependable. The conversations keep pushing more toward wind and solar, which are fine in and of themselves, but they are a tiny part of the grid. They are not a 24/7 available source of power anyway such as we would get from nuclear energy, hydroelectric, natural gas, or coal. Those can be counted on at any time. You can turn them on and use them at any time. Obviously with the wind or solar you have to wait for the Sun to come up, the clouds to go away, for it to stop raining, or the wind to blow—as long as the wind doesn't blow too hard, which in that case, they have to slow down and shut off the windmill because the wind might spin it off of its hinges.

Washington bureaucrats are now trying to dictate what kind of refrigerator you can have, what kind of stove you can use, and even how long your dishwasher should take to run. Most folks want to see that the dishwasher runs long enough to get things clean and dry; the same with your dryer, the same with your clothes washer. Folks want what it takes to get the job done, not some arbitrary shutdown of when a bureaucrat decides you have used enough energy.

So really it is just limiting options and you being told what is good enough for you, rather than what you actually need.

Californians have already been through a lot of this. We have been forced to live with policies that prioritize these whims of regulators over the needs of families. Indeed, we have seen the elimination of many outdoor tools, gas-powered lawn mowers, weed eaters, leaf blowers, and I will come back to even they are trying to take away generators.

Now, how do you take away a gas- or diesel-powered generator? When the electricity goes off, and you need something to replace that at least temporarily, what do you power that generating vehicle with? It isn't going to be other electricity. Some will argue we need to have batteries with this power saved up. Okay. Well, there are a lot of issues with batteries on what it takes to make them, what do you do with the metals and the materials from a battery that is now no longer useful and it has to be discarded versus just having something that works at the flick of a switch or the pull of a cord. You can start your generator using gasoline or diesel and have great success like you had for generations. They want to take all these options away from us.

Indeed, they do many things to inconvenience families, small businesses,

and they also strangle our economy. It is amazing to go out to Tractor Supply or someplace like that, and they have a whole lineup of those outdoor appliances and they are all electric. It just happened overnight. I don't know how well they are selling or how well people like them, but we have to get to a point where we can overcome these mandates or at least not have them at the Federal level for the other 49 States or whatever amount of States that are not following California as more and more of them seem to want to get toward with California's craziness.

Manufacturers are forced to spend millions trying to comply with these rules changing the dynamics, changing the makeup of how their equipment works.

Take the electric car industry, for example. I remember back in California in about 1990, the California Air Resources Board, known as CARB, pretty famous now, I believe it was 1990 they wanted to mandate that 10 percent of all vehicles by the year 2000 had to be zero-emissions vehicles. At the time, all that would mean is, well, you have to use batteries instead of fuel.

The manufacturers were standing on their heads, the auto manufacturers, trying to figure out how are we going to meet this mandate in 10 years for 10 percent production. You ended up with these basically glorified golf carts with batteries on them using the same old battery technology we had and finding out that you can't just slap a license plate on a golf cart and have a practical vehicle for people. They actually had to relent on that mandate before 2000 occurred, but you still saw these little golf carts running around dealerships with license plates on them pretending to be automobiles that people would buy.

They don't always know by making a mandate—many in those institutions believe that, well, if we force the mandate, then they will come up with the technology. Well, battery technology still hasn't made a quantum leap into the future yet to where it can be such an incredible source and for long extended periods as really the previous generation. They have got more experimental materials. They have different, more exotic materials they are actually using now, but the battery life hasn't extended that much more than what batteries of 20 years ago were doing.

The more we hamstringing the energy production and force businesses to conform with out-of-touch mandates, the more time businesses have to waste on developing technology, which really isn't going to go anywhere. The further refinement of internal combustion engines has so far achieved amazing results with how clean gasoline and diesel engines are running these days. They have put the filtration systems and the fuel additives on there to make a diesel engine run pretty darn clean, so why don't we allow those manufacturers to continue in the direction of

making them even better instead of saying, no, we are going to force you to stop selling gasoline-powered vehicles in California I think by 2030, and you can't sell any new ones and take away diesel-powered trucks.

We are going to run into a real reckoning in California when these mandates kick in and there are no goods to deliver. People expect to take the raw materials from a mine or from a farm or wherever to the mill, to the manufacturer and then bring a finished product to the store shelf and you go pick it up and bring it home. What is taking away these options, it is going to be a real strangle on the economy of California and any other State foolish enough to follow what we do out there.

So it really isn't about saving energy. It seems to be a lot more about controlling what people do, the ideals of putting people in stacked communities and these walkable communities, transit communities instead of letting them live how they would like to or what is needed.

In my rural district I have in northern California, the people that produce things that other people need whether it is timber, and the products that come from timber, wood, lumber, paper, et cetera, that has to come from a rural area. You need rural people living there that can do that, and they need to have the vehicles and the wherewithal and the tools to do it. That all seems to be taken away. Instead, they would rather burn down those forests.

So what kind of choice is that?

People would like to have choices where they can live as well as what we are talking about previously with energy choices and the energy using apparatus choices in those.

Americans deserve a little bit better than a government that prioritizes green ideology over their own quality of life. What you get right down to is that when these choices are taken away you don't really get that much greener of a lifestyle because there is an offset for taking away the power plants that we have. There is an offset of replacing them with solar panels that cover many, many acres, especially of prime ag ground like they are trying to do in central California in some of the richest ag ground anywhere in the world and products there that so many Americans have come to expect that come from California with these amazing vegetable crops, fruit crops, nut crops. Mr. Speaker, 90 to 99 to even 100 percent of those crops are grown in California, and they want to cover those areas with solar panels because those areas have had their water rights and their water taken away because of more green things and more environmental policies that put the needs of fish over the needs of people.

Instead, we need to go in the direction that puts energy policies that would actually lower prices, expand the consumer choices, and create opportunities for American jobs and an Amer-

ican economy and American prosperity and not have the continued stranglehold we saw under the Biden administration.

The work we are doing here along with President Trump is extremely important to bring these things back to the forefront of families having choices in the basics like their appliances, their automobiles, their ability to heat or cool their homes and just enjoy their life.

We will continue, and I look forward to being part of the battle here of pushing back against that out-of-touch agenda, whether you want to call it the Green New Deal or green ideology and move toward a future where families and not bureaucrats get to decide what works best for them.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from California for his message and for his willingness to always be here.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEUSER).

Mr. MEUSER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Utah for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, the United States spends more money per student than any country in the world, yet among developed nations, we sadly rank near the bottom in educational outcomes.

Mr. Speaker, 70 percent of eighth graders, 70 percent, Mr. Speaker, aren't proficient in reading or math according to the latest National Assessment of Educational Progress.

Believe it or not, and it gives me no joy to say this, there are reports that say 54 percent of Americans cannot read at a sixth-grade level. This is not just disappointing; this is indeed a national failure.

At this point, the Department of Education just doesn't need reform, it needs a complete overhaul.

In the last 5 years, the Department of Education has spent over \$1 trillion with no measurable gains. Under President Biden its spending surged over 200 percent from \$71 billion in 2019 to \$268 billion last year.

At the same time, the Biden administration's love of excessive regulations imposed an additional 4.2 million hours of paperwork burdens on schools pulling teachers and administrators away from what matters most—the students.

President Reagan said back in 1982, and President Trump has recently echoed, that we need to turn the schools back to the States and to the local school districts. President Reagan rightly noted that “... the decline and the quality of public education began when Federal aid became Federal interference.”

Fortunately, President Trump and Secretary McMahon are committed to returning control of education back to the States where it belongs and empowering parents, local leaders, and definitely teachers, but putting funding and decisionmaking back in the hands of States is just one piece of the puzzle.

If we truly want to improve student outcomes, we must embrace school choice and voucher programs, something my home State Governor's office in Pennsylvania still refuses to do.

School choice States have flourished. Florida, Indiana, Utah, and Ohio now rank among the best performing K-12 systems in the country. President Trump recognizes the importance of school choice, issuing an executive order directing the Department of Education to guide States on how to use Federal funds for K-12 scholarship programs.

It also instructs the Education Secretary to prioritize school choice when awarding discretionary grants. That is real leadership focused on students, not bureaucracy.

To that end, I am pleased to support H.R. 833, the Educational Choice for Children Act, which offers a Federal tax credit to encourage charitable donations toward scholarships that help families cover K-12 expenses, tuition, books, supplies, and more.

This bill is expected to benefit over 2 million students nationwide, opening the door to better opportunities whether in public, private, religious, or homeschool settings.

Unfortunately, forward-thinking solutions like this are not being considered in my home State of Pennsylvania where there are some families that feel trapped in a system that puts bureaucracy before students.

We cannot allow the status quo to be accepted.

School choice works, Mr. Speaker, and what are these politicians afraid of? I went to a public school, and I had some great teachers. My son went to public high school, and he had some great teachers, but not all of them were.

We need accountability. Parents and children must come first. Reforms are needed, not a year from now, not 5 years from now, but right now. This is critical. We are failing far too many young people.

Education is the foundation of a better life, a stronger economy, and a more advanced society, yet we continue allowing too many students to fall behind.

A child only gets one chance at a quality education. The time for change is now, and thankfully we have a President who puts students, families, and results first. President Trump and his administration will deliver for our students and for their futures.

The executive orders returning education authority to the States not only prioritizes school choice, it also ensures that vital services and benefits continue without disruption during the transition.

That is how we reform education the right way: by empowering parents, protecting students, and putting our educational life and results ahead of regulation.

□ 1500

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the message of the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEUSER). I think it is actually one of the most important things to be focusing on right now.

Mr. Speaker, I take a lot of questions from folks back home. Utah is a State that hits above their weight in academic outcomes. We have large families. This is a big, big deal for us.

The confusion of why would you dismantle the Department of Education, I will make sure I do my part, and I have spoken about this to a lot of constituents back home. One of the key aspects and the things that are important under title I is making sure that we have underfunded communities well represented.

My son is on an IEP. He is a 9-year-old in the third grade. He is on a specialized education plan that meets his needs. My wife painstakingly got us to the point of making sure that that was the right scenario for him.

We value the work that gets done here, and we want to see more resources pushed back to our State, who has largely led this effort. We have had meetings for our boy to be able to get into the situation where he is in a thriving third-grade class at a public school and where he has a little extra attention on things that he does well. He is reading well above a third-grade level, but he really struggles in other areas. He is on the autism spectrum.

The attention that our teachers, local administrators, and PTA have put into our boy, who is the pride of our life, we know that that will be cared for moving on. If we can move as much of those resources back into the decisionmakers' hands, we are going to have success here.

Mr. Speaker, I think we are going to look back at this point down the road and say that this was a key part of why we were able to better fund schools that are in tough communities, to better fund special education needs, and to make sure that we are still fulfilling all of the FAFSA and student loan requirements that we currently do.

Mr. Speaker, let's give this an option. If we are having such bad outcomes holistically, why not take a look and try to do something differently. We can't just keep doing the same thing.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's commentary on that issue, and I look forward to being a part of this change. I am actually very confident that, when Utah is given more opportunities in the space of education as we move more of those resources back to the State level, we will continue to thrive. I want to be a big part of it. I am sure my wife will be right there bird-dogging us to make sure that our son will have what he needs to also thrive in this environment. I look forward to that chance.

Mr. Speaker, I have been very encouraged this week to see the House and the Senate Republicans coming to-

gether to deliberate on our reconciliation package. We are trying to get this timeline going as quickly as possible. There is an enormous amount of good work that is going on in every committee with respect to this reconciliation package.

This is going to be a key factor to making sure that we maintain a progrowth and profamily tax policy amongst the other aspects of securing our border, bolstering our economy, supporting domestic energy production, promoting peace through strength, and making our government more efficient and effective.

This is the profamily and progrowth tax code that we are developing and have been developing since 2017, and we want to make sure that we don't see these provisions expire.

The number of inversions that took place before 2017 and the repatriation of companies and their operations has been pretty well underrecognized. When you make progrowth tax policy domestically, you encourage companies to repatriate those operations and their intellectual property, and you are able to actually raise revenues.

That is the big thing. If we want to raise the rate on taxes so we can claim we are raising revenues, if the outcome is to raise revenue, then every Democrat should be celebrating what took place in 2017.

What we are trying to make sure doesn't happen now is that those more antiquated international tax policies that encourage companies to put their intellectual property in Ireland and in other European countries or in other tax havens across the world, it encourages them to keep it there or put it there instead of investing back into America.

I wish my Democratic colleagues were more honest on this, because they know and they see the numbers, too. When you create a competitive environment, you are able to actually raise that revenue for the U.S. Companies want to invest here. If they have a competitive tax environment, they will always choose to be back in America.

Mr. Speaker, I worked very hard to get spots on the Committee on Ways and Means and Committee on the Budget. It has been an enormous amount of work getting us to this point, and the lion's share of that work is still up ahead. I wanted to be on those committees for this very moment because I knew that 2025 would be a major tax policy year. Known as the Super Bowl of tax colloquially, I believe that we have a real opportunity to extend tax policies that benefit hardworking Americans and that support families.

Let's remember that the child tax credit was \$1,000 pre-2017, and Republicans doubled it without a single Democrat vote in 2017. We are going to go at this alone, it looks like, again, where we are trying to avoid the child tax credit from going back down to \$1,000 at the end of this year if we don't

get this tax bill done. We want to make sure that we reestablish as much as we possibly can and moving it forward.

I am one of the key leaders on this particular issue with the Family First Act and to making sure that we are supporting families and encouraging that type of positive environment. Strong families will lead to so much good in our communities. I don't want to demean the concept of a strong family, but it is one of the core aspects of having a strong economy.

There is a lot going on now and in the coming months. I am looking forward to seeing the Senate come together and getting us the parameters that they would like to see with respect to this tax package. We are working very close in hand with our Senate Committee on Finance and Senate leadership to be able to take a look to see what this reconciliation bill is ultimately going to pan out.

We recognize that it will be a partisan moment back here because we won't have any support from Democrats on these incredibly important progrowth and profamily tax policies. That is just the nature of this place, but we are working very hard to build this out and continue on the successes that we have had from 2017.

Mr. Speaker, the irony of this place is that all of those tax provisions could have been repealed in 2021 and 2022, when Democrats had the White House, House, and Senate. None of them were because Democrats recognized deep down that doubling the child tax credit, doubling the standard deduction, encouraging increased wage growth without the inflation that came from the American Rescue Plan, which we saw the Democrats enact in 2021, all of that positive economic growth is actually a very good solution.

I hate that this place ends up being so partisan in these moments of what we call the trifecta, when one party has the White House, House, and Senate. It is just the way that it is, but there is so much of this tax policy that both sides of the aisle share a common vision on.

We did an awesome bipartisan tax bill last year. I wish it would have been able to survive in the Senate, but it didn't. There is so much good that will come out of what we are going to extend here.

I shared a lot of this with my newsletter followers yesterday. I feel like, as congressional Republicans, we have the most momentum now that we have ever seen regarding our looming debt crisis.

A statistic I shared is that, for several decades, our Federal revenues have remained at approximately 17 percent of GDP. Over the last couple of decades, our expenditures have skyrocketed to 26 percent of GDP. In the early 2000s, our expenditures were approximately 17 percent to 18 percent.

The way I shared it was that I know it is sort of the old adage that we don't have a revenue problem, but we have a

spending problem. That is just what the data bears out. In years of tax reform, we have still been able to maintain 17 percent of GDP.

Remember that, in 2017, even though we reduced taxes in multiple areas, we have what is called broadened the base, which actually helped bring in more tax revenue. We have continually maintained that 17 percent of GDP, but our spending has gone from about 17 percent to 26 percent over the last 25 years.

You have to look at things with respect to GDP. That is why I always talk about debt to GDP and how we are at World War II levels while we have largely been in peacetime. We have to take advantage of this.

This is not going to be easy. This is not going to be overnight. Yet, with progrowth tax policy, which keeps our economy strong and keeps our GDP moving in the right direction, we have an opportunity to limit some of this spending. It is not going to be easy. I never intended for it to be.

Anytime you add to the budget, it is much easier. Trying to remove from the budget is much, much more difficult, as anybody could probably attest. Yet, it is something that has to be done, and I hope that we can continue to do it in the most thoughtful way possible. We have a really strong plan.

Our committees have been working on this for months and months to identify where the best opportunities for savings over the next 10-year budget cycle are. In doing so, we want to be able to change that trajectory of, like I said, 26 percent of GDP. It is far too high, and we have to recognize that data that has been a success for our Nation.

I am thankful to be on these two committees as we work toward a really difficult needle to thread in getting this policy done, but we are moving it along.

I thank all of my Senate colleagues who are equally working on this. This is ultimately why I am back here, is to make sure that this work is done in the most responsible way possible. As we navigate the reconciliation process over the next few months, I look forward to being able to celebrate some significant wins for our American families and our economy.

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

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. SCHOLTEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARRETT). Is there objection to the re-

quest of the gentlewoman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Ms. SCHOLTEN. Mr. Speaker, the United States won its independence 250 years ago in the Revolutionary War, and our journey as the United States of America began. Yet, 250 years ago, I could not be standing where I am today. Women did not have the right to vote, to hold public office, or to own property 250 years ago. Some women were property 250 years ago. Women were a footnote to the story of our country's founding 250 years ago.

Today, 250 years later, women make up 125 Members in the Congress, and the Democratic Women's Caucus is 96 strong. Women now make up more than 58 percent of college graduates, 40 percent of all businesses are women owned, and more than 52 Fortune 500 companies are led by women.

This kind of change did not happen by accident. It happened because our mothers, grandmothers, great-grandmothers, aunts, sisters, and cousins dared greatly and forged new paths for us to walk on. The freedoms and privileges we enjoy today are because of those who came before us. These are their stories.

□ 1515

Over the next hour, we will hear from women Members across the country who will share the stories of heroines who changed the course of history.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina, Ms. DEBORAH ROSS.

Ms. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman SCHOLTEN for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor former Ambassador Jeanette Hyde, who, sadly, passed away last month.

A North Carolina native, Ambassador Hyde was a trailblazer who paved the path for generations of women in our State. Her contributions to our community span industries, from her time as a social worker and teacher to serving as the first woman on the North Carolina Board of Transportation.

Ambassador Hyde was an active philanthropist, never forgetting her roots and always giving back to North Carolina causes and organizations.

It is especially meaningful to celebrate her legacy during Women's History Month.

As a leader and influential advocate, she pushed for ratification of the equal rights amendment and women's full participation in the political process. She never gave up on her vision of an America where every woman has a chance to make her voice heard.

At a time when women are facing unprecedented attacks from the Trump administration, we should all seek to emulate Ambassador Hyde's grit and grace over the next 4 years. Like Jeanette, we cannot back down in the face of threats to women's healthcare, accessible childcare, equal pay, and more.

Ms. SCHOLTEN. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MORRISON).

Ms. MORRISON. Mr. Speaker, as we recognize Women's History Month, I rise, as an OB/GYN, in fierce defense of our Nation's moms and babies.

Right now, the Republican majority in Congress is launching a full attack on America's families.

Let's start first with where we are in our country. We are facing a serious and worsening maternal healthcare crisis.

Just look at this map. In more than half of our country, women do not have a place to go that provides obstetric care. Among peer nations, we have both the highest rate of maternal deaths and the highest rate of infant deaths—in the United States of America.

This is a crisis. It is an unacceptable crisis, and it demands immediate action from our Nation's legislators.

Yet, the Republican majority is shoving a budget through that would gut Medicaid, which is the single largest payer of maternity care in our country, in order to give tax cuts to billionaires.

As an OB/GYN who has spent my life caring for women and delivering babies, let me tell you: It is unconscionable to threaten the care women receive before, during, and after pregnancy, but that is exactly what the Republican majority is doing with their budget.

Republicans are choosing to shut down more hospitals and clinics across the country. Republicans are choosing to make even more of our country into maternal care deserts. Republicans are choosing to take healthcare away from moms and babies.

It does not have to be this way. As we celebrate Women's History Month, I implore the Republican majority to make their policy match their profamily rhetoric and choose to put America's moms and babies first.

Ms. SCHOLTEN. Mr. Speaker, clearly, history is still being made this Women's History Month as we have an unprecedented number of changemaker women from across the country who are standing up and fiercely defending their constituents. We are so grateful for their work in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Maryland, Representative SARAH ELFRETH.

Ms. ELFRETH. Mr. Speaker, Commander Janie L. Mines was the first African-American woman to graduate from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1980.

Commander Kristine Holderied, a Howard County native, was the first woman to graduate as valedictorian not only from the Naval Academy but from any service academy, in 1984.

Midshipman Kristen Dickmann, a Naval Academy freshman and volleyball player, tragically passed away at the age of 19 in 2008. Her memory is now honored every single year, for over the last decade, via a tournament in her honor.

Midshipman 1st Class Sydney Barber, the Naval Academy's first African-American female brigade commander,