

I acknowledged then that the Government of Puerto Rico had a plan A to bring in barges with temporary generation capacity and to repair all generation plants. I offered to support those goals and put my office at the local government's disposition to help accomplish them.

I also said we needed a plan B in case plan A failed. I proposed three immediate steps: to demand transparency from the utility companies about outages; to promote energy conservation through education and incentives; and to provide backup power for the most vulnerable in the island.

Here we are. Last week, the government announced that the generation barges are no longer viable. One of the repaired units failed. This week, over 100,000 customers lost power in a selective outage announced by LUMA, the utility company, that very same day, leaving them unprepared.

Where is plan B? It doesn't exist.

Worse yet, the government is walking away from over \$300 million in Federal appropriated funds for solar panels, and it is walking away from a \$1 billion lawsuit against oil companies, a lawsuit that sought to compensate our people for environmental harms.

Yesterday, DHS Secretary Noem did not assure the people of Puerto Rico that the tens of billions of dollars that have been assigned for its reconstruction will be honored.

As I said in March, this administration, both the Puerto Rico administration and the Federal administration, did not create the energy crisis, but they are responsible if it worsens. They are responsible for fixing it, and right now they are failing.

I will not stop working. This month I led 14 of my colleagues in urging the Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water to increase funding for the Department of Energy to support the resiliency and the modernization of Puerto Rico's grid. I also requested language to expedite delivery of generation assets to the island.

I sincerely hope that the Government of Puerto Rico and the Government of the United States corrects the course. No matter what, I will keep fighting for the people of Puerto Rico and for its energy future.

Mr. Speaker, I will briefly speak in Spanish, for the benefit of my constituents:

(English translation of the statement made in Spanish is as follows:)

I sincerely hope that the governments of Puerto Rico and the United States correct the course they are on regarding the energy crisis facing the island. But no matter what, I will continue working for the well-being and the future of the people of Puerto Rico and for a solution to their energy crisis.

Yo sinceramente espero que los gobiernos de Puerto Rico y Estados Unidos corrijan el curso que llevan en torno la crisis energética que enfrenta la isla. Pero no importa qué, yo seguiré

trabajando por el bienestar y el futuro del pueblo de Puerto Rico y la solución a su problema energético.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Puerto Rico will provide a translation to the Chair.

POCCA

(Mr. LICCARDO of California was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. LICCARDO. Mr. Speaker, you remember this friendly and famous fellow, Bill, as in: I am just a bill here on Capitol Hill.

I go back to "Schoolhouse Rock!" because I think the President needs a civics lesson that the rest of us received as kids watching Saturday morning cartoons with our mouths full of Corn Flakes.

Today, I am proud to join Representatives DAVE MIN and EUGENE VINDMAN and 30 cosponsors in introducing the Protect Our Constitution and Communities Act. It is just a bill on Capitol Hill, but it offers an opportunity to Congress to restore the rule of law against President Trump's unconstitutional highjacking of Federal spending.

As we all learned in school, two separate provisions of Article I of our Constitution allocate what is known as the power of the purse to Congress. As articulated by James Madison and Alexander Hamilton in the Federalist Papers, our Founders made the spending power the bedrock of the Constitution's allocation of powers in our government. They sought to ensure that the expenditure of the people's money would remain in that body that is closest to the people.

No longer. Under the dodgy dictatorship of DOGE, we have seen the unconstitutional and haphazard seizure of billions of Federal dollars critically needed in communities throughout our country for everything from food safety inspections to healthcare for veterans. Although DOGE has failed to meet any of Elon Musk's overblown claims for saving taxpayer dollars, DOGE has done a superb job of creating chaos.

With cuts of thousands of employees in the SSA, for example, the website that millions of Social Security recipients depend upon for services and information has crashed four times in only 10 days. We have seen shutdowns of critical health research. Tens of thousands of renters will be unable to pay their summer utility bills, and thousands more parents will be stranded without Head Start childcare.

All of this is in violation of our Federal appropriations laws, laws that this Congress passed and the President signed, a far cry from the constitutional imperative that the President "shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed," so says Article II.

If the President wants to spend differently than the law dictates, the Constitution provides him with a couple of options.

First, he can introduce a bill, and he can ask Congress to change its spending priorities. It shouldn't be hard to persuade this Congress because our Republican majorities in both Houses have been unable to muster the courage to oppose other Trumpian blunders, whether they are tariffs that burden families with higher grocery bills or the deprivation of millions of Americans without healthcare coverage or the kleptocratic meme coin schemes to enrich the Trump family by more than \$200 million. President Trump can simply ask Congress to pass a bill here on Capitol Hill.

Another option is provided through a 1974 law, the Impoundment Control Act, or ICA. Under the ICA, the President can notify Congress when he intends to withhold or impound funds through either deferral or rescission. The law requires the President to provide Congress and the public with the reason for the impoundment, along with the estimated impacts on our communities.

The Presidents, throughout the history since the passage of the ICA in 1974, have followed the law providing notice to Congress on 243 occasions since it was enacted; that is, until President Trump took office this January. Instead, Donald Trump and DOGE have haphazardly frozen, blocked, and unlawfully impounded funds.

Now, President Trump may have told a reporter 2 weeks ago that he does not know if he has an obligation to follow the Constitution. He actually took an oath to do just that only 115 days ago.

POCCA, Protect Our Constitution and Communities Act, will hold him accountable for doing so. It will empower American States, cities, and individuals to fight back when they are harmed by the executive branch's unlawful impoundment of funds. By giving Americans a right of action to seek injunctions or damages, POCCA gives the ICA and Article I of our Constitution real teeth. By waiving qualified immunity, it would make Elon Musk and any other administration officials who willfully break the law personally liable.

Mr. Speaker, our Constitution is not negotiable.

□ 1115

MAKE REFUGEE POLICY SAME FOR ALL

Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, this week, a group of Afrikans arrived in the United States. They were greeted with open arms and American flags. Every single one of them skipped to the front of the line thanks to the expedited pathway that the administration handed them.

Although they are not facing any imminent threat, nor any persecution, according to this administration, these farmers were victims who were being brutally killed as a part of a genocide. These claims are absolutely false.

We must ask ourselves: Why wasn't any grace extended to those fleeing the Democratic Republic of the Congo, home to the deadliest conflict in the world? There is no temporary protected status for them.

Why wasn't any grace extended to Afghans, who helped our soldiers at war and risked their lives for the American people? This administration ended their deportation protections on the same day they welcomed Afrikaners.

For those Haitians who fled instability and gang violence, why were TPS and humanitarian parole ripped away from them?

Around the world, we have victims of war, famine, and bloodshed, but they have been left out to dry, where these Afrikaners were welcomed with open arms and, once again, without any persecution or risk of harm.

We can't simply open our doors to the vulnerable when they serve political purposes. Refugee policies should never align with an agenda. It should serve those who are in need, those families overseas who will be murdered if America abandons them, not to people who serve a political purpose and for political gain.

They should be awarded the same pathway that Afrikaners were given.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 16 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

Dr. John Cross, First Sarasota Baptist Church, Sarasota, Florida, offered the following prayer:

Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your love, mercy, and grace in our lives. You have blessed us far beyond our ability to understand. Thank You for the gift of our great Nation. We are appreciative of the freedoms we enjoy. We pray for the men and women who are serving to protect and preserve our freedom.

We pray for all of our elected officials and all those in authority. Please give them Your wisdom as they make decisions that impact so very many lives.

We desperately need You. We know that our help is from the Lord, the maker of Heaven and Earth. We cling to You and every promise in Your Word.

Help us to walk in Your ways, to obey Your Word. May we act justly,

love mercy, and walk humbly with our God. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our living hope.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House the approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. LATIMER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LATIMER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING DR. JOHN CROSS

The SPEAKER. Without objection, Mr. BUCHANAN of Florida was recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Dr. John Cross, who just delivered this morning's opening prayer.

John is the senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Sarasota and has been the pastor for many, many years. John committed his life to Christ in his childhood and ultimately decided to pursue a career in the ministry.

He is a proud graduate of Mercy University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he earned his master of divinity degree and his doctor of ministry.

His leadership has extended beyond the local church, having served as the president of the Florida Baptist Convention Pastors' Conference and president of the Florida Baptist State Convention.

John is married to Dawn, and together they have been blessed with 5 children, 3 sons-in-law, a daughter-in-law, and 10 grandkids.

I deeply value his faith leadership in my life, my family's life, and our community. I am grateful for his presence here today.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOST). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

SALUTING POLICE OFFICER HEROES

(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, this past weekend, tens of thousands of law enforcement officers from across the country traveled to Washington, D.C., for National Police Week.

Established in 1962 through a joint resolution of Congress, National Police Week is a time for our Nation to honor the courageous men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

These officers gave their lives to protect our families, our neighborhoods, and our way of life. Their legacy lives on in the communities they served and in the continued service of those who wear the badge today.

At a time when violent crime is rising and law enforcement officers face growing hostility, we must stand firmly behind those who risk their lives to uphold the law.

This is why I am proud to cosponsor legislation that honors fallen officers and strengthens protections for those who continue to serve. I thank every officer who puts on the uniform each day with courage and conviction. On behalf of a grateful nation, we salute them.

DALLAS WELCOMES EXCEPTIONAL LEADERS

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

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during National Police Week to recognize a new chapter in public safety leadership for the city of Dallas.

On May 5, Dallas officially welcomed two exceptional leaders, Daniel Comeaux as chief of police and Justin Ball as chief of fire-rescue.

Chief Comeaux has over 30 years of law enforcement experience, including his recent role as Special Agent in Charge of the DEA's Houston Field Division. His leadership has been marked by intelligence-driven crime reduction and a collaborative approach to community policing.

Chief Ball, a nearly 30-year veteran of Dallas Fire-Rescue, has risen through every rank since joining the department in 1997. His dedication and innovative leadership have been instrumental in advancing the department's mission to protect and serve our community.

These appointments reflect Dallas' commitment to public safety and community trust. I commend City Manager Kimberly Tolbert for her thoughtful selection of these leaders.

I thank Chiefs Comeaux and Ball for their service. I look forward to supporting their efforts here in Congress to help ensure the safety and well-being of all Dallas residents.

HONORING BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

(Mr. EDWARDS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1