

run homer and this team sailed to a 3-1 victory.

Trine University women's softball has continued to make Indiana's Third District proud, as this is their second national title in 3 years. Their perfect post-season is a testament to the hard work and talent of this team.

These women have set an example for all of us as to the achievements that are possible with unwavering dedication and strong leadership.

To the 2025 Trine University softball team, congratulations on this monumental accomplishment. I know each of you will continue to pursue excellence and set an example for others.

RECOGNIZING SISTER TERESA LYNCH

(Mr. CORREA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Sister Teresa Lynch, who will be retiring from Santa Ana's Saint Anne School.

She served as a teacher for 31 years and principal for 19 years at Saint Genevieve and Saint Anne School. She also worked to improve the lives of incarcerated prisoners at the California Institute for Women in Chino, California. She also co-directed the Get on the Bus program that connected children with their incarcerated parents.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Sister Teresa for showing us all what it means to care for the community. I thank her for her friendship.

I congratulate Sister Teresa on her retirement. I suspect now, as a retiree, she will be busier than ever.

□ 1600

CELEBRATING NATIONAL DAIRY MONTH

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

Mr. FONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of National Dairy Month and to honor the hardworking dairy farmers of California, our Nation's leading dairy producer.

In my district, which encompasses Tulare, Fresno, Kings, and Kern Counties, we are proud to be the epicenter of dairy production. Tulare County alone holds the title of the largest dairy-producing county in America. It is home to 500,000 dairy cows, 222 dairies, and some of the largest dairy-processing plants.

Most of these dairies are family-owned enterprises. I myself personally know the effort it takes to operate these family businesses. I am proud of the legacy of my own family members who are in the dairy industry and who brought their farms to the Central Valley.

Even our region's large-scale operations remain rooted in family tradi-

tions, reflecting the dedication and perseverance of our agricultural communities.

Together, these dairies contribute one-fifth of our Nation's milk supply, producing everything from butter to ice cream, nourishing families and bringing joy to countless households across America.

To our dairy farmers, I thank them for their tireless efforts to feed our Nation. Their work sustains us, and it is an honor to stand in their corner.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MARZIE THOMAS

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life of Ms. Marzie Thomas. Ms. Thomas served as my district director in my Memphis office since 2013.

She came to my office first in 2007. She was an outstanding human being who cared about everybody that came into her office and who needed constituent services. She was a special person in Memphis because she represented what people in Memphis do, who are really good people and who care about others.

She cared about her family, Alonzo Thomas, her husband who passed away in 2024; her two children; her grandchild; and her sister who survives her.

She cared about her church, East Trigg Baptist Church, a famous church where the Reverend Brewster was known for his gospel songs that he wrote and sang. She was in the choir and had a beautiful voice. She was very dedicated to her church and Pastor Beasley.

She was concerned about our country, serving for a long time in my office. She was just a wonderful person. She was a great friend to me. She cared about me greatly, and I miss her much. She had a life well-lived, and I was thankful and fortunate to have her work with me in the office.

ADDRESSING IMMIGRATION INEFFICIENCIES

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

Ms. TOKUDA. Mr. Speaker, just days ago, a Hawaii veteran, Sae Joon Park, said goodbye to his family which included his elderly mother with dementia, his two adult children, and his home.

Mr. Park was shot twice in combat, earning a Purple Heart for his bravery. Yet despite his sacrifice, ICE officers gave him no choice but to deport himself back to South Korea after nearly 50 years.

Mr. Park served. He fought. He belonged. Yes, he made mistakes, as many veterans struggling with PTSD do, but he turned his life around. That

is the reality for many veterans. They fight hard for this country and still face battles back home and, too often, alone.

Republicans are now pushing a funding bill that would abandon even more veterans like Mr. Park. It shifts critical care from the VA to private corporations and makes it harder for women and immigrant veterans to get the services they need.

This bill isn't efficiency. It is cruelty. I will not stand by while Republicans turn our veterans into bargaining chips.

When we fail our veterans, we are not just breaking a promise. We are breaking our people.

FIGHTING FOR LGBTQ RIGHTS

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago today, our Nation made a remarkable step toward equality with the legalization of gay marriage. This was a day that came after decades of advocacy by individuals and organizations across the country, including Garden State Equality in my home State of New Jersey.

The rights of our friends and neighbors are under continuous attack from the Trump administration including by cutting HIV treatment and prevention and rolling back antidiscrimination protections.

More than 1.3 million Americans have sought lifesaving help by making the call to 988. Yet this administration has eliminated funding for those specialized services. These are blatant attempts to harm the LGBTQ community that has already overcome so much and made incredible strides towards equality.

It is here in this Chamber that we should be standing beside them and fighting for them. When we are elected here to serve here in the people's House, it is our obligation to fight for everyone that we have the privilege of representing.

Mr. Speaker, that is what I will always do and what I urge my colleagues across the aisle to do, as well.

STOP BATHING IN FOLKLORE AND START BATHING IN 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, we are having a really exciting discussion with my buddy of how CBO actually does scoring on things. I was trying to explain that some of the things we consider absurd are actually our fault because it is the law that we have passed to tell CBO how to do the scoring.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make an apology to everyone because this one will

go a little longer than normal. Yes, I know. Everyone can grab a cup of coffee or something. Hopefully, the Sergeant at Arms—we are apparently not allowed to drink coffee on the floor. Whatever happens, don't get caught, right?

Mr. Speaker, I am going to try three things tonight. I will upset a number of folks. I am sorry. My math will be accurate because we have spent the last couple of days double-checking it.

I am going to try to do something a little insane. I am going to walk folks through the Social Security actuary report. We are just going to do some of the most basic parts of it so folks understand what the reality is.

Number two, I am going to walk through actually something that really bothers me because I have a number of politicians on the left and the right who spend day and night making up math. Mr. Speaker, can you believe that?

They attack the CBO. They attack the Joint Committee on Taxation, this and that. I am going to walk us through parts of the accuracy and what we call the variance report done by the Congressional Budget Office and try to demonstrate—yes, there are mistakes. They are actually more accurate than most of the outside groups.

That is uncomfortable because one of the other things I am going to touch on—and this is tough—is we have aspirational documents coming from the White House and from our own folks here on what growth can be. We can actually do remarkable growth, but we have to do very difficult policies to make it work.

Are we going to do talent-based immigration? Are we going to do incentives to automate, to modernize, to use technology, or to even use AI? My fear is we want to take credit for very high growth numbers, as in GDP grows this, but we are not willing to do the hard lift with the policy.

With that, I will explain why that is so important. The growth of debt, the drivers of debt, is the thing it is hard to tell the truth about.

I am going to show some charts in a little bit, Mr. Speaker, that show over the next 10 years interest is the number one driver of debt and then healthcare, Medicare, almost exclusively.

It is hard to explain that it is actually like 65-35 now. The some \$22 trillion dollars that are baseline and then stack everything else on it that is going to be borrowed over the next 10 years, about 60 or 65 of that is just interest.

Whether we like it or not, the reality of it is this country, our Federal Government, is an insurance company with an Army. We don't have enough cash in the bank to pay for all the promises we made as part of that insurance coverage.

Let's have at it, Mr. Speaker. I keep bringing this chart because it is a really simple visual. Think of the people

who almost attack us in our hallways and say: How can you want to cut spending?

We show them this chart that says baseline spending. It is \$86 trillion over the next 10 years. All we are talking about on the House reconciliation budget—and my understanding is the Senate, our good friends down the hallway, their cuts and spending are even more anemic.

□ 1610

It is 2.3 percent. \$86 trillion is the baseline spending for the next 10 years. We are trying in the House reconciliation budget to cut \$2 trillion. That caused absolute panic because Washington, D.C., is about one thing. It is about money. When so much of America makes its money off D.C. policy, this has caused absolute panic, but it is a fraction. Mr. Speaker, when you see the new data on what is happening in healthcare costs—we have got some new data today that the numbers are even worse. Almost no one has actually started to do the math—the fact that the Social Security Medicare actuary report from 4 days ago actually has an 11 percent cut coming in the Medicare trust fund in 2033. That is not actually in the baseline debt numbers.

Mr. Speaker, are we just going to pretend that we didn't get older as a society?

Let's actually walk through.

Mr. Speaker, I have done this chart for a decade. About 74 percent of all spending is on autopilot. It is what we call mandatory. It is interest, it is Social Security, it is Medicaid, it is Medicare, and it is other promises that are built into the formula. Members of Congress almost never ever get the chance to vote on any of this red. The only time it will ever really come up is if we have a reconciliation budget.

All the blue, defense and nondefense, is 25, 26 percent of our spending. Every dime of it is borrowed. Please, anyone who cares, get this in your head: Every dime—other than some of the things in the reconciliation budget, every dime a Member of Congress will vote on, many for their entire careers, is borrowed money.

Mr. Speaker, you see this 26 percent that is in blue, that is defense and non-defense discretionary.

This year we are on track for every dollar we bring in in tax receipts—that is corporate taxes, that is individual taxes, that is everything—we are going to spend \$1 in, \$1.39 out the door.

Does anyone see a math problem?

Mr. Speaker, 1 month ago, Moody's actually downgraded U.S. debt, so now the three big rating agencies have lowered our credit. We actually have 18 States in America that have a higher credit rating than the Federal Government.

If anyone bothered to actually read it, it was actually really well done. There were a lot of details. Mr. Speaker, you would have had to have gotten it through a Bloomberg Terminal or

pay a subscription. We are blessed to have a Bloomberg Terminal.

Yes, they got attacked by people who want to keep spending money who said: Stop. You can't downgrade U.S. sovereign debt.

The other two rating agencies had done it years earlier. The punch line in there is that in less than 9 years—and this was assuming interest rates stayed stable—in 2034, 30 percent of all tax receipts just covered interest. If interest rates went up 1 percent, Mr. Speaker, 1 percent, in 2034, then 45 percent of all U.S. tax receipts pay interest.

Are we paying attention?

Yet, the first words I will get from my brothers and sisters on the left are: Well, just raise taxes.

I will show over and over here, Mr. Speaker, that if you look at times when we had high marginal tax rates, low marginal tax rates, we basically always get about 17 to 18, sometimes 18½, percent of the economy in tax receipts.

There is our problem, it is that split. Right now if we are sitting in the almost 18 percent of the economy we are taking in in taxes, but we are spending 24—and understand, over the next few years it goes from 24, to 25, to 26—that gap is the annual deficit that gets piled on to the debt.

I have lots of charts here that actually start to show—let me see if I can find my favorite one here—that when we actually raise—well, actually, I hid it in the back so we will do that as a whole section.

How many understand we borrow \$6 billion a day?

How many understand in 9 years we are borrowing over \$10 billion a day?

Right now that means we borrow \$72,000 a second. In 9 years we are functionally borrowing over \$100,000 a second. The reason I try to break it down like that, is I am trying to find a way to make numbers like this, absolutely crazy numbers, work.

Mr. Speaker, so you have that.

My Democrat brothers and sisters have legislation they have introduced over the years. They have never actually brought it to the floor even when they controlled this body and controlled the White House. It gives you a sense, Mr. Speaker.

Economic study, go on Manhattan Institute, Riedl, it is about 1 year, 1.5 years old, they did the scoring on all the Democrats' tax proposals.

Here is the problem: Increasing taxes, Mr. Speaker, when you did actually all of them—and I am going to do this in a couple of fashions—you basically got to the point that when you did all the corporate, the estate, the individual, and then you did the economic effects, you got about 1.5 percent of the economy.

All the taxes hikes—every time we have someone over on that side saying: Just raise taxes—if we do every one of their tax proposals, then we get 01.5 percent.

Hopefully, everyone knows what the joke is.

We are going to borrow 7.3 percent of the economy this year, and in 9 years we are borrowing 9 percent of the economy.

How do we tell the truth to the American people that we are going to have to embrace things that are actually hopeful?

The cost of healthcare—it is always fascinating, I always thought I would get beaten up for saying this behind the microphone, and, shockingly, we have had people being remarkably kind to us.

The economist in my Joint Economic Committee—and it was a hard report to write—a couple years ago wrote a major study saying: What does obesity cost America?

That is not Republican or Democrat. It is just what we are. It means, every time you say that, Mr. Speaker, did you make all the people who make money off certain foods, off of certain healthcare, and other things, nervous?

We came up with a number 2 years ago. It was \$9.1 trillion of additional healthcare spending over 10 years.

Now this one is a few years old. Milken did a study, he said that 47 percent of all U.S. healthcare spending was associated with obesity.

Is that Republican or Democrat?

It is just the math. It is something we could do together around here.

How do we help our brothers and sisters be healthier so they live longer? How do we help them so they could maybe have more family formation, live a life, participate in the economy, and use a hell of a lot less healthcare?

Mr. Speaker, you know the perversity around here. When we start talking about maybe we need to modernize how we do agriculture in America, what we grow, because we concentrate functionally on like five crops.

What should we do? This is a question—and I have been attacked by Democrats on this—is it moral to give an EBT card, modern food stamps, to someone to go buy onion rings?

I love onion rings. It is one of my addictions. I am working on getting off of it.

Is it moral with taking hard-earned money, rare resources—remember, it is borrowed money now—and say: Go eat crap.

Now the people who sell onion rings come lobby us and come attack us and say: People should have the choice. They should with their own money.

The fact of the matter is, when we looked at some of the data of the 7 million prime-age males who are missing in America, we have a data set that says about one-half of that population may be missing from the labor force. They are missing from the American labor force not because of drugs and not because of video games but because of health, because of obesity.

Are we allowed to talk about it?

Mr. Speaker, a bit of trivia. Let's do something I consider wonderfully funny and amusing.

In the last 20 years, what is the only success that has happened in the

United States of helping young people get healthier?

Remember, under Michelle Obama's initiatives with President Obama, I think we spent, it was \$16 billion or \$36 billion, but some number like that, and it had absolutely no success. This was the dietary issues and the food issues, trying to get young people to go exercise. Can anyone guess?

Come on, this is a play-at-home game. It was Pokemon GO. I know it sounds crazy, but the gamification actually was the one great example of success for the last couple decades of helping young people get healthier.

What if we took that knowledge of, hey, these incentives do work, and actually legalese that and made that part of how we deliver healthcare services or how we allow insurers to provide incentives because the ACA ObamaCare is a finance bill.

□ 1620

It is who gets subsidized and who has to pay. You have three age groups and smoking. You could be creative enough to add a fifth category that says you can provide a series of these sorts of incentives, so when you wear the digital ring, wear the smartwatch on your wrist, or walk 5,000 steps, at the end of the month, we are going to give you something. Is that Republican or Democratic? Or is it just using data to try to keep our brothers and sisters healthier?

The stock answer is to just raise taxes on rich people. The math doesn't get you anywhere close. It may make you feel better. It may make you feel better, but I am going to show you numbers that should scare you half to death.

Let's continue to try to run through healthcare expenses. We are going to have to update our charts because we got one just a couple of hours ago and didn't have a chance. It actually had the spending growth on healthcare over the next decade actually accelerating again.

Here is part of my problem. Nominal, which means before inflation, we actually have domestic productivity growing at 4.3 percent over the next decade. We have healthcare growing at 5.8 percent. It is geeky, but that margin keeps separating and separating. Unless we are willing to do policy, whether it be technology or incentives to stay healthy, these sorts of things, if that separation continues, the debt picture is actually worse.

Mr. Speaker, at some point, I am going to show a slide here that if you actually take some of the policy we are working on, the baseline between now and 2035 of the \$22 trillion we are supposed to borrow, some of the potential financing costs of what the Senate is doing right now, the higher interest rates, we are not exactly there, but we come close to doubling U.S. sovereign debt over the next decade. That took us 240 years, and we functionally double it in the next decade.

Let's get to the really uncomfortable stuff. I have to admit that I am only two-thirds through the Social Security actuary report. I have one on my desk that has highlights and little questions and things that I have to get my economists to go back to help me understand. For some, I actually don't like some of the math I see.

I am going to try something, and we are going to try to build a chart on this. This is crazy math, but we see it in the report.

You will have lots of activists say to just open up immigration. That will take care of the Social Security shortfall. Remember, the report says, in 2033—so, what is that? Seven or 8 years from now, there is a 23 percent cut coming in Social Security checks. That means we will double—we have had witnesses that explained this to us. We will double senior poverty after 2033.

Are we ready to do that? Is that moral?

Yet, I will get folks who will say that if we just open up immigration—it turns out that is actually not the math because one of the real reasons they moved up the date of the exhaustion of the Social Security trust fund was actually flattening of wage growth. It turns out there is no free option here.

We have some charts that show some things. Here are people who are undocumented in America. They are working under stolen Social Security numbers. They are giving into the system, but they are never going to get anything out. Then, you look at the suppression of wage growth. I know this is geeky, but I sort of need to lay a marker on the suppression of wage growth. When you bring in millions of people across the border who have similar skill sets, and they are often willing to sell their skill sets for even less money, Social Security actuary reports are now modeling a flattening of wage growth. That is one of the things that has actually shortened the life of the Social Security trust fund by a year.

The next time someone says that we just need to open up the borders, that that will take care of the Social Security trust fund, it turns out that it doesn't work that way. You actually didn't get anything from it. You did a suppression of working people's wages, and this one takes us out about a decade.

I don't know why people don't think, don't understand, these almost basic economic—we all went to our high school economics class, right? Here is what is coming. You have the 23 percent cut coming in 2033. If you are watching this and don't plan to be around in 2033, you don't have to care. The one that we have had almost no discussion about is that the Medicare trust fund is gone in 2033. That means if it lives off its income, its tax receipts from the FICA taxes, it is still an 11 percent cut.

The next time we get someone here saying that we need more money for

our hospitals, outpatient surgeries, and hospice care, point out to them that, in 7 years, there is an ugly cut coming. This 11 percent shortfall isn't even in our long-run CBO projections yet because a year ago, to give you an idea of how these numbers eroded in 1 year—I think 2054 was in last year's actuary report for when the trust fund was gone.

How many people over the last week, because this has been out for almost a week now, have you seen come behind these microphones and say maybe we should all work together, do something that is mathematically honest, or just even tell our voters the truth that, in 7 years, you are getting a 23 percent cut in your Social Security check and, by the way, another 11 percent cut in your hospital coverage and other things because the Medicare part A trust fund is gone.

For those who don't understand, and that is most of us, of the portion of your payroll tax that goes to Medicare, about 38, 40 percent of it is covered by the trust fund. That is the hospital portion, as we typically refer to it. The rest of it actually comes out of the general fund.

One of the most difficult numbers I have in my dataset here—because this is the one that I see people get upset about—is the primary driver of U.S. debt. Interest? It is healthcare. For every dollar you put into Medicare, you are getting \$6 to \$7 back. That delta is uncomfortable to talk about, but it turns out to be that and interest are the primary drivers.

All right, you start to actually look at some more—and I put this chart together just because I thought it was really interesting. We finally actually have really good data that has been designed on what happened during the Biden administration having the border open. We got some direct effects of, hey, we got a little bit more tax receipts and potential effects over time, but it turns out its deficit effects are more than two times because of the consumption of services.

It turns out that when someone tells you this is going to grow the economy, it is not in the economic literature. It may be in your aspirations, in your heart, or how you feel, but it is not in the economic literature. Tell the truth about the math.

National health expenditures as a percentage of GDP—remember, a couple of moments ago, I told you we are trying to figure it out. We just got another report that we expect the growth of healthcare spending to pop almost 3 percent more than modeled. That is a lot of money. Here is the punch line: We estimate that this year, right now, we are right here. We are spending about 18 percent of the entire economy on healthcare.

□ 1630

In 9 years, it is over 20 percent. Those differences are monstrous. That is functionally a 12.8 percent growth in

the cost of delivering healthcare in that 9-year span. This is going to tie into why I am talking about some of our growth rate projections.

How do you hit these folks who are running around saying: "David, we are going to grow at 3, 4, 5 percent GDP growth." At the same time, interest and expenditures are chewing up everything around us. How does that math work?

Then, I am going to show you some of the demographics. I am going to probably say this twice just so it starts to bleed in.

Today, we have the same number of 18-year-olds as we had 20 years ago. We have doubled the number of people 65 and up. So, functionally, we have the same number of 18-year-olds—it is no one's fault. It is not Republican and Democratic. Starting in 1990, U.S. fertility rates rolled over. We have a shortage of young people in America.

Tell me how I grow the economy if you are not going to let me do things like automation of ports, automated rail, AI, technology, allowing AI when it has the right data to be able to prescribe, and people go: "Oh, I don't like that." Fine. Tell me how much poorer you are willing to live.

It is economics. If I can't grow the economy, yet I am being buried in debt service and increased costs for providing the services, tell me how I am to pay for it.

There is a path where I can make this math—I can't pay it off. I can stabilize it and make this another American century, but, damn it, how do I do it in a body that is just terrified of telling the truth about math or just basic economics?

This is the reality. This is our latest report. In 2033, 20.3 percent of the economy will just be healthcare. Considering government is functionally the primary payer, I think we are well over half of all healthcare spending coming out of the trust fund and the general fund.

Does anyone see a problem? Do you remember, a moment ago, I showed you that the Social Security and Medicare actuary report said that there is an 11 percent cut coming in 2033? Are we going to let that happen? Probably not. Are we going to reach into the general fund to pay for it? Probably. It is not in the debt projections yet. The scale of this is off the charts.

Back to the math problem. If I am making someone unhappy, be mad at the math, not me. Be mad at all the people who have never told you the truth with a calculator.

How do I save my future? Remember, my little boy turned 3 years old yesterday. I have a 9-year-old. Yes, they are adopted. It is a miracle. My wife is my age. Yes, we have screwed up my retirement. It is the most fun I have ever had in my life.

My child will be the first generation to live poorer than his mommy and daddy. Great job, America. This is our morality.

People will say: "No, it is going to be great." Great. Okay. I hope it is great. Tell me how I do it in the math. Walk me through the economics. Walk me through what we are going to do to maximize GDP growth or what we are going to do to change productivity.

People will say that we are going to just grow. Okay, tell me how. That is our problem right now. We are using these wonderful, aspirational words, and we are not doing any of the policy.

The reality of it is that Social Security, Medicare, and net interest account for 80 percent of the spending growth.

If you are a Member of Congress, how many protesters did you have in your office this last couple of days? "You can't review. You can't go after waste and fraud and Medicaid." Medicare Advantage, The Wall Street Journal has done a five-part series that, if you add it all up, is \$1 trillion to \$2 trillion of waste and fraud over 10 years. "That is hard. You can't actually talk about that."

If we can't do the work, how do you save the country? How do you save my kids' future? How do you save your own retirement? Maybe we can just keep lying to each other and the public because the public really doesn't want to hear these things.

There is a path to make this math work, but you keep telling me that we are going to take off on productivity, but then you see the charts of available young people to participate in the labor force. The number keeps falling and falling.

Remember, we have the smallest group of 18-year-olds as a percentage of population in U.S. history, and next year is even smaller, and the year after that is even smaller, and the year after that is even smaller. "David, we are going to grow like crazy." We can, but you have to do policies that maximize productivity. "Productivity might cause creative destruction." We are not allowed to do free-market economics anymore. Remember, we are populists now.

If you embrace that you are going to drive this country—we will still be greater than any country on Earth, but we are going to give up so much.

Prosperity is moral. The growth is moral. We are killing ourselves, but we are making promises that aren't in the data. They are not on the charts.

You have an idiot like me who gets behind the microphone week after week—I am not smart, but I am good at math—and tries to explain by saying that there are ways to make it work.

Mr. Speaker, 1 month ago, after almost a year's worth of work—I chair the Joint Economic Committee. I am number four in the Committee on Ways and Means. I chair the Subcommittee on Oversight. It is public now. The press broke the story. We have been doing investigations after The Wall Street Journal did that major series on Medicare Advantage—the amount of fraud, the people being diagnosed with

diseases they don't have, people being dumped on VA even though they had the Medicare Advantage insurance, and people being dumped in hospice care. If you don't know about it, grab your computer and google: The Wall Street Journal MA.

The MedPAC report—I have come to this floor year after year. I am sometimes thinking, Mr. Speaker, that I am the only idiot here who reads the MedPAC report. It is like this, but it is not a hard read.

In there, it will say that when we started Medicare Advantage in 2005, it was designed to come in at 95 percent of the cost of fee for service, but its model was that we were going to incentivize the folks who manage the care to make money by helping you be healthier. The incentive was that we were going to help populations be healthier.

The MedPAC report for the beginning of this year, today, comes at 120 percent of fee for service. Just that delta from the 95 to 120 percent over 10 years is like \$2 trillion.

Think about it. We are knifing each other right now, trying to figure out how to finance as much of this reconciliation budget as we can. I am an idiot, as I have been told by my wife over and over, because I thought we cared. We spent 6 months writing the modernization to Medicare Advantage to make it so it incentivizes to help our brothers and sisters who are 65 and up who choose Medicare Advantage, which is 55 percent of the population, to get services so that they are healthier.

The Joint Economic Committee economists say that, over 10 years, it is \$1.76 trillion of savings over 10 years. The preliminary score from our conversations with CBO—it is not in writing, but preliminary—is \$1.84 trillion, making it the largest savings bill in U.S. history. It doesn't take away a single service. It fixes the misalignment in the system.

Mr. Speaker, how many cosponsors do I have? The bill has been introduced for 1 month. Remember, we are tough. We are going to help stop this borrowing. We are going to take on the debt. I have zero cosponsors. We have visited almost 100 Members of Congress in their offices. "David, this is uncomfortable. It has big words. David, it has the word 'Medicare.'"

I beg of you, understand the scale of this debt. I have people now who won't even look me in the eye as they walk down the hallway because they are fearful that I might ask them again and again: "Will you sponsor this? You tell me you care. Help us. Help us do the right thing."

Yet, if I try to show what is going on—remember our baseline. Over the next 10 years, we expect to spend \$14.67 trillion on Medicare Advantage. It is not Medicare but just the Medicare Advantage portion. All we are trying to do is save about 10 percent of that. That is the alignment of incentives.

□ 1640

Stop telling me how much you care. Stop telling me you are a budget hawk. I am a budget hawk. I care about the budget. But God forbid, I am not putting my name on something that actually does something because that is hard.

I am the guy in the 50/50 district. I am in one of the most competitive districts in America, and yet I am willing to stand up behind this microphone and tell the truth and actually put it on paper.

My economists did a model over the next 10 years with what is happening demographically in America. We have a shortage of young people. President Trump said something that was brilliant on the campaign trail. He said: It is insane we educate people, then we send them home with their degrees from the American universities to compete with us. That sparked an idea, and then we got our economists to do the modeling.

It creates about \$150, \$160 billion of additional tax receipts in the 10-year window, but in the second 10-year window, it explodes. We wrote an immigration reform bill, moving the American immigration system to a talent-based system, but it has the word "immigration" in it so that scares the hell out of the political class because reporters will lie about it. The activists on Twitter or X, whatever it is, will lie about it, but the economics are incredibly important.

If you are going to move this country to raise its productivity so we can raise wages so we actually can survive what is happening in the actuarial reports of Medicare and Social Security, guess what? You almost can't close the numbers unless you do something like this.

The reason I am doing this is, we added the President's Gold Card, but it is skills based. I get people saying: I don't know how I feel about that. How many of you have a Dr. Patel? It was meant to be funny. I am from Scottsdale. It is one of the greatest medical communities in America, and a bunch of our great, amazing talent has come in from all over the world.

Stop bathing in folklore and start bathing in math.

Our third bill to pay for the reconciliation budget is less of a cut. This is using data to find where the hell is all the cash. It turns out if you add it all up, there is \$1.5 trillion sitting in accounts up and down government. It was appropriated 3 years ago, but they never built it.

There is a great example of hundreds of millions of dollars that were set aside for one State. It is in the account to build a bridge. They chose not to build that bridge. Cash is still sitting there. We call it Total Discretionary Balances Subject to Rescission. We call it forgotten funds. We are paying interest on that money. Almost every dime of this was borrowed money, and some of it has been sitting in accounts for years.

Why is it so hard? We have the legislation. I have introduced the legislation line item by line item by line item saying let's just grab that cash, even if you just went back to know your money, or maybe the ones that are just a couple years out, it is a half a trillion dollars. Grab that cash and bring it back and put it under Treasury.

If we as Members of Congress want to appropriate it again, appropriate it again. I just gave you three pieces of legislation: I gave you fixing Medicare Advantage, alignment of the incentives. Moving to a talent-based immigration system, which, in the long run, is one of the most powerful things we can do for GDP growth for productivity. And capturing the forgotten funds. I just paid for most of the reconciliation bill.

Wouldn't that solve a bunch of our problems around here? Wouldn't that solve a bunch of the fighting? Wouldn't that solve a bunch of the stress when we are saying: We are going to borrow how much?

This year, we are going to borrow \$2.2 trillion. At the end of 2026, if we do what I think and the Senate is going to try to jam us, that is \$2.5, \$2.6 trillion of borrowing that year. But DAVID, we are going to have all this magical growth.

Look, I accept I am a senior Member. I have staff. I have really smart economists. I just brought you three bills without cutting a service to anyone. I found \$3.3 trillion of savings and not a single cosponsor in Congress.

I am going to try to do this next little section here. I don't want to be a jerk. I am going to hurt some people's feelings. The math is important. Why the math is important is because there are solutions. The reason I am doing this is, I think it was Monday or Tuesday, I had a Member I was talking to, great Member, brilliant in their area of specialty, really smart. I have spent my whole life doing budgets and healthcare finance and a few other weird things.

They said: DAVID, CBO is always wrong, the Congressional Budget Office. They make up things. It is way off.

Okay. For anyone that keeps telling you that, this is what you call a variance report. CBO puts it out every year. I know every staffer and every Member of Congress grabbed it in January and actually read the data.

If you look at the calculations—and I didn't actually bring one of the boards, which probably is good because it was really obnoxious. What did happen to that board?

CBO projected when we did the 2017 tax reform, 2018, 2019, just before the pandemic, they were like 99.5, 99 percent accurate. Don't tell anyone because it will make it harder for us to lie around here. Then you get Members saying: But over the next 5 years, they weren't accurate at all.

Does anyone remember there was this little thing called COVID? Does

anyone remember what Congress and the world actually did? We dumped how much cash into the world market. You are accurate to here, and then all of a sudden, we dumped how much cash? Do you think there is a chance when you borrow trillions and trillions of dollars, pump it out into the economy, you don't have your tax collections go up? Oh, but DAVID, they didn't project that. They didn't predict that. Come on, people. Stop it.

Because even now, when we get back to baseline after we got beyond COVID, they were still remarkably accurate. I found the chart. It was hidden back there. It is on the smaller board.

The fact of the matter is, what they projected and what actually happened—and this is actually 2018, not 2016, so I found a printing error—99.5 percent accuracy.

Mr. Speaker, they are not always accurate. Of what they projected for the clean energy tax credits and inflation reduction, they missed by miles because they didn't actually pay enough attention to the fact that they were uncapped. There are a number of things where they absolutely screwed up, but the fact of the matter is on tax collections, the numbers have been good, and we need a scorekeeper.

My grandfather used to have this saying: It doesn't matter how you play the game. It is who keeps score. He thought that was hysterical.

How do we convince the American people we are serious about economic growth, productivity, taking on the debt and deficits, and not bankrupting their future when we spend almost every day saying: Well, we don't like the scorekeeping.

Then you look at every outside group, the Tax Foundation, Yale Model Foundation, all these others, and it turns out CBO was more accurate than they were.

I am not standing here to be a defender of them. I am actually being a defender of my brothers and sisters here. Please, I know it makes our lives easier when we can attack the scorekeeper. We can say the scorekeeper didn't get it right, therefore, pay no attention when they say we are trying to add \$3, \$4 trillion of debt.

We are better than that. There is a reason so much of the economic press is just mocking us and making fun of us. I understand it is good politics. You get to go home, get in front of the audience that is not reading the Economic Press and say, they didn't get the it right. Let's treat our voters like they are adults. They understand what is going on.

□ 1650

These are the scores from Yale Budget Lab, from Penn Wharton, from Congressional Budget Office, from Joint Tax, Tax Policy Center, American Enterprise Institution, Tax Foundation, and then here is what we are telling people.

Is every other Ph.D. economist wrong?

It becomes an excuse not to do the things I was just complaining about when an idiot like me comes and says: I found you \$3.3 trillion in savings.

DAVID, we don't have to do those hard pieces of legislation. We don't have to explain those bills to our constituents. We don't have to take on the lobbyists who are going to be all upset with us. We will just tell people that it pays for itself.

So everyone else is wrong because it makes our life as policymakers easier. Somehow, we are going to have magic growth, magical thinking when just today parts of the latest census data came out. The population 65 and older rose by 3.1 percent in the last year, while the population 18 years old—under 18 decreased by 0.2 percent.

I am trying to make an argument that—I love the partisanship. I love a good fight with my Democratic brothers and sisters, but what happens when the debt and deficits are demographics? If we can blame the other side, we will just do this ping-pong back and forth—they are in charge, we are in charge, we are in charge, they are in charge—and we will blame each other. Then we are going to have a failed bond auction, and interest rates are going to explode.

Remember, there are datasets—I presented them here on the floor—that just a single point of interest going up over the next decade wipes out almost all the good we are trying to do extending the tax reform of 2017.

Mr. Speaker, there is a way to make this work, and I am mentally just exhausted. Maybe I need to consume more coffee or maybe I need to stop caring so much because I am really worried. There is a way to make this work. There is hope, but what happens when no one will hear a word you are saying because it requires doing hard stuff and pisses off some lobbyists or some group or some group that is in our office that wants us to regulate their competition's business or give them something?

We used to be the party of fiscal sanity. I still think we are. We can get there. We can do it. Maybe we just need to understand the math.

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

CENTRAL BANK DIGITAL CURRENCY

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mr. DAVIDSON of Ohio was recognized for 30 minutes.)

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIDSON. 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 (Mr. HARRIGAN). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIDSON. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to talk about central bank digital currencies.

A lot of people don't necessarily know what a central bank digital currency is, so we will start with a definition. A central bank digital currency begins with the central bank. The central bank in the United States is the Federal Reserve. The Federal Reserve manages our currency. They also manage settlement between banks, so when banks have to pay each other, they do it directly, but a lot of times they manage it through the central bank.

Central banks around the world, whether in the United States or the European Union, China's central bank, most countries have a central bank. Switzerland has the Bank for International Settlements. Their central bank is essentially the central banker to the central banks, so when central banks pay each other, they broker the transaction through the Bank for International Settlements.

What is the digital currency? Digital is sort of self-explanatory. Currency is a means of payment. Traditionally, you think of money, the system of money is as old as people. The right to transact predates any government. People would transact with one another before we had a government. It is an inherent natural right. As our Founders recognized, we are endowed by our creator with certain inalienable rights, that among them are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

One of the ways we pursue happiness is by transacting with each other: We buy things, or we make money from selling things. In the natural order, there is nobody between you and the person you want to do business with. In cash, that is still the case. When you hand a \$20 bill to somebody for sweeping your driveway or a \$100 bill for shoveling your driveway in the snow or things like that, that is between you and maybe the high school kid who came and shoveled your driveway. There is no third party to get in between you and the other person.

When you think about a lot of other transactions, we have sort of migrated to a digital payment system of sorts today that involves third parties, like Visa or Mastercard. They dominate the payment system in the United States. Banks are behind the credit cards, so they are in the scene, too, but fundamentally when you transact with a credit card people think, well, that is digital, and you are using a credit card company.

What they do really is amazing. For a relatively small fee, they guarantee that it really was you who made the transaction. If it was fraudulent, they insure the transaction, they will make you whole on a credit card if you didn't pay it. They establish the identity and say this really is you, and you really do have the credit available. Then they establish the person who you are buying from as a store and say this is really a credible transaction, and they approve it or deny it.

What they do with an amazing frequency in volume of transactions is incredible. That is a third party, and it is