

average CEO makes 632 times more than their workers.

This is absurd, and it is immoral. It is corporate greed. It leads to income inequality in our country and drives wage stagnation. It doesn't have to be like this.

This is why I am introducing the Tax Excessive CEO Pay Act. While these CEOs float around on their yachts, millions of Americans, our residents, are drowning in credit card debt and struggling to keep their heads above water.

This level of inequality is a threat to our democracy, and this kind of economic power concentrated in a few hands truly hurts our families.

CEOs in the 1970s made roughly 25 times the average pay of their workers. Today, it is 290 times more. I want folks to think about that because these are workers who depend on us, the Federal Government, to subsidize these poverty wages. They are on Medicaid and getting food assistance because their CEOs are focused on profit and their own pay instead of taking care of their workers.

This bill would apply higher corporate tax rates to companies that pay their CEOs higher amounts of compensation compared to their workers. It is triggered if it is 50-1. That is the trigger, 50-1, that a company will pay more in corporate tax if that is the case. The greater the ratio, the larger the increase in the tax rate.

This will not only incentivize more reasonable CEO pay packages, but it would also compel companies to increase their workers' pay and take care of their workforce.

□ 1020

This level of inequality we face is a threat, again, to our families' economic stability and livelihood. In this Chamber we constantly have to subsidize. We constantly have to take care of the workers when their CEOs and the companies don't do that.

I urge my colleagues to please support the Tax Excessive CEO Pay Act.

WAR PROFITTEERING

Ms. TLAI. Mr. Speaker, Republicans already voted to give \$5 trillion tax breaks to the richest Americans, paid for by ripping food from children's mouths and kicking 17 million people off of their healthcare.

Trump's big betrayal bill—and that is what I call it because it is a betrayal to the American people—also included \$150 billion for the Pentagon's war machine. Here we are this week, again, debating another obscene \$892.6 billion military budget. It is not helping our veterans. That is not where they get, literally, healthcare, mental health support, and the things they need. That is over a trillion dollars to Trump's so-called Department of War, even after the Pentagon failed seven audits in a row.

As recently as 2023, the Pentagon could not even account for 62 percent of its assets—a trillion dollars, while the President is deploying troops in

our neighborhoods and threatening to go to war against American cities.

It seems my colleagues can always find time and money for war, but when it comes to clean water, when it comes to being able to address the needs of our people, there is never enough money.

Why is it that when it comes to, again, trying to make sure people have healthcare, being able to address the Housing crisis, being able to tell our families that we are doing the best that we can, all I see is the bipartisan support for a war machine budget that can't pass an audit?

I want people to look at this and pay attention because they will never, ever fully fund Medicaid, universal school meals for every hungry child, or guarantee healthcare as a human right in our country. I think maybe it is because many of my colleagues in this Chamber are actively profiting financially when they vote to pass more funding for weapons and war because they own stock in war manufacturing.

I introduced an amendment to this war machine budget to add the Stop Politicians Profiting from War Act to put an end to this corruption by banning Members of Congress and their families from owning defense stocks.

My colleagues should not be able to use their positions of power to get rich from defense contractors while voting to pass more funding for war. Our elected officials should not be able to profit off of death.

The American people deserve Representatives who vote in the best interests of our families. We are elected to serve the public, not to serve stock portfolios or campaign contributors.

The American people deserve better. We are sick and tired of politicians profiting off of endless wars.

HONORING BETTY ANN MATTHIES

(Ms. DE LA CRUZ of Texas was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. De La CRUZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of former Seguin mayor, Mrs. Betty Ann Matthies.

Born and raised in Guadalupe County, Mrs. Matthies graduated from Seguin High School in 1953 and went on to become a registered nurse.

After marrying her beloved husband, "Pokey," she returned to Seguin to begin her 42-year career helping shape and grow what is now Guadalupe Regional Medical Center.

Throughout the years, Mrs. Matthies rose through the ranks, holding to her guiding principle: Always do what is best for the patient.

Following her work in healthcare, she carried her passion for service with the Seguin City Council and her work as mayor, always doing what is best for the community.

Whether as a leader, a mother, or a friend, she encouraged everyone to pursue their passions and live life to the

fullest. Her inspiring legacy and service will always be remembered.

RECOGNIZING SABRINA WALKER-HERNANDEZ

Ms. DE LA CRUZ. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize the life of Sabrina Walker-Hernandez, a truly remarkable and selfless woman who dedicated her life to serving her country, her family, and the community of Edinburg, Texas.

After serving 4 years in the U.S. Army, she earned a master's degree in public administration from UTRGV. For 10 years, she served as the CEO of the Boys & Girls Club of Edinburg in the RGV where she helped raise over \$11 million for their new building to provide more young Texans with space to learn and grow.

In addition to being a gifted speaker and a published author, she gave her time to numerous boards, including the Museum of South Texas History.

Her compassion shone through during her own battle with cancer, and she used her journey to raise funds and awareness for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

In 2023, she was recognized as the Woman of the Year by the Edinburg Chamber of Commerce for her community service.

Her incredible life and legacy are remembered by her family, friends, and all of south Texas.

UTRGV FOOTBALL PROGRAM

Ms. DE LA CRUZ. Madam Speaker, today I proudly rise to celebrate a landmark moment for the Rio Grande Valley, the inaugural season of the UTRGV football program.

Four years in the making, the UTRGV Vaqueros have finally hit the field along with their new drill team and marching band.

A new tradition has begun in the Rio Grande Valley. Nearly 13,000 proud fans came to watch the first game against Sul Ross.

The valley is excited to unite around this Rio Grande Valley football team, and we are ready to keep cheering our team on. We wish you the best season. V's up.

MARKING SOLEMN EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY OF HURRICANES IRMA AND MARIA

(Ms. PLASKETT of the Virgin Islands was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. PLASKETT. Madam Speaker, as we mark the solemn eighth anniversary of Hurricanes Irma and Maria making landfall in the Virgin Islands, each as Category 5 hurricanes, I rise today to speak about the remarkable resilience of Virgin Islanders, the critical Federal partnership that secured the necessary funding for our recovery, and the transformative opportunity which is on the cusp of realization for our people.

On September 6, 2017, Hurricane Irma pummeled the territory, shredded roofs, destroyed our utilities, and shattered lives.

Two weeks later, Hurricane Maria made landfall in the Virgin Islands, wreaking destruction across parts of the territory already spared from Irma.

The devastation was complete and overwhelming. Our hospitals were destroyed. Schools were left in ruins. Our children shared schools for 2 years, and thousands of homes were uninhabitable. Our residents lived without electricity for 9 months.

In those darkest hours, I witnessed something extraordinary: the unbreakable spirit of Virgin Islanders. We came together to support one another, rebuild our community, and lay the foundation for a stronger and more resilient future.

While others simply saw the need to rebuild, I saw an opportunity for transformation. Many in my home in leadership said I was asking for too much and I was out of place.

By showing Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle how many times infrastructure had been rebuilt after storms and how expensive that was, Congress recognized that the prudent replacement required that the Virgin Islands should rebuild not how things were at the time of the storm but how they should have been.

As the Representative in Congress for my home at the time, I knew that recovery of this magnitude would require unprecedented Federal support and innovative approaches.

That is why we fought for and secured transformational changes in Federal law through the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018. This legislation allowed FEMA, for the duration of our recovery, to rebuild our critical infrastructure with resilient design features up to the latest industry building standards, regardless of what existed before the storms.

□ 1030

This was not just a policy change. It was a paradigm shift. Instead of simply replacing what we lost, we could build infrastructure designed to withstand future storms and serve our community for generations.

I personally brought drafters of the legislation to meet with local government and FEMA officials to ensure that they understood the intent of this body in changing that law.

The numbers speak for themselves of the historic investments in the territory: almost \$2 billion for rebuilding of our hospitals, several billion dollars for our schools, and more than \$4 billion for the Virgin Islands Water and Power Authority. There was a total of \$20 billion flowing to our population.

Recognizing that even this massive investment could be undermined by local matching requirements, I worked tirelessly with the last administration to secure an increase in the Federal cost share to 95 percent for public assistance categories and 98 percent for larger critical infrastructure. This will save our territory \$1 billion in matching funds that we simply do not have.

Unfortunately, the local government has, at times, exacerbated the slow pace of rebuilding. The first years after the storm were not used to sufficiently build capacity or develop integrated project management, and we have had fits and starts in rebuilding.

Our isolation and relatively small size creates difficulty in obtaining supplies and labor. This is further exacerbated by delays that occurred at HUD and FEMA. However, the story of the Virgin Islands recovery is, ultimately, a story about partnership between Federal and local government; between Congress and our territory; and, most importantly, among Virgin Islanders themselves.

We must be focused, transparent, adaptable, and driven to make our home the jewel of the Caribbean. It is a testament to what we can achieve when we refuse to accept that natural disasters must define our destiny.

As we move forward, we carry with us the lessons learned from Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria. We cannot and we will not squander this transformational opportunity. We will build smarter, stronger, more resilient, and we will continue to prove that Virgin Islanders, undeterred by any challenge, remain VI Strong.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF IRENE PEREZ PLOKE SGAMBELLURI

(Mr. MOYLAN of Guam was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. MOYLAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today with profound respect to commemorate the life and legacy of Irene Perez Ploke Sgambelluri, a CHamoru daughter of Guam, a survivor of World War II, and a tireless advocate for justice.

At just 10 years old, Irene was eating breakfast with her family when the skies above Guam roared with warplanes. Her father, a U.S. Navy pharmacist, surrendered himself to protect his family, spending years in a Japanese POW camp.

Irene, her mother, and her siblings endured displacement, hunger, forced labor, and cruel treatment under occupation. She gave up her bed so that her grandparents could rest. She helped forage for food, and bore the weight of survival with quiet strength.

At age 13, she witnessed the return of American forces and trekked through mountains and devastation to seek safety, but her story didn't end there. Ms. Irene transformed her pain into purpose. She spoke at schools, ceremonies, and even laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, becoming the first civilian to do so, in honor of Guam's liberation.

Her advocacy helped to secure war reparations for CHamoru survivors, and her home phone became a lifeline for those who were seeking help.

Her grandchildren called her "the bi-ionic woman," a fitting tribute to a woman who defied cancer, embraced

technology, and danced through life with grace and grit.

Her legacy is etched not only in the history books but in the hearts of her family and the people of Guam. She reminded us that history lives among us and that the enduring CHamoru spirit would never be forgotten.

Madam Speaker, we thank her. We honor her, and we carry her life forward.

REMEMBERING 9/11

(Mr. LATIMER of New York was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. LATIMER. Madam Speaker, death comes for all of us at a time and a place unknown. It may come quietly, after a long illness, or swiftly and violently without warning. None of us are exempt. The youngest and the oldest among us each will face that moment. We know it. We fear it. Still, we carry on, putting it out of our minds so that we can live, work, and love.

In that certainty, we are united. Death does not discriminate by race or religion, gender or sexual orientation, or economic status. We are all equal in our mortality.

On September 11, 24 years ago, death came suddenly and violently. It struck without mercy or logic. It took office workers, firefighters, police officers, maintenance workers, financial executives, flight attendants, secretaries. It took Muslims, Christians, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, and those with no faith tradition. They were targeted simply because they showed up to work.

Others died trying to save them. Those first responders—the brave men and women of the FDNY, the New York Police Department, EMS, and Port Authority—ran into danger knowing full well the costs. Some lives were saved because of them, and many of those heroes never came home.

The attacks were an attack of hate, of an ideology turned into violence. In highjacking airplanes, those terrorists tried to hijack our values, to cause casualties in pursuit of their beliefs, and to use death as a weapon to divide us.

Yet, even as we still grieve, as we continue to lose 9/11 survivors to illnesses from that day, we remember something greater: that humanity goes on, even as individual lives are lost. Children who lost parents have grown up. Parents who lost children have passed on. Young Americans have graduated high school who were not yet born on that clear, bright, September morning. We are reminded that life continues, but it is up to us to give it meaning.

In a deeper sense, we are all on the 107th floor of that day. We are all aboard flight 93. We all carry the weight of that day, not just in mourning but in mission.

The universality of loss can and should be the foundation for our unity, and so I ask: Why, then, are we so divided? Have we learned nothing from