

22,000 people in my congressional district alone.

To illustrate what this means, a couple who are 60 years old in Fresno earning \$82,000 a year will pay \$18,000 more per year for coverage. A family of four in Tulare County earning \$64,000 a year will pay \$2,500 more.

This is not fiscal responsibility. This is a Republican healthcare tax hike on working families, imposed in the richest country in the world. I think it is unacceptable. These are not just numbers on a page. These are real people.

It is a mother in Fresno who has to choose between filling her prescription and paying rent. It is a father in Tulare County who may have to decide whether his children can see a doctor when they are sick. It is seniors who have delayed care, skipped medications, or avoided preventive screenings because of these rising costs. These are the consequences of inaction. But there is still time.

Mr. Speaker, the Democrats have a plan.

Our plan is to keep the premiums affordable.

Our plan prevents Republican healthcare tax hikes.

Our plan requires President Trump to carry out a bipartisan budget. That is what we are supposed to do, a bipartisan budget.

We know healthcare cannot wait, and our families cannot wait. Our Nation needs certainty, affordability, and leadership more than ever.

Let us come together at the table in a bipartisan fashion. That is what my constituents expect of us.

Let us extend the Affordable Care Act tax premiums.

Let us keep healthcare affordable for Americans.

Let us show the American people that Congress can act responsibly, that we can protect our families, that we can deliver on the promises to ensure that no one has to choose between healthcare and their basic needs of the safety net that is a contract that we have with the American people.

Mr. Speaker, our constituents are counting on us. Let us not fail them. Americans deserve affordable healthcare, and we have until the end of this month to make that happen.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL BENNY "RAY" ADKINS

(Mr. FLEISCHMANN of Tennessee was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dear friend and a great patriot, Benny Ray Adkins.

Mr. Speaker, over my 15 years of service in this wonderful Chamber, I have given many speeches. I have eulogized and talked about many great people.

Today is a very special speech for me and for our great Nation.

I knew Benny Ray Adkins back when I practiced law. He worked for the

Hamilton County Courts. He worked for the Sunshine Biscuit Company for years, and Ray was my friend.

When I got elected to Congress, Ray Adkins really stood out to me not only as a mentor but as someone who loves his country. Ray loved the United States Army. He was Army proud. He was a lieutenant colonel. He served 36 years in the United States Army and Army Reserve.

Time and time again, when I needed Ray, whether it was to get advice on active military, veterans affairs, and the like, he was there.

Now, the largest city in my district is Chattanooga, and Ray was from a part of Chattanooga called Lookout Valley, Tiftonia. It is on the western side of Chattanooga.

Ray was always there whether it was Wreaths Across America, Memorial Day, or Veterans Day. He was omnipresent. He was always there for the veterans. It didn't matter if it was World War II, Korea, Desert Storm, Desert Shield, he was always there. He would show up in his uniform.

For the past decade or so, Mr. Speaker, he struggled health-wise, but he would always show up in his uniform. He would always show up Army proud, and he participated in so many different things.

We had a situation where we put together a Military Advisory Board, and I had people from all branches. Ray was so well-respected by everyone, whether it was the Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, or the Marines. In that room, he was Ray, the great colonel.

He loved the Army. He loved our country. He loved our veterans. He was a member of the VFW. He was a member of The American Legion. He was named Veteran of the Year in Chattanooga in 2017 and received the Hometown Patriot Award in 2018.

This man was so well revered in Chattanooga and rightfully so. He was honored with the Ray Adkins Interchange by the Tennessee General Assembly, our State assembly in 2021. I drive past that on occasion.

Mr. Speaker, I will end by saying this: I thank Ray for his friendship. I thank him for his service to our great Nation, and I thank him for being a great American. America is a greater nation because of him.

HORRIFIC MASS SHOOTING IN STOCKTON

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

Mr. HARDER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because this weekend my community in Stockton, California, was shaken by a horrific mass shooting.

Families were gathered at a banquet hall for a 2-year-old's birthday party. They were about to cut the cake when gunshots rang out. Four people were killed, including three kids. They were 8, 9, and 14 years old. Thirteen more

were injured. Think about that for a second.

As a dad, I cannot fathom the pain these families are feeling right now. This was supposed to be a moment of celebration, and instead it became a nightmare that has rocked our community to its core.

Mr. Speaker, I ask for a moment of silence to honor the victims, including Amari, Susano, Maya, Journey, and their families as they navigate this tragedy.

My wife, Pam, and I are praying for the victims, their families, and our community. We are and always will be Stockton Strong.

HONORING DEPUTY TERRI SWEETING-MASHKOW

(Mr. HARIDOPOLOS of Florida was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life, service, and sacrifice of Deputy Terri Sweeting-Mashkow of the Indian River County Sheriff's Office, who was tragically slain in the line of duty.

Deputy Sweeting-Mashkow served the community with courage, professionalism, and deep compassion. She was the kind of public servant every community hopes for, steadfast in her duty, kind to those in need, and unwavering in her commitment to keeping Indian River County safe.

Her loss is felt not only by her brothers and sisters in law enforcement, but by every family she protected, every neighbor she reassured, and every life she touched. Today, we honor not only her heroism, but the legacy she leaves behind.

We also hold in our prayers her husband, Casey; her daughter, and her family; and the entire Indian River County Sheriff's Office as they face this heartbreaking tragedy of a person who served our community for over 25 years. May they find strength in knowing that this Nation stands with them as they face this very difficult time.

I thank our sheriff in Indian River County, Sheriff Flowers, and his incredible team who put together a dignified funeral yesterday honoring her life.

Deputy Terri Sweeting-Mashkow gave her life in service to others. For that, we are forever grateful. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring her memory and supporting all those who continue to answer the call to protect and serve their communities.

HONORING DAVID LONG

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of David Long, a local locksmith in Indian River County, an Army veteran who was tragically killed in Vero Beach while assisting deputies during a court-ordered eviction. David was simply doing his job, fulfilling a legal obligation, supporting law enforcement, and helping keep the process orderly and safe.

By every account, he was a kind, dependable member of the community.

He served his country in uniform and continued serving it in civilian life through honest work and quiet professionalism. What happened to him should never happen to anyone.

This tragedy is a sobering reminder of the risks that not only our deputies, but our civilians take in working alongside them when they face the realities of simply upholding the law.

May we honor his memory by standing firmly with those who keep our communities safe and recognizing that everyday heroes come not always in uniform.

We remember David Long today for his service and as a person who makes America the great Nation that it is. May David Long rest in peace.

AFFORDABILITY FOR AMERICAN FAMILIES

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today about this issue of affordability.

I find it shocking that the Democrats actually have the gall to talk about the issue of affordability after 4 years of failure: 9 percent inflation, higher interest rates, just challenges across the board for everyday Americans.

I think one of the reasons why our party has the majority today is simply because they failed for 4 straight years. They never cut taxes on overtime or tips, let alone Social Security. Republicans did, and we think this is going to help turn around a very challenging situation which we inherited.

I look forward to the debate over the next month in how we take down even more prices so Americans can have a more affordable life. This is the challenge of our day. I am glad that we are talking about affordability because for too long Washington, D.C., has turned its back on the issue.

REPUBLICAN HEALTHCARE CRISIS

(Ms. RANDALL of Washington was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. RANDALL. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to raise the alarm on the Republican healthcare crisis.

Speaker JOHNSON shut the government down for 43 days and kept the House out of session, effectively running out the clock to find solutions to address the healthcare affordability crisis created by my Republican colleagues.

Now we have just 11 session days left before recessing for the holidays, and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have offered zero solutions.

At the end of the month, the Affordable Care Act enhanced premium tax credits will officially expire, leaving 24 million Americans who currently purchase healthcare on the exchange in an unimaginable position. While MIKE JOHNSON may be sleeping soundly and enjoying the holidays with his family, millions of Americans will be up at night worrying about how they are going to pay for health insurance on top of the affordability crisis the Trump administration created with reckless policies.

My family knows what this feels like. My sister, Olivia, was born with microcephaly, which means her brain was small and the doctors didn't know why. Even with insurance provided by my dad's civilian job at the Department of Defense, Olivia wouldn't have gotten the care that she needed to live for 19 years as healthy as possible if it weren't for the Washington State Legislature expanding Medicaid the year she was born.

My family would have faced dire choices about which bills not to pay in order to meet Olivia's needs if it weren't for Medicaid access. Would we give up heating, groceries, school lunches?

Neighbors of mine in Washington's Sixth District are already sick to their stomachs, looking at their monthly costs. For example, a couple in Clallam County, ages 60 and 55, with a household income of \$85,000, for them the least expensive plan available would jump from \$127 per month to \$1,485 per month. That is a 1,062 percent increase.

That same couple in Kitsap County, where I grew up, would go from paying \$56 to almost \$1,500 a month under the least expensive plan. That is an annual insurance bill of \$24,000 without even having to go to the doctor for a medical emergency or routine healthcare.

I recently heard from a neighbor in Port Townsend who said: "My husband is retiring in a few weeks." She retired years ago. "So although we currently have a good benefits package through his work, we will be on our own for coverage soon. Only yesterday we learned of the substantial increase through Healthplanfinder. We have now determined that the best way to cover our upcoming healthcare costs will be for me to take my Social Security early."

She says: "It is upsetting to me that my Social Security will not be used for other living expenses or be as much per month as it would have if I could hold off taking it a few more years."

She is worried in her last line about not being able to use her Social Security for other living expenses because she is going to have to use all of it for healthcare coverage.

Under this administration, costs are up across the board. Groceries are more expensive. Housing is more expensive. Childcare is more expensive. Gas prices are soaring. Today, the average price for a gallon of gas in Washington State is over \$4, one of the highest in the Nation.

Healthcare costs are only one aspect of why millions of Americans are needlessly suffering under this administration. We don't have to keep living like this. It is time for my colleagues to get serious about solving the ACA tax credits, as serious as they were about extending tax breaks for billionaires in July, and get back to delivering on their promise to lower costs for Americans, which Trump promised to do on day one of his administration.

CONGRATULATING SALPOINTE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL'S GIRLS' FLAG FOOTBALL TEAM

(Mr. CISCOMANI of Arizona was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. CISCOMANI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Salpointe Catholic High School's girls' flag football team for winning the 4A State championship in its first season.

On November 22, the Lancers took home the State title in a fierce match against Mesa Eastmark. Even a 2-hour weather delay couldn't stop the Lancers from taking down the number two ranked Eastmark 17-0, winning them the 4A title in the first year of the girls' flag football program. In an impressive season, they finished 16-1.

Freshman quarterback Isla Collins, who is a youth national team player for the United States, led her team with two rushing touchdowns, scoring her first at the end of the first quarter and adding her second touchdown in the middle of the fourth quarter. Additionally, junior Andie Tkalecivic added a 21-yard field goal, extending the Lancers' lead.

To Coach Barrie Pedersen, the entire team, and everyone who played a part in this successful first season, I congratulate you. There are undoubtedly many, many more to come ahead. They have made their school and our community incredibly proud.

Lancers, enjoy this victory. You earned it. Congratulations once again.

CONGRATULATING IRONWOOD RIDGE GIRLS' CROSS COUNTRY TEAM

Mr. CISCOMANI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Ironwood Ridge girls' cross country team for winning the 2025 Division 2 State title. This is the fourth time that the Nighthawks have taken home a State championship title.

Senior Sorella Natale was the D-2 runner up, with a finishing time of 19:23.4, securing the Nighthawks' win. Additionally, sophomore Sophia Simmons finished in 9th place, with a time of 20:05.5. Sophomore Kylie Lederhos finished in 10th place, with a time of 20:08.9.

Congratulations to coaches Michael Smith and Bob Jones, the whole team, and everyone who made this win possible. They have made their school and our community very, very proud.

Nighthawks, enjoy this victory. You have earned it.

CONGRATULATING SALPOINTE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL TEAM

Mr. CISCOMANI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Salpointe Catholic High School's girls' volleyball team for winning the 4A State championship for the first time in 5 years.

The number one ranked Lancers took home the 4A conference State title against the number three ranked American Leadership Academy-Queen Creek, with a score of 3-1. After a struggle to maintain the lead, they prevailed in the end, including an impressive 6-0 run in the fourth set.