

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, 267 percent, that is how much energy prices increase in communities located near Big Tech data centers.

DTE Energy, in my State, already charges us some of the highest rates in the Nation with some of the most unreliable services.

Do you like clean water coming out of your taps at affordable prices? So do I. You better hope a data center doesn't get built near you.

Do you like breathing clean air and being outdoors? I do. Organize like hell to keep these extremely loud data centers and their emissions out of your community.

So, for more expensive utility bills, and increased air, water, light, and noise pollution, we get a lot more AI slop bullshit that nobody asked for.

The Silicon Valley billionaires don't care about our communities. Believe me when I tell you, all they care about is profit. They don't care that these data centers will absolutely make life miserable. All they care about is the money and the power.

I am so inspired by the grassroots movement in the State of Michigan right now popping up all over the State to protect our communities from data centers. I want them to know loud and clear, here in Congress, I have your back.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RULLI). Members are reminded to address their remarks to the chair and to avoid profanity.

HONORING AFL-CIO'S 70TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, with deep gratitude, I rise today to honor the AFL-CIO's 70th anniversary.

Seventy years ago, the AFL-CIO joined laborers with a bold vision: The dignity of a day's work must be matched by the dignity of a worker's life.

Their merger formed a promise: America would be stronger when working people stand together.

That promise is personal. Our mother was a proud union organizer. Her union badge, along with our father's, helped our family be more secure with union membership. It opened doors for opportunities we could only dream of as a working-class family: a living wage and the opportunity for more education, health insurance, and retirement benefits.

Today, let us honor the bold generations of workers who built our factories, powered our industries, cared for our ill, and advanced our communities.

As our Nation faces new challenges, from international outsourcing to corporate consolidation, we recommit ourselves to the fight for living-wage jobs, fair trade, and affordable health insur-

ance, and to passing the pro-worker protections in the PRO Act.

I thank the AFL-CIO for 70 years of solidarity, strength, and service to America's working families. Here is to 70 more.

CONGRATULATING WHITNEY POINT EAGLES AND WINDSOR BLACK KNIGHTS

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

Mr. RILEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, New York's 19th Congressional District is home to not one but two championship field hockey teams.

The Whitney Point Eagles just won their fifth straight State title. That is 10 championships in the last 11 years.

The Eagles earned this one with a perfectly executed corner in overtime. That is the kind of composure under pressure that you only get from hard work, discipline, and a great coach like Nicole Huston.

The Windsor Black Knights just brought home their first State championship.

The thing I love about this team is how tight-knit they are. During a post-game interview, Abby Guarino said the things she will remember the most wasn't raising the trophy after the game; it was the bonds she built with her teammates.

We are so proud of these young women from Whitney Point and Windsor. They represent the very best of our rural communities, and they have set an example for the next generation of what you can accomplish when you give it your all.

Go Eagles, and go Black Knights.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to include in the RECORD the names of each player on these championship teams.

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

There was no objection.

Nicole Huston
Abby Guarino

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MOTHER VIOLA FLETCHER

(Ms. PRESSLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Mother Viola Ford Fletcher. She was a living monument to truth-telling and righteous resistance, a steward of Black history and cultural preservation.

At 111 years old, she carried within her the memories of one of our Nation's darkest chapters, the 1921 Tulsa race massacre, and she bore these memories with unmatched grace and courage.

Mother Fletcher refused to let this Nation look away. She traveled the

world demanding justice, not just for herself or her family, but for Greenwood, for the generations robbed of life and prosperity.

When she testified in this very institution, her voice shook the Halls of Congress and the conscience of our Nation.

Mother Fletcher's passing is a profound loss, but her legacy is a call to continue to fight for full reparations.

May we honor her transition to ancestor by moving in her spirit with unyielding hope, moral clarity, and faith that justice, though delayed, is not denied.

CONGRATULATING ECO-CLEAN SOLUTIONS

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

Mr. KILEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate JB Harris, JT Chevallier, and the entire team at ECO-CLEAN Solutions for reaching a record-breaking milestone late last year: 1 million square feet of Lake Tahoe shoreline cleaned by the team's beach-cleaning robot, BEBOT.

JB and JT, two longtime friends from Las Vegas, were drawn to the Sierra Nevada by the beauty and lifestyle of the mountains. As their connection to the area and the great outdoors deepened, JB and JT witnessed the toll of increased tourism on their natural surroundings.

With the motivation to give back to the home that had given them so much, ECO-CLEAN was created to respond to the need for environmental responsibility and sustainability.

With the annual number of visitors to Lake Tahoe growing to 15 million people, Tahoe's beaches experienced a surge in waste, particularly during peak travel seasons. JB and JT recognized the problem and set out to find innovative and low-impact solutions to this growing concern.

In their search, the team discovered BEBOT, the first battery- and solar-powered beach-cleaning robot on the West Coast. Through funding provided by the North Tahoe Community Alliance, the team was able to successfully deploy BEBOT to the shores of Lake Tahoe, maximizing beach cleanup efforts through advanced technology and in partnership with local volunteers.

Through this innovative solution, ECO-CLEAN Solutions and their beach-cleaning BEBOT have cleaned more than 1 million square miles of shoreline, picking up over 38,000 pieces of litter that may have become pollution in Lake Tahoe.

In comparison to visible litter items collected by volunteers, BEBOTs detect and remove up to 10 times the number of items hidden under the surface of the sand.

They also partner and collaborate with several local organizations, one of

which includes the Desert Research Institute, which analyzes the litter taken from the lake to better understand pollutants and proactively address their source.

It is an honor to represent exemplary businesses such as ECO-CLEAN Solutions in the United States House of Representatives. They exemplify how American innovation can serve as a solution to the issues that are facing our communities and the Nation at large.

Therefore, on behalf of the United States House of Representatives, I am honored to recognize JB, JT, and ECO-CLEAN Solutions for reaching this significant milestone and for their ongoing dedication to protecting the beauty of Lake Tahoe's shorelines for generations to come.

□ 1120

RECOGNIZING SOUTH TAHOE PUBLIC UTILITY
DISTRICT ON 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. KILEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize and commemorate the 75-year anniversary of the South Tahoe Public Utility District, a trusted steward of environmental protection and sustainable water management in the Tahoe community.

The South Tahoe Public Utility District was formed in the 1950s to protect the ecosystem of the Lake Tahoe Basin while furnishing customers with reliable water and wastewater treatment services. Since then, they have grown into a nationally recognized utility that exemplifies innovation, resilience, and exceptionalism in public service.

The district supplies quality drinking water and provides reliable wastewater collection, treatment, and export services to over 14,000 residents and 660 commercial and government sites. Their services play a significant role in the function of the region and have improved the quality of life and experiences for residents, businesses, and visitors.

Over the span of more than seven decades, the South Tahoe Public Utility District has achieved a wide diversity of accomplishments, including building the world's first advanced wastewater treatment plant, bringing high-quality Tahoe tap to the community, earning national recognition as the Environmental Protection Agency's Wastewater Treatment Plant of the Year, and becoming a 100 percent recycled wastewater operation, just to name a few.

These successes reflect the district's deep commitment to protecting Lake Tahoe's environment, ensuring the sustainability of its water resources, and fostering community engagement.

Throughout its history, the South Tahoe Public Utility District has faced and overcome many unique challenges. During droughts, wildfires, and even a global pandemic, the district did not falter in its mission. In moments of crisis, such as the Angora, Tamarack, and Caldor fires, the district's personnel displayed courage and determination, standing shoulder to shoulder with

firefighters under hazardous conditions and evacuation orders to continuously maintain water flow and wastewater treatment.

For three-quarters of a century, the South Tahoe Public Utility District has established a legacy of efficiency, professionalism, and excellence. I have no doubt that that legacy will only continue to grow in the years to come.

It has been a privilege to work alongside the South Tahoe Public Utility District throughout my tenure as Tahoe's Representative in Congress. Therefore, on behalf of the United States House of Representatives and California's Third Congressional District, I am proud to celebrate this milestone and to commend the South Tahoe Public Utility District for their 75 years of unwavering dedication to the region and to the protection of a national treasure that is Lake Tahoe.

RESTORATION OF HEALTHCARE TAX CREDITS

Mr. KILEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge prompt action on a matter that could make life a lot more difficult for millions and millions of people in this country, and that is the expiration of tax credits that could lead to a massive increase in healthcare costs.

We are talking about 22 million Americans who will be directly affected, some of them seeing thousands and thousands of dollars in increases in their healthcare costs. That is something that a lot of these folks simply cannot afford.

Mr. Speaker, that is the reality of what will happen if Congress does nothing and if Congress fails to act. Since that is not acceptable to me—and I know it is not acceptable to a lot of Members on both sides of the aisle—I have introduced bipartisan legislation with SAM LICCARDO called the Fix It Act, which will stop this cliff from occurring and will spare these Americans this massive increase in healthcare costs.

Here is what it does: It extends these tax credits for a temporary period of time, for 2 years. That will give us the runway that we need to work on a broader solution to the healthcare affordability crisis in America without forcing millions of Americans to pay the price in the meantime.

Mr. Speaker, importantly, our bill not only provides this temporary extension, but it also includes reforms that pay for themselves. In other words, the savings that we get through our reforms are actually greater than the cost of the extension itself. This is according to the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, which analyzed several proposals that are out there and found that the bill that SAM LICCARDO and I have introduced is the only one that actually does not increase the deficit and, indeed, actually achieves savings for taxpayers.

We do this with sensible cost controls, income caps, to make sure that the tax credits go to those who truly need it. You will still be eligible as

long as you are a family of four with an income level up to \$192,000.

It also includes strong antifraud measures that will save billions of dollars from the fraud that we know is far too pervasive in this program. It enacts reforms to a program called Medicare Advantage that are supported by the AARP because we have seen that insurers have been overcharging in this program to the tune of tens of billions of dollars over the course of a decade.

Mr. Speaker, all of those elements not only actually make it so that we are not increasing the deficit or having to raise taxes or increase spending with this extension, but they also make the extension inherently temporary in the sense that, if you have a pay-for, like we do, then any extension will need another pay-for that will entail additional tradeoffs. That is an accountability measure to make sure that this doesn't become just a never-ending series of extensions but truly is temporary.

Mr. Speaker, there are a growing number of Members in both parties—who we just had a press conference—who understand what is at stake here. It is not just, by the way, for 22 million Americans who will be directly impacted by utilizing the individual market and benefit from these tax credits, but if you see millions of people who ultimately choose not to get insurance and drop out of the market, that is going to cascade to the employer-provided market, as well. People are going to see increased costs there, as well.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about affordability, which is so important to so many people in this country right now, there is perhaps no single policy issue that will have a higher impact on affordability in this country than doing something about this issue right now.

For my colleagues on the Republican side, I simply point out this: When Members look at the 22 million Americans who will be most directly impacted, a lot of these folks are people who Republicans have been fighting for, for a long time. For example, independent contractors, freelancers, gig workers, and Uber drivers. They have been under attack from the likes of Gavin Newsom and the corrupt political class in Sacramento, who have targeted them and made it very difficult for them to practice their professions.

The Biden administration actually brought in Newsom's labor secretary, Julie Su, to try to do the same thing, targeting independent contractors on a national level. They are the folks who will perhaps suffer the most if these tax credits expire because they rely on that individual market, and they don't really have any other option. They will be forced to pay thousands and thousands of dollars more when their income is already uncertain.

We simply can't let that happen to them or small businesses. Small business owners' employees who rely on the individual market, this will absolutely be devastating to many of them if they are forced to shoulder this cost.

Early retirees who are not yet eligible for Medicare, millions of them rely on these tax credits.

That is why I believe that doing nothing is not an option, and I have made no secret of the fact that I think the House of Representatives has been missing in action in a lot of ways in recent months.

The House was literally not here for a period of almost 2 months. The Speaker inexplicably canceled session for 6 consecutive weeks. The House has not been in the driver's seat when it comes to many important policy issues facing the country. The House has even chosen to cede some of its own legislative authority on certain issues. This is extremely troubling to me. I have been encouraging a change of course.

Mr. Speaker, this issue right now, which is a matter of urgency and needs to be dealt with before the end of the year, is an opportunity for the House to change course, to reclaim its legislative authority, to actually drive policy in the right way, and to become the people's House again by actually serving the American people in a way that will make a profound difference in the lives of many of them throughout the country.

□ 1130

CALLING FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. KILEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to present some truly bewildering and completely unacceptable news out of my State, the State of California. I have been very critical of government performance in our State, with giving taxpayers the services that they are paying for. This latest example makes that point very clearly.

For the last 6 or so years, Californians have been paying an extra fee on their phone service. This was due to legislation enacted by the legislature and signed into law by the Governor. All of these fees were collected for the purpose of creating a next-generation 911 system, which, honestly, is something we need. The system is quite outdated, antiquated, and not up to the task of serving the many different kinds of emergencies that we get in California.

For the last 6 years, these extra fees paid for by California taxpayers, which are in addition to the State budget itself going up over 50 percent during that time period, were used to build out this new 911 system. The State spent \$450 million building out this 911 system.

Just last week, it was announced that after spending all of this money, the State is scrapping the entire project because the technology does not work. It is absolutely beyond belief. The \$450 million that Californians have been paying on their phone bill was absolutely, completely squandered, wasted by the State, which not only wasted all that money, but has now left Californians with an inadequate 911 system because they need to start over from square A.

This, Mr. Speaker, is an example of how the failures in Sacramento that have degraded the quality of life for people throughout our State are not a matter of Democrat versus Republican, but simply a matter of competence, of basic government performance, and of serving the people of our State as opposed to serving other agendas.

I hope that this latest debacle will be a wake-up call to demand the sort of accountability that our taxpayers are entitled to in California, and for the way the government in Sacramento is run to be completely revisited, to be reoriented in a way that is based on performance, that is based on competence, that draws upon the best practices of the private sector, and that ultimately is geared toward citizen service rather than the other interests and agendas that too often prevail at our capital.

CALLING FOR EDUCATION REFORMS

Mr. KILEY of California. Mr. Speaker, for years, I have been warning about the declining education outcomes that exist across our country, but in particular, in my State of California. We just received a jarring reminder of just how bleak things have gotten.

UC San Diego, which is a rather selective school in California, has recently announced that a large share of its students can no longer even do basic math. The school announced that the number of students who require remedial courses has gone from 1 out of every 100 to 1 out of every 8.

This truly jarring state of affairs comes in spite of a massive increase in education funding in California. Indeed, since Governor Newsom came into office, the overall education budget has increased by almost \$40 billion. Yet, what is the outcome of that? We have students at a fairly selective university who can't do basic math, and, by the way, the State also has the highest illiteracy rate in the entire country.

I have advocated for reforms to our education system in California that would actually close achievement gaps and serve students. As chair of the Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education Subcommittee here in the House of Representatives, I have advocated for those reforms not just for our State, but on the national level, as well.

We have seen that when States and districts take a data-based approach to instruction, they can get tremendous results for students. We see examples like KIPP or Success Academy. These are charter networks that have vastly outperformed other public schools, despite serving students who are well below the poverty level in many cases.

If Success Academy were its own district, it would rank at the very top of the rankings in student performance in the State of New York, which is one of the reasons I am sponsoring the High-Quality Charter Schools Act that would make more opportunities like that available throughout the country.

We have also held hearings in my subcommittee on teaching literacy appropriately, which California is finally moving in that direction, teaching math appropriately, getting back to basics, utilizing education technology in the right way, without having students be exposed to excessive screen time. We have looked at school choice programs, including, most importantly, expanding charter schools. We have looked at the foundational importance of parental rights.

In California, unfortunately, we have an education system that is not about the kids. That is why we have among the highest achievement gaps in the country. That is why we have these jarring statistics that we are getting out of UC San Diego. That is why California had the longest school shutdown in the entire country during COVID-19.

I would hope that these latest numbers will serve as a wake-up call to enact the sort of education reforms that have worked well in other States because we are failing our students right now, and we are imperiling our State and, increasingly, our country's future.

CALIFORNIA BY THE NUMBERS

Mr. KILEY of California. Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that affordability and the cost of living are increasingly salient issues for many people in this country.

It is becoming harder for many people to get by, and there are many reasons for that. I have proposed, and in fact passed, legislation in a number of areas related to the cost of energy and the cost of healthcare to start to address those problems.

I was caught somewhat by surprise to hear the Governor of my own State of California commenting on this issue and even saying that no State matches California's success, that "the numbers speak for themselves."

I thought I would go through what some of those numbers are when it comes to the lack of affordability in the State of California. I think it offers insight into the steps that we could take nationally to make life more affordable for folks not only in California, but across the country.

The basic gist of it is to do exactly the opposite of what California has done. Newsom says the numbers speak for themselves. Here are the numbers:

California has the highest gas prices in the entire country, number one out of all 50 States. It is not even close. You can drive a few miles from here in Maryland, which is another blue State, by the way, and you will get gas for \$1.50, \$2 cheaper at least. You can go to Hawaii, which is an island State after all, and you will get gas for 20 cents cheaper than you do in California.

The cost of electricity: California is number one in the country. The New York Times recently published a map showing how much electricity rates have increased over the last several years, which tracks the time that Gavin Newsom became Governor. California saw by far the biggest increase

in electricity costs of any State in the country.

Water bills: California ranks first, or close to it, of any State in the country for how much we pay for water.

The cost of housing: California is number one in the country for the median cost of a home—actually, number one in the continental United States. Hawaii is a little more expensive there.

Taxes: California is number one, has the highest income tax rate of any State in the country, as well as the highest gas tax rate of any State in the country.

Government spending and debt are so much higher in California, and that relates to affordability as well because, of course, it means that we have to get more money in taxes and fees. It also means that the infrastructure that supports businesses is inadequate, which raises their cost of living, which results in higher costs to consumers, not to mention California being the worst business environment of any State in the country.

□ 1140

It has repeatedly been rated as having the worst litigation environment as well, which means that those costs are passed onto consumers, too.

Insurance: When it comes to fire insurance in many parts of our State, you pay more than you pay just about anywhere in the country because of the catastrophic fires that have done so much damage and because of the way the insurance issue itself has been mismanaged.

What is the lesson here?

Well, number one: The lesson is, California needs to change its own policies.

Number two: We can learn from California's failures as we enact reforms at the Federal level to improve the quality of life and affordability for folks throughout the country.

Gas: When it comes to gas prices, it is no mystery what has happened. California's taxes and regulations and insistence on special fuel blends have caused costs to go up inordinately. This, by the way, doesn't even factor in that we have two refineries that are about to close. Fortunately, we just passed legislation here in Congress to partially address this issue of the refineries. There is one study from USC that says that by the end of next year, Californians could pay \$8 for gas.

Electricity: California has passed all kinds of regulations that no other State has, at least not to the extent that restrict the supply of energy in our State. By the way, it is done ostensibly in the name of the environment, but California's policies have been incredibly damaging to the environment, as well.

In just 1 year, for example, the catastrophic wildfires that our State had erased all of the emissions reductions from the prior 16 years. In fact, it erased them two times over because of our State's very poor policies when it comes to forest management, which goes to the insurance issue, as well.

That is why I am very proud to sponsor the Fix Our Forests Act, which allows for more effective forest management which will stop catastrophic wildfires and will make it so we don't have to keep raising the price of insurance. That has passed the House of Representatives with bipartisan support, and it is time for the Senate to pass it, as well.

Housing: When it comes to the cost of housing, we have seen how California has piled on fee after fee after fee so that a project costs tens of thousands of dollars before you even break ground. Even worse, we have seen how California has allowed frivolous lawsuits to delay projects for years and for decades. That all gets baked into the price of the home, and that is why I am sponsoring a number of measures here to try to make housing more affordable.

Of course, the tax issues speak for themselves.

We have a lot we need to do to continue to make life more affordable for Americans. We have seen some progress in certain areas when it comes to the price of gas across the country, when it comes to the supply of energy, and some other issues.

Unfortunately, people in my State are bearing the brunt of it. I would, again, encourage the leaders of our legislature and the Governor to chart a different course, to start actually working for the people of California.

This is why, by the way, we have the highest real poverty rate in the entire country. It is because the cost of living is so high and the economic opportunity is so low. We actually have the highest unemployment rate in California, as well. As the Governor would say, the numbers speak for themselves.

I encourage us here not only for those of us in California to encourage a change in action on the part of our State's own leadership but for Congress itself to follow the anti-Newsom playbook in making sure that we don't see costs across the entire country rise to the level they have in California.

SAFETY OF AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES

Mr. KILEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I will share some data that has recently been published on the safety of autonomous vehicles and self-driving cars, which have been widely deployed in a number of cities across the country.

In California, Waymo has been operating for years now in San Francisco and in Los Angeles, and now their footprint is actually about to expand to the wine country and even into the Sacramento area. They may even be coming to Washington, D.C., soon.

Tesla has a self-driving feature available on its cars as well and they have been publishing some very encouraging data. What the data shows, very clearly, is that even at the current state of the art that is going to continue to improve, autonomous vehicles are overwhelmingly safer than human-operated vehicles by a factor of about 10 when it comes to the risk of injury or death.

When you think about that, that means that being in an autonomous vehicle, in a self-driving car, is a much more effective safety intervention than wearing a seat belt, which, of course, you should continue to wear a seat belt as well.

There was an article in The New York Times a couple of days ago from a doctor who actually likened this to a clinical trial, where you actually have to stop the trial because the drug performed so well and it becomes unethical to continue to give people the placebo and not give them access to the drug.

We have 40,000 people who die in this country every year on our roads. Many, many others suffer serious life-changing injuries. Every American pretty much has been affected in some way, knows someone who has been involved in an accident, and we now have the technology within our reach to drastically reduce that number, to save tens of thousands of lives every year just in this country and to spare tens of thousands of people devastating injuries.

I do believe it is a political policy and a moral imperative to use whatever levers we have here to remove barriers to expanding access to this technology.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with the administration as well as folks on both sides of the aisle to do that because we really do have an opportunity here to do an immense amount of good.

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

PRESIDENT TRUMP IS A THREAT TO OUR REPUBLIC

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SCHMIDT). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. PRESSLEY).

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. GREEN for yielding and for his moral clarity and always for his leadership, especially during these deeply consequential times.

Mr. Speaker, every parent hopes that no harm, heartbreak, or hardship finds their child. We want our children, especially when they are babies, to know safety, warmth, full bellies, and a peaceful slumber.

When they are young, especially during the fall and winter months in the throes of cold and flu season, little ones carry raspy coughs and runny noses home from the playground. Dads