

I am glad to be a partner in this fight with Representative RIVAS and all of my other Democratic colleagues who spoke on the floor tonight.

Ms. RIVAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman RANDALL and thanks again to my other colleagues who spoke tonight.

Today's vote will help keep healthcare affordable for millions of Americans, but our work isn't done. The Senate needs to pass this bill immediately, and then we need to get back to work on progressive and equitable solutions that leave no family behind.

Families are still facing high costs for housing, childcare, groceries, and other everyday necessities. House Democrats and the Congressional Progressive Caucus will continue to stand with the American people to protect their healthcare against Republicans' attacks and keep the American Dream attainable for all.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

CONGRESS IS A MATH-FREE ZONE

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

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I was actually going to come here and do some things on demographics and some things that are optimistic, but I actually think we should first jump into the fact that we work in a math-free zone.

If you listen to the people coming behind the microphones, particularly today, it is as if they have read none of the CBO reports, none of the HHS reports, or the other things, particularly in regard to the ACA, which are subsidies. They are subsidies on top of subsidies to insurance companies.

Did you read the reports? Last year, 41 percent of those subsidies on subsidies of the people that had the enhanced subsidies paid no premium, so they had no skin in the game, which is not what we were promised when ObamaCare came into existence a dozen years ago.

We actually showed an economic report. I did entire floor speeches on it showing that only a third of that \$35 billion, \$40 billion a year subsidy on top of the subsidies actually goes to healthcare.

We also showed that a third of the folks never made a claim because now we are finding rampant fraud of people who were signed up because if they don't have a premium to pay, they had brokers signing them up, and they had no idea they had coverage.

Where is the passion to actually deal with the fact that particularly the left—and I have got to blame my brothers and sisters on the Republican side,

we have done the same. We have turned healthcare into financial engineering, instead of having it be about the cost, access, and delivery of having our brothers and sisters get healthier.

Is it you have sold your soul to the insurance companies? Remember, the ACA model is an insurance company model. You promised them rates of return, you promised them a market, so this is 7 percent of the healthcare market, and 94 percent of that 7 percent gets a subsidy.

Let's actually do math because you have been listening to—oh, yeah, there has been actually no math today as people talked about subsidies on top of subsidies. The CBO report that updated yesterday—and I can do this off the top of my head—basically said the 3 years cost \$80 billion.

The reason it is lower than my \$105 billion is because they made an assumption that this year, if the Senate were to pass these, that there will be a delayed sign-up, so there will be half a year or so where people—but if they did a claw back, the actual number on these subsidies is about \$105 billion.

Okay. Even if you do the CBO's number of \$80 billion for 3 years of subsidies on top of subsidies, and then you put in the 10 years of interest, you know, because of the interest window, this costs \$111 billion.

□ 1950

Understand what the left is telling you. They are basically saying they don't give a damn about healthcare. It is financing. If we wanted to change the price of healthcare, we would actually be looking at the innovations that are going on and start to legalize them, but there are too many damn lobbyists walking up and down our hallways here trying to stop us.

Look, here is an article from 2 days ago. Bless the State of Utah. If you are like me—I have hypertension. Can you imagine that? I have had it since I was a teenager. I take a calcium inhibitor. It lowers my blood pressure. Hopefully, I don't pop an aneurysm, but every 90 days, I have to pick up the phone to renew a doctor's prescription or go visit the doctor, even though it is the same prescription I have had for decades.

Utah just created AI that will take my data and renew my prescription. It will save a fortune for the people of Utah—cost, access, not subsidies.

Stanford medical reviewed basically being able to use certain wearables. Their new AI model predicts disease risk as you sleep from over 100 health conditions. They take some data as you are sleeping off your wearables, and boom, basically you are wearing a medical lab. Except the problem is, it is not allowed to prescribe. That would be illegal because that would require us to actually do things, modernize access to healthcare, use the technology to crash—oh, we can't use technology to crash the price. It would really annoy a whole bunch of the lobbyists. People

are lined up at our doors. People would show up at our fundraisers.

OpenAI chat health to connect data from health apps medical records—there is a revolution coming where we as people of America can stay dramatically healthier.

Why aren't we doing the discussion of what to do to lower the price of healthcare instead of having debates of another \$100 billion that goes on the very credit cards of the people who get—the insurance companies that get the subsidy that only as—our model is 38 percent of that subsidy actually ends up going into healthcare. We are still trying to figure out where the hell the rest of the money went.

Have we lost our minds? Why is it so much easier to just keep borrowing money and borrowing money and say: I am giving you something, but I am putting it on your credit card. It is like we are engaging in a level of financial lunacy here.

Now, let's actually go on to the even more difficult part of this discussion. I am doing this because I want us to start to have a benchmark. If there is anyone out there listening that has ever had to tolerate—because I have been doing these for a decade, and I am just exhausted. I am frustrated. I am angry.

My brothers and sisters here, Democrat and Republican, I like most of these people, and I am crushed. I am just absolutely intellectually, emotionally, even physically crushed at the inability to tell the truth. We don't want to tell the truth because our constituents get pissed off at us when we walk them through the math. The constituents look back and say, so you have been lying or the politicians have been lying to us for decades. The answer is yes, but it is not Democratic. It is not Republican. Much of the crisis that we are facing is demographic.

I am not going to explain all of this chart, but I am basically going to tell you, if you look at the financial lines on this chart, Mr. Speaker, it basically says, in 3 years, over half the money this Federal Government spends will go to those 65 and up. In 3 years, half the money we spend will go to those 65 and up.

Now, I need you to work through something with me. I have already presented the Moody's Analytics report that is saying, in 8 years from now, 30 percent of our spending, 30 percent of tax collections, will go just to interest. You are now seeing, in 3 years, the majority of our spending will actually go to benefits here. We have a math problem. Today, we have fewer 18 year olds than we had 20 years ago, but we have double the number of 65 year olds.

We can sit here and blame each other, but it is just demographics. It is happening over the entire industrialized world, but we are not allowed to actually have an honest discussion about it because the moment you say something, the other side is writing political commercials to rip your face off

because you told the truth about math and demographics.

It is real simple. Mr. Speaker, you are going to run for U.S. Senate. In your next term, the Medicare trust fund is empty. The Social Security trust fund is empty. It takes that first year, 2033, to just cover that shortfall that is over \$638 billion. If you don't fix it, you double senior poverty. You double the number of baby boomers who will live on the street, and everyone's Social Security check has a 24 percent cut.

How many people have you heard this week get behind the microphones and say maybe we should actually start to adopt technology, modernization, deal with the reality of our fiscal cliff that is coming? Instead, I watch a parade of my brothers and sisters here say: I have an idea. It costs more money, but it is a really good idea. Let's just put it on the credit card.

It is out of order, but I will get to it. I am going to say it a couple of times because I did a presentation of a report from I think it is the Massachusetts or Boston economic council, freaky smart professors. If you use a 6 percent discount rate, which you can argue something lower, but sometimes you have to talk about math. A child born today, you need 104 percent of that child's lifetime income, so more money than they make in their entire lifetime, just to cover Federal pension benefits, Social Security, Medicare, military, Federal employees, and railroad retirement.

Does anyone care? Does anyone care? What is wrong with this place? The immorality that the next generation will be poorer than us—but we are not allowed to say that because, let's be honest, people want more stuff. If we keep giving them more stuff, they vote for us. They might even contribute.

Look, let's just continue to do some of the basic demographics. From 2004 to 2024, you see this one line here, those are 18-year-olds. Somewhat similar, but now you start to get to 2035 and start to understand, without immigration, you have a world where you functionally have more 65-year-olds than you have 18-year-olds.

We are having debates right now. There is a report out that—now, it is not adjusted for self-deports—saying that the United States had about 400,000 as a first snapshot growth in 2025. We have another report that says the United States had zero population growth last year. We have another report that says the United States will have zero population growth this year.

□ 2000

Mr. Speaker, are we going to tell the truth about math? You want our Social Security. You earned it. You deserve it. You want our Medicare. You earned it. You deserve it. In 7 years, both of those trust funds are empty.

What are we going to do? The argument is we will just borrow more money because, God forbid, we have

any conversation about the cost of delivering healthcare. That will upset someone's business model or bureaucracy's model. It is hard to read.

The basic point was trying to show we are having terrific economic growth. I will show some slides here. With our GDP growth, some of the tax policies and some of the regulatory policies adopted in the last year are working.

Our problems are spending. Almost all the spending growth is interest because we are refinancing. We have \$30 trillion out there we have to bring to market over the next few years. I think this year refinance was going to be about \$11 trillion. That is bonds, notes, and paper that come due, plus another \$2 trillion probably in virgin. That is new issuances. They are subject to the higher interest rates today than we had 5 years ago.

That is why our interest coverage costs have gotten so much more expensive. That is why if we do total interest from last year—the interest we also pay back to the trust funds from the money we borrowed from the trust funds—we spent \$1.2 trillion on interest last year. Interest was the second biggest expense in this government last year, and it is getting worse.

What happens when we produce economic growth? We see this in red here. Our debt projections are actually every bit as bad as last year. That means for every dollar we take in, in tax receipts—remember that our tax as a percentage of GDP is basically back to the mean that it has been for decades. For every dollar we take in, we will spend \$1.43. That is \$1 in and \$1.43 out. How long can we carry that on, Mr. Speaker? Yet, you start looking at where we are demographically.

What frustrates me is this is just what we are. There is not a magic: Well, we will suddenly have more children. Really?

This is happening all over the industrialized world. We have countries that buy you a house on your third or fourth child, and it didn't increase fertility rates. Yet our pension systems were designed on four or five workers.

Remember that Social Security and Medicare are pay as you go. We had a benefit of building reserves when the baby boomers were in the labor force. They ultimately were designed as pay as you go.

I have been in a 50-50 district for years. The political consultants lose their minds. They tell me I am not allowed to talk about the truth in math, but no one here wants to go near it, not even the people in 20-point or 30-point partisan districts. Will anyone here help us plan for the future?

This future is coming fast. We have economists now say we have functionally 3 years before we get in the interest cycle back and forth. I will try to explain that one of these days.

You have to understand when we hit in—what was that? In 2020, we had 2.7 workers per Social Security retiree. We

are actually getting to the point over here where we think we are down to 2.3. In the coming decades, it is even less. So you and your spouse, you and your partner, functionally have your own retired person. It is just to understand the basic economics of the math.

Then we have the brain trusts who say we will just borrow the money each year. Did they hear the math? In 2033, the year the trust funds are empty, it is well over \$600 billion. You are going to borrow basically half. That is 40 percent equal to what is the—well, actually almost 60 percent equal to today's defense budget. We will just throw that on the credit card. The next year it is bigger, and the next year it is bigger.

There are good things happening. The GDP numbers, which means the baseline economic growth numbers, are remarkably healthy. There is huge investment going on right now in technology that could actually boost productivity. Therefore, it will boost wages.

Where is the unified theory here? We are going to do another reconciliation where we are going to tell the markets that we will start limiting the spending so we get lower interest rates and so we can have more market growth. People can afford houses, all the input. Instead, you have a government that for every dollar we spend, we have to borrow another 43 cents. This is insane.

I was going to try to walk through some things I consider really hopeful. These are the contributions to GDP growth. Many of these contributions in the GDP growth, if we can get our policies and our regulatory designed properly, we can get some pops and productivity. Pops and productivity means pops in people's wages and pops in tax collections.

We have to get all the stars aligned at the right time. I just don't see us doing that because somehow it is not part of our lexicon. I will do presentations. We have too many people, particularly even on my side, who say things that aren't mathematically true. We hear something, and we repeat it. The customs duties, tariffs, are helpful. It is not as much money as so many people think.

Mr. Speaker, I am blessed to chair the Joint Economic Committee. I am number four on Ways and Means. I chair the Oversight Committee. I am the guy running a bunch of committees and am responsible for a number of these really uncomfortable investigations. I am blessed to have a staff that is a hell of a lot smarter than I would ever have hoped to have been at their age.

We start to work out charts like this. I am going to make some people mad. As a matter of fact, I am not even going to bother with that one. I will walk us through the straight number.

We are still vetting the number because we are doing predictions. All of this could mean nothing if the Supreme Court tomorrow changes its rules on the President's authority to

do the enhanced tariffs—let's just call them that—and whatever authorities the President may have to supplement those tariffs.

We have to understand our latest articles that we are looking at saying, for 2026, \$215 billion of what we call customs receipts—tariffs—the baseline, if there had been no changes, it would have been \$84 billion. Mr. Speaker, is everyone working with me on this? That means there was \$131 billion of new tariff money coming into the budget this fiscal year.

If we pull out our calculator, so far in the first quarter of this fiscal year, we have been borrowing \$8 billion a day. We are hoping it actually comes back to the mean of being about \$6 billion. Let's do \$131 billion divided by 8. We functionally are covering 2 weeks of borrowing. It is helpful. It is not a solution.

Yet I will do the speech. I ask anyone who is watching if they have some suggestions of how I can actually start to break through because I am exhausted. Then I will watch someone come up. I am sitting in my office, and I am watching the floor. On occasion, I will pull out my calculator. I am just enraged because of the mathematical lying that goes on behind these microphones over and over. This is the survival of our Republic.

Let's actually do something that is semi-optimistic here. Let's look at waste and fraud. I had a meeting with a wonderful woman the other day. She actually is involved in our county party. She is really smart and absolutely lovely. I hope I misheard her. She seemed to believe that if we just didn't have that fraud in Minnesota, we could have covered a whole bunch of our national debt. She was genuinely concerned. It sounds like she was trying to quote what she actually thought she heard on cable news.

□ 2010

Mr. Speaker, I had to walk her through saying, okay, here is the best projection. Remember, some of this fraud may have happened over a decade. We are still getting all the numbers. There have already been a number of prosecutions, “Minneapolis woman pleads guilty in \$250 million Feeding Our Future fraud scheme.” She stole \$250 million. There are a number of these articles that I have here, but you still have to do the math.

The fraud, just to give you an idea of the scale of our Nation's borrowing, is only a couple of days of borrowing. How do I help people understand the perspective of the scale and the fact that everything that we as Members of Congress vote on is borrowed?

If you told me today that I have to balance the budget, I can do it. Every part of government has to be shut down—no Park Service, no Congress, no EPA, no FDA. Everything that is discretionary is gone. Today, my math is that several hundred billion dollars of mandatory spending have to be gone.

We are borrowing so damned much money now that we have to borrow money just to cover our Medicare obligations.

Do we understand? What if I came to you tomorrow and said that I can end most of the fraud in the IRS and the government and the SNAPs and all of these subsidies, like welfare and nutrition support programs?

We have actually had a bill for 6 or 7 years to use AI to audit the Pentagon. The Pentagon, I think, last year was its ninth audit. It failed. It could not pass an audit.

The same technology that we wanted to use to audit the Pentagon, it turns out that all of these programs, you just put that in the back end. Instead of doing the pay-and-chase model that, for some reason, the left seems to embrace, why let the fraud money ever go out the door?

I want to give you a simple example. How many of you have a credit card? How many of you have ever gone to a place where you have never purchased from before, and you stick your credit card in because I am going to buy some fishing tackle or whatever the hell you are buying, and suddenly, you get this text message saying: Is this you? Can you put in your PIN? Can you put in your code?

That technology has been around for a decade. If the credit card companies now have even more advanced AI to know that someone isn't you, that it is fraud, and that the data on your application and other things are fraud, you are telling me that we put billions and billions at risk trying to help our brothers and sisters, only to later find out that we have been financing scammers.

I have a passion for dealing with the long-run debt of this country. How do I convince the American people that we are going to have to do hard things when they are able to point and say that you haven't taken care of the filth and the stealing from our society, from our taxpayers? How do I get them to trust me when I still have scam artists robbing them?

Mr. Speaker, we have proposal after proposal to use technology to stop the scamming. Will it ever get a hearing here?

There almost seems to be a war to stop us from using technology because—I actually can't give you an honest answer. We know that, for years, I have been trying to fix technology at the IRS, and the IRS union loses its mind thinking: You are trying to get rid of us.

When we have been doing the audit at the Pentagon, the unionized auditors come and want to have meetings with me. They are concerned that we are trying to get rid of their jobs. I am just trying to protect the American taxpayers, but the technology already exists in the private sector. It is time we adopt it.

On healthcare, I just want to give this as an example. Utah, a couple of

days ago, announced that they are going to allow AI as a pilot program in Utah to prescribe. It is for the renewal of your prescriptions. As I was talking about before, my calcium inhibitor, my hypertension medicine, the same one I have had for decades, I could plug in my data to the AI, and it would order my prescription, and it would be sent to me. It functionally has almost no cost.

We have dozens of examples that I have brought to the floor here over the last—actually, dozens and dozens of examples that I have brought to the floor here over the years, showing how we could crash the price of healthcare instead of doing the scam of let's just keep subsidizing the subsidy and the insurance companies. How about we change the accessibility and use technology to make it less expensive?

We are actually working on a thought experiment—and this will be the end—a crazy thought experiment. President Trump and the White House actually get a lot of credit, though we worked on this for years. Glutides, GLP-1s, I believe by the end of this month, one of the tablet versions will be available for \$149 a month.

If obesity is responsible for 47 percent of U.S. healthcare spending, according to the Milken study, what would happen in our society, particularly where we have States where technically over half of their populations are considered obese? What would happen if access to the drug and, hopefully, nutrition and all the other things that need to go with it—but just do this thought experiment with me. The lobbyists weren't able to stop access to the glutides.

You might be on the cusp of a revolution of people who are morbidly obese, who have multiple chronic conditions, and who are losing their feet are about to get healthier.

Let's actually start accepting the technology, thinking creatively. With that, Mr. Speaker, we might be able to do some amazing things out there.

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

REFLECTING ON IMPACT OF ILLEGAL ACTION IN VENEZUELA

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, I prayed, and thanks to God for saving the lives of every single one of our precious soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and intelligence officers who were deployed secretly to Venezuela by the President of the United States without consent of Congress.

Importantly, this operation was planned and executed in violation of the United States Constitution, Article I, Section 9, Clause 7: “No money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in consequence of appropriations made by law.” That clause also requires publication of all publicly expended money, funds.