

transgender. I think for people like me, that is not a surprise at all because I think a lot of people who are being transgender are being transgender because they are egged on by psychiatrists or egged on by school counselors, or even more, egged on by popular culture as a way to find a peer group and as way to kind of be, you know, the cool rebel.

Yet, Dr. Oz has taken on the medical groups, including the American Psychiatric Association, who have been in favor of identifying people as transgender and even giving them puberty blockers and, worse, giving them surgeries before age 18.

Now, I don't know how anybody, any medical professional, anybody with a wit of common sense, would give anybody surgery before 25 years old because you know that people change their minds about things, and obviously if you have one of these dramatic surgeries and realize later that you made a mistake, it is going to result in huge psychiatric problems.

So I strongly encourage Dr. Oz to get more involved in this. I strongly encourage this body to lower their opinion of the American Psychiatric Association because these people who have spent a long period of time in school apparently have a complete and utter lack of common sense, and one wonders why we are listening to them or why we are required to give them money for their ridiculous efforts on behalf of early surgeries on transgender people.

In any event, I hope that all conservative commentators, when they talk about the transgender thing, in addition to talking about the relatively tiny number of men who participate in women's sports, go after the psychiatrists and psychologists who are giving puberty blockers and, even more, giving outright surgeries on our young people that I would bet in very, very many cases, they will regret and they will regret listening to the professionals who went to school at length for such a preposterous endeavor.

FINDING WASTE IN INCOME TRANSFER PROGRAMS

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, the next thing I would like to point out is I thank Congressman OWENS for introducing a bill that we recently dealt with in the Education Committee.

Over time, certainly in Minnesota but across the country, we are finding shocking amounts of money being wasted on income transfer programs. We found another one here. We are right now giving aid to students who may not even exist, and maybe some of that money winds up with colleges and universities toward tuition, but a lot of the money winds up with what we will call ghost students, students who don't exist except for on paper, and somebody winds up stealing money that the government is printing.

First of all, one more time, it gives a lesson as to why things ought to be handled on a State and local level because I think State and local govern-

ments are going to be much quicker to pick up on the fact that they are being taken advantage of than the unwieldy Federal Government.

Secondly, it is continuing a trend that we have in this country of encouraging the crooks in society to take advantage of the Federal Government and get wildly rich.

We are, in this bill, going to make it a much more difficult thing and require the government to look into this matter and into the students who are getting these aid payments so that things in one more program don't wind up completely out of control.

I strongly encourage this body to pare back on any of these programs that are wrought with fraud. I think a conclusion that ought to be dealt with once you get done looking at fraud for food stamps or fraud for Medicaid or fraud for earned income tax credit is that if you let the Federal Government do anything, there will be tons of fraud in it and the less of these programs, the better.

It doesn't mean that people can't be helped, but the people should be helped by either private charity, or they should be helped by State and local governments.

FAMILIES WITHOUT MEN

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, my final thing I am going to point out, and I recently had a meeting on this with the Vice President, but what I think is the biggest problem with the government right today, which is further related to all of these income transfer payments, is the fact that right now in this government and really for the last 60 years, we have been penalizing couples who have children in wedlock.

This has been a longtime dream of getting rid of the nuclear family. It was Karl Marx's dream. It was Kate Millett, the mother of the women's studies department, dream, families without men. All sorts of families can succeed. I assume you know many single parents who have done a fantastic job of raising their children.

Nevertheless, as they work toward their goal of keeping men out of the family, it statistically overall does hurt the children to a degree. It is not something that we should be encouraging.

I sit here and listen to hearings about educational achievement. I listen to hearings about crime problems, hearings about depression, hearings about drug use, and to a degree, I think the answer is never brought up in these hearings.

The answer is: Stronger families. Yet, if this government is going to give a bonus of \$25,000 per year or penalize somebody \$25,000 per year for getting married before they have children, it is obviously, first of all, unfair on its face, or grotesquely favoring one lifestyle over another lifestyle. Secondly, we are reducing the number of children who do have a mother and father at home.

I strongly encourage Vice President VANCE and President Trump to step

forward and appoint some sort of committee or commission to recommend what we should do instead of dramatically penalizing couples who decide to get married.

I will point out that you are hurting the children, which is true. I think you are hurting the mothers, which is true. Yet, according to expert sociologists like George Gilder, you are hurting the prospective husbands or fathers because the way society is built up, the primary purpose of most men in the country is supposed to be to take care of their wives and children.

As an Indian immigrant friend of mine said: When you have the government marrying the woman, it kind of leaves the man out of the picture, and he loses what is supposed to be his natural purpose in life.

I strongly encourage Speaker JOHN-SON, Majority Leader THUNE, and President Trump to establish some sort of committee in which we can look at all of these programs. There are about 70 programs out there in which we penalize people for getting married.

Pell grants, it is much easier to get a college scholarship if you are a single parent than a married parent. Food stamps, low-income housing, earned income tax credit, daycare subsidies, like I said, about 70 programs, and it looks, to a certain extent, the way they were put together, their design was to cause the breakdown of the American family.

I hope that is something that can be done over the next couple of months. I thought it would be done today, but I think the war in Iran is taking everybody's focus. Yet, I would like to see us by the time June rolls around to have these committees or commissions at work preparing recommendations so that we no longer exhibit this hatred that we apparently have in this country of people who decide to get married before they have children.

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

□ 1140

SPEAKING TRUTH ABOUT CRYPTO AND CONGRESS

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

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, and still I rise. I rise today, Mr. Speaker, with a very special topic. I rise today, Mr. Speaker, because I am a liberated, unbought, unbossed Democrat.

I not only speak the truth to power; I speak truth about power. You speak truth to power by simply saying: "Power, there is a problem. Let's solve it." It is a great thing to do. When you speak truth about power, you say: "Power, there is a problem, and you are it."

Today, I am going to speak truth about power. I am going to do so because I will not allow the power that I am to speak about to intimidate me. I insist on having the full benefit of my

free speech rights, and I will take advantage of them. If it should cost me, I will pay the price. I plan to speak truth, not only to power, but also speak truth about power.

Today, I am going to embrace the topic that has caused a good deal of consternation in this Congress, a topic that many people would say that it would be injudicious to embrace because of the consequences, but there comes a time when you have to take a stand. Consequences are things that have to be considered, but when it comes to my country and when it comes to the American consumer, I am willing to take on those consequences. I am willing to do what I believe to be not only the right thing but the righteous thing.

Today, I will embrace the topic: Why the crypto industry is spending mega-millions of dollars to control Congress.

Why is the crypto industry spending mega-millions of dollars to control Congress, not to have debates in Congress, not to allow the American people to hear all sides of issues, but to control Congress to the extent that but one side is going to be presented?

Today, I stand and I speak for all of those people who agree with me. I don't speak for people associated with any party. I don't speak for people associated with any caucus. I speak for everybody who agrees with me, and there are a good many. Not all will say what I say, but they agree with me.

By the way, I say what I say, and I don't expect others to say what I say because I think I am uniquely qualified to say what I say. I sit on the Committee on Financial Services. I have chaired the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations for the Committee on Financial Services. I am proud to say that I have lived under the leadership of the Honorable Barney Frank and the Honorable MAXINE WATERS, and I am proud to say that at some point, I believe that we will have the leadership on that committee again. This is why the crypto industry is so concerned about Members who might take the position that I take.

The topic again: Why the crypto industry is spending mega-millions of dollars to control Congress. Let's start with what is actually happening right now in Congress. The Congress is the House and the Senate. We are in the House of Representatives, but it is the House and the Senate. The Senate has passed a piece of legislation that deals with housing. It is styled the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act.

I have a section-by-section breakdown. I am not going to go through every section, but I can tell you that there is language in here that, if implemented, will be of great benefit to people in the area of housing, people who are in need of housing, people who are in need of a place to call home. There is language in here that I support.

I also want you to know that in this bill that deals with housing, the crypto industry decided that something was

germane that I totally, absolutely, and completely disagree with. The crypto industry decided that near the very end of the bill, on the last page of the document that I have, after having topics styled "Rental Assistance Demonstration program," "Increasing Housing in Opportunity Zones," "Whole-Home Repairs Act," and many other things that are beneficial, the crypto industry—this is on the very last page of the summary that I have—found reason to believe that what I am about to articulate is germane. I don't think it is germane, but it is in the bill.

The crypto industry has included language in section 1001, section 1001, styled "Central bank digital currency," crypto industry, central bank legislation in a housing bill. Here is what it would do. This section pauses the Federal Reserve from issuing a central bank digital currency, pauses, pauses for approximately 5 years.

It pauses it. That pause is not good enough for some people. There are some people who want a permanent ban on a central bank issuing a digital currency.

Now, I have to give some edification to many people who are listening. Let's start with this. Right now, if you desire to, you can transfer with crypto dollars—cryptocurrency, I should say—money from one person to another without it going through any other entity or going to any other person, one person to another without going to any other person, friends.

That kind of transference is beneficial in many ways to many people. Some people who would do dastardly deeds are indeed enthralled with this methodology. They are enthralled with it because, when they can transfer from one person to another, if they want to transfer funds to someone engaging in some sort of illicit activity, they can make that transfer and remain anonymous.

There is something called pseudonymous. They are pseudonymous. They have pseudonymous positions that allow them to be secretive within the transaction. It is called pseudonymity. They have pseudonymity.

This pseudonymity allows people to do dastardly things and not be recognized for their dastardly deeds. It makes it very difficult to catch them. For example, someone who wants to send money to a terrorist organization, you can do this anonymously. You have pseudonymity.

Also, you might recall some time ago not so long ago, there was a group of people, maybe one person—I am not sure—who wanted to extort money from a very notable family. They wanted that money to be transferred in crypto dollars, crypto fashion, digital currency. They wanted it to be transferred digitally because they knew that it would prevent them from being caught.

Now, maybe they would be caught. Maybe there is some super means of spying and finding out, but their

chances of being caught were very slim if they could have the money transferred from one person to another, not go through a central bank, and, as a result, claim their ill-gotten gains and go off into the world unknown to people as the criminals they would be.

□ 1150

It is great for those persons who want to extort money, this direct transfer of money from one person to another.

Now, it would be against the law to do this, but it would also be up to the law to find some means by which you can prevent this or you can at least arrest the people who do this. But with this pseudonymity, they have the ability to do this and not be caught. If they are caught, it would be very difficult to accomplish the actual act of catching them after they committed the crime. So extortion is one means by which this kind of direct transfer can be used.

But there is another means. This means is something that applies to people who have large sums of money but don't want to pay taxes. Some things bear repeating. There are people who have large sums of money who do not want to pay their fair share of taxes.

With this direct ability to transfer dollars from one person to another, transfer them digitally, transfer them at a later point into a currency that is tangible, this ability to do this also opens the door for them to not only avoid taxes, which is legal, but to evade taxes, which is illegal. It is lawful to avoid; illegal to evade.

Many people in this country—I know it is a surprise to some people to know that there are some people who would evade taxes. My dear friends, my dear brothers and sisters, there are people in this country who, if given the opportunity to pay zero taxes, they would pay zero taxes, notwithstanding the fact that they have large sums of money.

Well, I believe that taxation is something that is necessary. If I want the roads that I traverse, if I want the bridges that I cross, if I want the infrastructure that we have, taxation is necessary. You don't pass an offertory. You don't pass an offertory for infrastructure.

We need taxation to help us with hospitals. Sometimes we have to build the infrastructure with tax dollars to aid and abet people who are sick. Aid and abet might not be the best choice of words. Sometimes my diction is less than superb.

The point is, we need tax dollars to do things to help people in this country that we have concluded are in need of help, and it is necessary to do so. That is what we do here in Congress. We pass legislation quite regularly to help people, and we decided that this is a good thing to do.

But you can't get the tax dollars from people who are evading because you don't know that they are actually in the business of evading until you

can prove it, you can't prove it if you can't catch them, and you can't catch them if they are making these direct transfers from one person to another, one entity to another. They are anonymous.

I am not saying that all of my colleagues had this in mind when they say they want privacy. Privacy is a big issue. They are saying that the government ought not know that I am moving my money from one place to another, that that's my personal business.

Well, it is your personal business until you break the law. Then the question becomes if your position is to break the law, how do we prevent it. The way you prevent it is to have a third entity involved in this transaction, a third entity. That entity, that third entity, can then have some means by which your anonymous position is known.

If you go to the bank now and you want to withdraw funds, you can do so. It is your money. You can do so, but you can't withdraw it to send it to a terrorist organization. I think that is a pretty good thing. I don't want terrorists to be able to get money easily. In fact, I don't want them to get it at all. But if we make it easier for them to get it, this system will be utilized.

Let me give you an example. I have it on good authority that the drug traffickers—there is a big issue in this country about drug trafficking. The drug traffickers, the people who are dealing with cross-border selling of guns, they use crypto methodologies. They use a crypto method to transfer the dollars involved. Well, we don't want them to be anonymous. We want to catch them. These are the people who are indirectly killing American citizens. We want to capture them. We want to stop this.

They can transfer the guns, and once the guns are received, the money is transferred. It is done from one person to another, and the government cannot seem to be able to find a way into that transaction such that the people who are committing the crime can be properly prosecuted.

That is pseudonymity, unknown persons transferring large sums of money for unknown reasons.

A third entity in this process that allows the money to get into it, digital dollars—we might call it a digital dollar, digital currency—gets into this third entity, and the identity is exposed. We know that you are transferring this huge sum of money. It is okay for you to transfer it, but we want to know who is getting it. That is what we can do with some sort of third entity that we can call a central digital bank. You can have it by any name, but the point is, a third entity that gets in between the direct transfers of these huge sums of dollars.

By the way, currently, without this, you can literally transfer unlimited amounts of money, and no one will know. It is illegal to do some of the

things that are being done, but how do you deal with the illegality if you can't deal with the people who are actually engaged in illegal transactions. That is the issue.

So the crypto industry has decided: Here is what we will do. All the people who think as I think, we will just take them out of Congress. We will just have a Congress that has one mindset, and that is an absolute ban on any kind of centrality associated with this movement of money, an absolute ban.

Now, the bill that I called to your attention, this bill, just has a pause, as it is called in the bill—just has a pause for a period of time, just a pause.

There are people in this House who are antithetical to a pause. They want permanency. They are willing to kill a housing bill because they can't have a permanent ban. They will kill a housing bill because they cannot get a permanent ban against some sort of centrality in the digital currency world.

This legislation should not have the ban that it has in it. It is a pause. Excuse me. It shouldn't have the pause that it has. Somebody said: Okay, we are going to compromise.

The art of compromise is how things get done. I appreciate it. They made a compromise.

But a temporary pause is not good enough. There has to be a permanent ban, because they want the permanent ability to move money from one person, unlimited amounts, to another person with anonymity, pseudonymity. It is pseudonymity because they assume an identity that is not necessarily a name that belongs to the person. They get another name of some sort.

□ 1200

Mr. Speaker, this shows you the length and the extent that the crypto industry is willing to go to have its way. They are literally willing to kill a housing bill because they cannot have language in it that would prevent the transfers of funds from one person to another in this pseudonymous fashion, this pseudonymity, this means of avoiding and evading.

That is not all they seem to be interested in doing. Yes, I am talking about the crypto industry, so call them up and tell them: AL GREEN is on the floor, and he is doing it again.

Yes, here is what AL GREEN says that they want also. They also are eliminating, as best as they can, the notion of seniority meaning something, the notion of upward mobility in Congress being affixed to some extent with seniority. Seniority is being in a position for some time, understanding of the rules of the road, understanding the bills that have already passed, having the institutional knowledge to bring forth what is necessary to present the counterargument. Seniority is how you acquire this. You can't get it by being anyplace other than here and serving time here—well, serving in Congress. Serving time is not an appropriate way

to say it. It is by being in Congress and serving in Congress. You have to be here.

They want to eliminate that. If they eliminate this, then, Mr. Speaker, money will rule. Money will be the methodology by which you can acquire chairmanships, and when money becomes a means by which one can acquire chairmanships, the AL GREENS of the world will not be in Congress. That is because we don't have the connection to the dollars and because some of us refuse to take certain money.

I don't take money from the crypto industry. They graded me out just recently, and I graded an F. I graded an F. When you get an F, Mr. Speaker, that means that they don't like you. That means that when they don't like you, they will do whatever they can, it seems right now, within the law, to expel you and to evict you.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot allow money to have a greater influence on elections than it already has.

There are Members of Congress who are here because of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 or because of what happened at the Edmund Pettus Bridge. They are not going to be here if seniority is eliminated. A good many of us won't be here, a good many.

Congress will then become a place influenced by and controlled by megadollars. People will have to raise millions of dollars, not just 1 million, not just 5 million, not just 10 million, 20 million, or 30 million. \$40 million easily becomes the amount of money that one would have to raise to become a Member of Congress.

So it becomes more about money than about issues in general. There will be specific issues that will come to the floor, and they will be unopposed because the crypto industry and the persons of that ilk associated with the industry will have the money to own Congress. At this point, we will literally have the best Congress money can buy. We will have the best Congress that money can buy.

It depends on where the money is coming from as to which issues are going to be brought to the well of this Congress and voted on. There will be issues of greater importance that will never get voted on because the mega millionaires won't allow it. They will control Congress. They already have an inordinate amount of influence. They will have an overwhelming amount of influence. They will be able to determine what issues are important in the Congress of the United States of America.

I stand in the way. I stand in the way now, and I will stand in the way as long as I am in Congress. They know this, and they know that the AL GREENS of the world are the people who are not likely to support what they are doing.

I do believe in compromise, so I haven't written off compromise legislation, but this notion of a permanent ban, I think we have got to be very careful.

There are additional reasons we ought to be careful. It is because China does not ban centrality. Now, here I am mentioning China. China doesn't have our best interests, China has China's best interests at heart. While we are pausing and banning, they are going to be moving forward with a digital currency, a digital currency that is backed by another form of currency. It will have some backing.

There is a war for currency supremacy in this country. There is a war to dethrone the American dollar as the king of reserve currencies. As such, we can borrow money at a lower cost. As such, we are able to impose these sanctions that you hear us talking about, Mr. Speaker, that we can impose. That is because countries hold dollars in reserve. They hold dollars in reserve because they believe that our treasuries, our dollars, are going to be there, and they will be the last dollar standing.

If they hold it in reserve, there is another reason why, and I simplify it. There is another reason why they hold it. It is because they know that we have the biggest guns, and nobody is going to take anything from the United States of America. They are not going to take our currency. They are not going to destroy us from within because we can protect ourselves.

People value the American dollar. That is why there is this war, this war for currency supremacy. If the yuan replaces the dollar or some other currency, then that means that that country will have lower interest rates when they borrow. It means that that country can then influence the dynamics associated with sanctions across the globe. That country will then displace the United States of America as the preeminent country in the world with the ability to influence geopolitical circumstances with what I would call soft power, the soft power of the American dollar. It is an awesome power that we have.

There are people willing to sacrifice this just so that they can make more money and just so that they can hold on to money. Too much is not enough. A billionaire wants to be a trillionaire. Too much is not enough. Well, Mr. Speaker, have all you want. Just do it lawfully, pay taxes on it, and I will salute you, Mr. Speaker.

However, this notion of doing things that would damage the American dollar I am going to defend. I defend the dollar. I defend the American consumer, and I defend the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

AL, why do you bring the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau into this statement?

Here is why. It is because my colleagues across the aisle are doing everything that they can to eliminate the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. That is the one entity that is designed to protect the consumer and that would be there to look into illicit transactions of dollars by way of cryptocurrency. They are the one enti-

ty they are willing to eviscerate, to decimate, and to eliminate.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to have closing comments. How much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HURD of Colorado). The gentleman from Texas has 45 seconds remaining.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I have been censured but not silenced.

In closing, I still say the solution is impeachment. We are still in a countdown to impeachment.

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

□ 1210

AMERICA MUST COME TOGETHER

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

Mr. KILEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I recently changed my voter registration to Independent. Accordingly, I asked the Clerk of the House to update my party designation to Independent in all official publications and databases of the U.S. House of Representatives.

This reflects the way I have always approached my role as an elected Representative: to be an independent voice for the communities that I represent, to hold politicians in both Sacramento and Washington accountable, to work with both sides to find common ground, and to answer directly to my constituents and always put our district first.

While it is unusual for a Member of Congress to have no party affiliation—in fact, I am now the only such Member in the House—this is the norm for most elected positions throughout the country. In California, for example, almost all offices are nonpartisan: your mayor, city councilors, school board members, county supervisors, sheriff, and district attorney. Every day, these officials work toward practical solutions to the problems affecting their communities, unencumbered by partisanship. I think we could use more of that in Congress.

It is no secret that I have been critical of partisanship in Congress, from the longest government shutdown in U.S. history to an epidemic of gerrymandering that has spread from State to State.

If there is one thing that Americans agree on, it is that political division has become a serious problem for our country. We need to reorient our politics toward bringing us together as Americans rather than tearing us apart as partisans. That means, for example, finding concrete ways to make life more affordable rather than each side blaming the other for why it isn't.

We are also living in a moment of great uncertainty and perhaps dramatic transformation, where technological change could bring incredible

opportunities along with unfamiliar risks and dislocations. The ordinary rituals of partisan politics are simply inadequate in these extraordinary times and are simply incapable of meeting this generational challenge. Our ability to work as one team serving all Americans is now more important than ever.

SEQUOIAS PROVIDE LIVING LINK TO PAST

Mr. KILEY of California. Mr. Speaker, this week, I was delighted to see that a bill that I am sponsoring, the Save Our Sequoias Act, passed the House of Representatives with overwhelming bipartisan support.

This act, as the name suggests, is designed to save, preserve, and protect one of the truly great marvels that we have here on Earth. The sequoia is the largest organism on the planet, and it actually continues to grow throughout its lifetime. They can live for millennia, so these trees serve as a living link to our past, a link to antiquity itself.

When you see these marvels, which we have so many of in California, it truly inspires a sense of awe and humility as you contemplate both their scale here in the present and their link to our past.

The bad news is that these incredible marvels are under threat. Over the last decade, we have seen 20 percent of them destroyed, largely because of the growing intensity of wildfires. The time has come for us to take urgent action to ensure that they can continue to inspire awe and serve their important ecological purpose as well for generations and millennia to come.

Specifically, the Save Our Sequoias Act enhances coordination between Federal, State, Tribal, and local land managers. It creates a giant sequoia health and resiliency assessment to prioritize and inform forest management practices. It declares an emergency to expedite environmental reviews and consultations while maintaining robust scientific analysis. It establishes a comprehensive reforestation strategy to generate giant sequoias in groves destroyed by catastrophic wildfires. It directs the Secretary of the Interior to develop and implement an insect-monitoring strategy to limit potentially fatal infestations. All of this is designed to expedite forest management and wildfire prevention for the remaining giant sequoia groves.

Mr. Speaker, I was speaking a moment ago about the need to find common ground and things that can bring us together, and this is a small—well, actually quite large, but in the grand scheme of things small—example, but I think it is an encouraging one.

This is an example where we have been able to come together and say that this is something that is larger than any of us; this is something that transcends partisanship; and this is a way that we can be stewards of our heritage and protect a true treasure for those who will inherit it from us for generations to come.