

coordinated Federal response is critical.

I want to thank President Trump for approving the emergency declaration and FEMA for mobilizing resources. Now we must act with urgency and precision. First, I call on FEMA to ensure rapid deployment of personnel and prepositioned supplies, with a focus on restoring access to food, clean water, and emergency medical care.

Second, I urge the administration to expedite individual assistance and public assistance under the Stafford Act so families can begin recovery immediately, not weeks from now.

Third, we must prioritize the rapid restoration of power and water systems. I ask for full Federal cooperation, including support from the Department of War, to stabilize critical infrastructure as quickly as possible.

Fourth, I ask this body to be prepared to support supplemental disaster funding, if needed, because for island communities like ours, recovery costs are disproportionately high, and resources are limited.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I ask that we not lose sight of the bigger picture. Events like this highlight the vulnerability of remote U.S. communities to increasingly severe weather and the need for sustained Federal investment in resilient infrastructure, energy security, and emergency preparedness in the territories.

Mr. Speaker, right now this is about life and safety. In the coming days, it will be about recovery. In the months ahead, it must be about resilience.

But today I ask for something simple and human. I ask this body and the American people to keep the Northern Mariana Islands in your prayers. Pray for the families riding out this storm as we speak. Pray for our first responders and pray for strength as our community begins to pick up the pieces.

We are proud to be a part of this Nation. We serve this Nation, and in this moment, we are asking this Nation to stand with us.

May God bless the Northern Mariana Islands.

EVERGLADES DETENTION CENTER VISIT

(Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ of Florida was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, last week, I conducted an unannounced oversight visit to the Everglades detention camp the Trump administration and Florida's government despicably named Alligator Alcatraz.

While the employees in charge honored the legal requirement to allow me in, for the 3 hours I was there they wouldn't allow me to speak with the people they had put in cages. Because I arrived without notifying ICE, as Federal law allows, they had no time to whitewash the inhumane conditions.

I want to tell Americans the truth about what is being done in the middle

of our Everglades, in our name, and on our dime. Mr. Speaker, when you walk into this facility's dormitory area, which is a series of massive tents built on top of a tarmac, all you see are cages. Inside were 32 adult men, from ages 18 to 75, all packed into each cage, eight cages per tent, with 1,500 packed in that way in total.

The cages are clearly unsanitary. It is dirty and smells like urine. Men used the toilet inside the cages with only an open-sided, pelvis-level wall a few feet from the beds with toilets that have feces remnants in them.

So whom have they put in these cages? Are they convicted criminals?

Some possibly are. Let's be clear: Convicted criminals should be deported. However, the vast majority are not that.

Do they pose an immediate public threat?

Under ICE's own risk assessments, the vast majority do not. Yet everyone there suffers, and that suffering is very intentional because cruelty is the point. Some have been held in cages for 6 months or more. Detainees report being beaten, taunted, and pepper-sprayed. Many have disappeared, without a day in court, to distant third countries where they don't speak the language.

Haitians have been dumped into Mexico. Cubans have been sent to African countries and jailed on arrival.

When I walked through, men cried out for help. An older man was sprawled on his cot, clearly ill. I am certain more are sick. I have seen reports that staff deny access to prescriptions, and several detainees have been hospitalized. They are served tiny meals marked fresh that were clearly dated 2 weeks old.

For months, ICE denied detainees' access to lawyers or family, including U.S. citizen kids. A court order finally forced them to install unmonitored phone lines for people inside to call their attorneys.

Human rights advocates alleged more violations since then. One harrowing example came just before my visit. On April 2, staff at the facility shut off phones for a full day, cutting contact to the outside world. When detainees protested, officers entered their cages and severely beat them. According to the court filing, one man was "thrown to the ground and beaten by multiple guards. He suffered injuries to his shoulder . . . and was kicked in the head. A guard placed their knee on his neck. . . ."

Reports say when officers pepper-sprayed everyone in cages, an "older gentleman passed out, as he could not breathe."

It begs the basic question: Who is in charge here?

ICE argues in court that this is a State facility, immune from Federal law, which is absurd. Immigration is a Federal responsibility.

The site is in the middle of a federally protected area on Miccosukee Tribal land under a Federal treaty.

Why is ICE hiding behind Florida?

Is it so they can try to evade accountability for depriving detained people of basic human rights?

As soon as I arrived, I was met by Florida State employees and contractors. During the tour, I asked if ICE had a permanent presence, and they said yes. Any questions I asked about the detainee population were referred to ICE. Yet ICE personnel not only refused to speak with me, they blocked me from talking to the men caged there for months, despite my having signed privacy releases for specific detainees.

Three things about this facility are crystal clear: First, while Florida taxpayers bear the costs, ICE is clearly in charge. That means this camp should fall under the same rules as any other ICE facility.

Second, it is an ecological disaster. Taxpayers spent billions to restore the Everglades, which is a critical water resource and a homeland for the Miccosukee people. Now we are spending countless tax dollars to produce heaven only knows how much pollution, because ICE never conducted an environmental assessment.

Third, this facility makes a mockery of our values.

It is an insult to the Bill of Rights, which requires due process and prohibits cruel and usual punishment for all people, not just citizens. It is a gut punch to family members who can only watch loved ones waste away inside dirty cages with no legal recourse.

We know this is wrong. We know it is un-American. That is why we must stand up. I watch with pride as my south Florida neighbors mobilize to hold vigils outside the Everglades interment camp and unite in solidarity.

For my part, I led Florida Democrats to sponsor legislation to shut this place down and guarantee every Member of Congress can conduct oversight at ICE jails, like I did, to see the truth.

Mr. Speaker, this detention camp must be shut down. Our conscience demands it, and I will not rest until the families torn apart by this stain on the State of Florida seek and obtain justice.

BLACK SUNDAY

(Mr. LUCAS of Oklahoma was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember the 91st anniversary of a solemn day for the people of Oklahoma: Black Sunday.

While perhaps there are not many Americans who know about that consequential Sunday on April 14, 1935, I want to take a few minutes to tell you about it, Mr. Speaker, based on what my ancestors told me and the hardships that came from that day.

I still remember my grandfather, Fred Lucas, telling me and my cousins about Black Sunday. You see, Mr. Speaker, in Crawford, Oklahoma, on

Sunday afternoon in those days in the 1930s, they would have a community baseball game which would last after church through the afternoon and into the early evening hours.

My grandfather described that particular Sunday because they had just finished a multi-night hellfire and brimstone revival, and the community was very fired up about the things going on in the world and their responsibilities. Remember, this is 1935. It was tough times, but if a community could afford a bat, a ball, and at least a glove for the catcher, they could play baseball, the American pastime.

My grandfather described that afternoon. In the course of the baseball game, this giant, dark cloud appeared in the northwest sky. It rolled in, and the closer it got, literally, it was a miles-tall cold front full of nothing but dust.

Finally, someone in the crowd said: Oh, my goodness, we have not repented. We have not followed the advice, and the Lord is going to take action against us.

The entire community scattered. They may have misgauged the dust storm, but the dust was so bad that literally for the next few days, the skies were dark, the Sun was clouded, and everyone stayed in to avoid that.

Now, that dust storm did not just come across Oklahoma. It came across the entire Plains. It worked its way across North America, and it made it all the way to Washington, D.C., where ironically, that next week, the House Agriculture Committee was in meetings to discuss how to address the conservation disasters of the Dust Bowl of the 1930s.

It was so bad that it brought it to the attention of my colleagues, our predecessors here in Congress, that not just were the Great Plains suffering, but so was the rest of the country.

The House Agriculture Committee, the United States House, and the United States Senate took action. Thirteen days later, on April 27, they passed the act, and it was signed into law by the President that created the Soil Conservation Service, what we now refer to as the NRCS.

That great ecological tragedy was based on years and decades of bad decisions. In 1935, Congress chose to address that and began the process that we now think of as the NRCS, the EQIP programs, all the things to protect the soil, the water, and the air quality in this great Nation. It was an accomplishment.

Mr. Speaker, when I was sent by my neighbors to represent them in the United States Congress to serve on that very same Ag Committee, I was very focused on making sure that the mistakes that had gone back almost a century would not be repeated and that we would do better going forward. Every farm bill that we passed since I have been here, we have strengthened those provisions in the conservation title. It is why we have not had a Black

Sunday again on the Great Plains of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, we have to remember the ominous things in our past, not just the good. Black Sunday was an ominous event that reflected decades of bad policy, but it started the process of correcting that.

I am proud of the conservation accomplishments we have made. I am proud that my children, my grandchildren, and I have never seen something like my grandfather, Fred Lucas, described.

Let's stay at the forefront of conservation. Let's continue to protect our water, our soil, our air; and let's move this country forward.

□ 1245

RISING COSTS

(Ms. BARRAGÁN of California was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans continue to enable Donald Trump's costly and disastrous war of choice against Iran, all while refusing to lift a finger to help working families as their bad policies drain Americans' wallets.

We need Republicans to act, to rein in this dangerous President and help Americans have a shot at getting ahead in Trump's economy.

This district work period, I traveled around my district to hear directly from people. I heard the same thing over and over again: Everything costs more and families are struggling. Gasoline prices have skyrocketed. Grocery bills have gone up. Cost of shoes? Up.

Let's be clear about why. It is Trump's war of choice that is costing American families, and it is his tax through tariffs on American families. Due to the war, oil prices and gas prices have jumped dramatically. When gas prices go up, everything goes up.

Jessica Hernandez is a driver who transports people with disabilities in a wheelchair-accessible van. She serves people in communities in California like Lynwood, South Gate, Long Beach, and Lakewood every single day.

However, now, because of rising costs, she works longer hours to cover the cost of getting her passengers to where they need to go while making sure she can still feed her family.

Think about that. She is working harder, longer, and still falling behind because of Trump's reckless war in Iran.

Jessica was not the only person I heard from. I also heard from a truck driver who said the rising diesel gas prices have caused the price of delivering goods to go up. It also means hiring fewer drivers.

If that is not enough, if you order your goods through Amazon, they just announced a price increase because of this reckless war of choice that Trump and Republicans support.

I also spoke to a small business owner in Carson, Monica Jordan. She is

the general manager of a small family business, a restaurant. Her suppliers have raised their prices. When we met, she showed me just one of the letters she received from a vendor saying that costs had increased 13 percent, and they had to pass on at least half of the cost to her small business. The result is higher prices for her business and customers.

This story is not unique to this business. We are hearing these stories from businessowners across the country that they are experiencing higher costs, fewer customers, and some are having to close their doors.

Then there is my constituent Marysol Arellano, a single mom with two kids in San Pedro. She used to take her kids out every Sunday for a family meal, a moment to bond. Now she can't afford it. What used to be a simple family meal is now a luxury.

That is what this cost-of-living crisis looks like. It is people working longer hours. It is small businesses barely hanging on. It is families losing the moments that matter most.

Instead of addressing the rising costs, President Trump has slapped tariffs on many products that enter the United States, and that is a tax on our working families.

Trump's war with Iran is costing Americans billions. While Americans pay up to \$7 for just a gallon of gas so they can drive to work or drop their kids off at school, the U.S. spends at least \$2 billion of their hard-earned taxpayer dollars a day firing missiles and dropping bombs.

When Americans are struggling, these are the wrong priorities, and Trump shows no sign of focusing on Americans first. His latest proposed budget calls for cuts to programs like energy assistance and affordable housing that would help Americans get back on their feet but asks for huge increases in military spending instead.

That tells you everything you need to know; billions for war overseas but nothing to lower costs here at home.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve better. They deserve leaders who are focused on bringing costs down, not driving them up. House Democrats are fighting to lower costs and make life affordable for working families.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HARIDOPOLOS). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 48 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. EZELL) at 2 p.m.