

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.

PRAYER

Reverend John Kellogg, Christ Church Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

Gracious God, we give thanks for the goodness of this Nation and for the Representatives who offer themselves in service to lead our country.

Bless, guide, and protect them, along with their families, staffs, and all who serve in this building.

Grant them strength, courage, and resilience as they face the challenges before them, and help them to make wise decisions for the well-being of our people.

Keep this Nation ever under Your care.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House the approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. DAVIDS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNIZING PINE CREEK RAIL TRAIL

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the beautiful Pine Creek Rail Trail, which was recently named Pennsylvania's 2026 Trail of the Year by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

This 62-mile trail connects Jersey Shore, Pennsylvania, and Wellsboro, Pennsylvania. Visitors hike through the scenic Pine Creek Gorge, better known as the Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania.

The Pine Creek Rail Trail was first used by the Iroquois nation and then later developed as a railroad in the 19th century. For more than 100 years, this railroad helped move tons of iron, coal, and lumber through the region. In 1989, the railroad ceased operation.

Today, the nationally recognized trail attracts more than 44,000 visitors each year and generates more than \$5 million in local revenue.

Mr. Speaker, the Pine Creek Rail Trail is a shining example of the beautiful landscapes in the Commonwealth, and I thank all the volunteers and offi-

cialists who work tirelessly to upkeep the trail and ensure that visitors can experience the beauty of the region.

MAKING OUR SKIES SAFER

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

Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the bipartisan ALERT Act.

Last year, 67 lives were lost in a tragic midair collision of a flight from my home State of Kansas to Washington, D.C.

Those 67 people were parents, children, and friends. Their families' lives changed in an instant. In the weeks that followed, I met with those families. I listened and made a commitment to turn their grief into action.

This bipartisan bill reflects that work. It takes commonsense steps to make our skies safer, modernizing collision avoidance technology, strengthening training, and closing dangerous communications gaps.

It also acts on the National Transportation Safety Board recommendations, turning lessons learned into real action.

We cannot bring those 67 people back, but we can honor them by preventing this from happening ever again.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote "yes" and, after the passage of this bill, work together on a final, fully thought-out bill that ensures safety measures are efficiently implemented. The families deserve nothing less.

AMERICA LIBERATES NATIONS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the American military has liberated more countries than any other Nation in history. I have witnessed personally in Sofia, Bulgaria; Seoul, South Korea; Monrovia, Liberia; and Bogota, Colombia, the success of American liberation.

Mr. Speaker, 2026 has seen spectacular achievements with the leadership of President Donald Trump, Secretary of War Pete Hegseth, Chairman of Joint Chiefs Dan Caine, and Secretary of State Marco Rubio.

The dictator of Venezuela has been arrested. Ukraine maintains sovereignty, defeating war criminal Putin; and the mass murderers of Iran are eliminated.

President Trump has unified support in Latin America and strengthened NATO defense spending, and Arab Gulf states stand with America.

As the son of a World War II Flying Tiger, I appreciate those who fought to liberate China, and I have had four sons who have served in the Middle East.

In conclusion, God bless our troops as Trump is reinstating peace through strength, revealing war criminal Putin lies, insulting and mocking Trump, with Putin providing Iran satellite targeting to murder Americans.

OPERATION DEMOCRACY AND FLAGS FOR FREEDOM

(Mr. SUOZZI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SUOZZI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Operation Democracy and their Flags for Freedom program.

In my district, the hamlet of Locust Valley proudly founded Operation Democracy's sister city program in 1947, partnering with the first town, Normandy, France, liberated on D-day.

Now, Oyster Bay-East Norwich and Cold Spring Harbor, also in my district, participate in the Flags for Freedom program, as well.

Operation Democracy was founded in the wake of World War II as a humanitarian effort to rebuild war-torn cities across the globe. Since then, it has connected more than 500 communities with partner communities throughout the world, fostering diplomacy, peace, and mutual understanding.

Their Flags for Freedom program builds powerful bridges between generations. Through American Legion posts, local veterans present American flags to graduating high school seniors.

Nearly 10,000 flags have already been presented as living lessons of service, sacrifice, and citizenship.

I encourage every congressional district across the country to enter into the Flags for Freedom program. It is a simple, nonpartisan tribute to our veterans and our Nation's flag, and it is rooted in both history and gratitude.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 8 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1501

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HAMADEH of Arizona) at 3 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE TONY GONZALES, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable TONY GONZALES, Member of Congress: