Donald Trump and Stephen Miller attempted to rewrite the Constitution through an executive order banning birthright citizenship for the children of undocumented immigrants. It is the same legal arguments that were first used when a white supremacist wanted to deny U.S. citizenship to Chinese Americans.

Four Supreme Court Justices dissented in the ruling to protect the 14th Amendment. That tells us that we are not safe from these continuous attacks from Donald Trump and his administration on our Constitution, on our freedom, and on our neighbors.

We know that the White House is currently scheming to have Trump's activist Supreme Court rehear the case that upheld the 14th Amendment, that upheld birthright citizenship.

This is all part of a larger agenda to dehumanize Black and Brown people in this country, to strip away their rights, and to normalize questioning who belongs here. Who is American enough?

It is why Republicans have funded Donald Trump's immigration agenda by $200 billion and why on the 158th anniversary of the 14th Amendment, my colleagues and I launched the Defend the 14th Amendment Task Force.

Our goal is simple: to defend the Constitution, to coordinate oversight and public education efforts, and to respond strongly to the Trump administration's attacks on our rights, on our freedom, on our Constitution, our country, and our communities.

We will stand up to these attacks on civil liberties. We must continue this fight to ensure that the citizens of the United States are protected and that nothing erodes these constitutional protections. It is our duty. It is our responsibility, and it is the oath we swore when we took this public office.

Mr. Speaker, I am so proud to be a co-chair of this task force and so proud to stand here in defense of our Constitution.

Ms. MEJIA. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chair AGUILAR and my fellow co-chairs, Representatives Cleaver, Randall, Simon, and Subramanyam, for their leadership in launching the Defend the 14th Amendment Task Force.

This work is about protecting the Constitution's promise that every person deserves equal protection, due process, and the full rights of citizenship.

Those principles have shaped generations of progress in our country, and they are worth defending today just as they were 158 years ago. We owe it to those who came before us and those who will follow us to ensure that that promise endures.

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

□ 1840

OUR BORROWING IS TERRIFYING

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

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, and to the room, I apologize. I was doing a tour for a former firefighter, who actually was paralyzed in the scope of his duties, but we were close.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to take 1 or 2 seconds here to try to straighten this out just a little bit.

The presentation tonight is going to be a little bit technical. Sorry about that. If you don't like math, if you don't like demographics, if you don't actually want to deal with the math I am going to give you, now would be a good time to go find something on Netflix.

I have been trying to make a point over and over around here that our borrowing is terrifying, and it is much worse than almost anyone is willing to talk about.

We actually had some of the Joint Economic economists meet with some of the Penn Wharton modelers over the last couple of days. When they used their population statistics, some of the coming years are even uglier than we get from CBO, what we get from OMB, and actually what we get from some of the other scorers.

Let's actually just sort of start this and put this in perspective and then understand there are solutions. You don't pay off the debt, but you can stabilize it.

What is the number one driver of U.S. sovereign debt? It is shocking how many of even our brothers and sisters here in this building get the math wrong. It is demographics, and it is the one thing we are really not supposed to tell the truth about.

Next year, there is a model that says we will have fewer under 18 than we had 20 years ago, but we will have almost double 65 and up than we had 20-plus years ago. It is baby boomers, and we have gone decade and decade without enough children. It is just math. Is that Republican or Democrat? It is just math.

Once again, all right, let's do this. For those of you who have actually paid attention over the years, you have noticed that over the time we talked about discretionary outlays. Today, it is down to about 25 percent. What is blue here is what you remember that Congress actually gets to vote on. What is red here is almost all formulaic, and that is part of the problem.

As Members of Congress today, we could all hold hands, sing kumbaya, love each other, get rid of every dime that is discretionary—now, that is nondefense and defense, but it is what we vote on—and you still couldn't balance the budget.

Remember, last year, for every dollar we took in, we spent $1.43. So far this year—and, look, I am hoping it bends back down, but this year, the number is even worse.

Interest this year, our model—just interest, total interest, so the interest we have to pay back the trust funds, the interest we have to pay the people who are willing to buy U.S. bonds, it is the second biggest expense in the Federal Government, so Social Security, interest, Medicare, Medicaid and ObamaCare subsidies, defense—once again, remember, defense, the thing that is in the Constitution, is actually number five.

That interest may come in close to $1.3 trillion this year. That is about 20 percent. One of my charts is going to say 19, but my math is closer to 20 percent of all tax receipts go just to pay interest.

I am going to say this two or three times in different ways. In 9 budget years, we have a model that says 30 to 33 percent of all the tax receipts will go just to interest. So you pay a dollar. In 9 years, what happens if a third of that money's function is just covering the interest on the debt pileup?

It is important to understand this chart and why I show it. I start with it all the time.

All right. Let's keep doing this.

Net interest as a percentage of total revenues would approach 30 percent, and understand, we have a model that actually is over 30. It is actually as high as 33 percent.

Here we are. Right now, we are in this slot here, so 19 to 20 percent of all of our tax receipts is going to interest in 9 budget years.

This should terrify you. How many bridges, how much helping people get healthy, how many benefits is the interest paying? No. I mean, it does benefit those who buy the bonds, and there is the Ray Dalio theory that it is still money circulating back into the economy, but it is money that does not go to meet the mission of the Federal Government. It is basically paying for past spending.

The ethical question here is: Is borrowing a tax hike? Now, for some of the antitax groups—I love them. I would cut spending dramatically. I voted that way, and I am in a tough district.

Let's be honest, what is the running joke here, Mr. Speaker? No one ever got unelected by spending too much money.

It is sort of perverse, but the bond market will basically be running the Federal Government in the next few years because of the influence it will have and the damage it can do to us.

That is a percentage to understand.

Let's actually dig in a little bit more. The boards, because I started late, are all upside down. So forgive me, I am going to be bouncing these around.

The rising national debt will lower wages. This is something we have been looking at over and over. We keep talking about affordability. Two weeks ago, I brought an academic paper and showed some charts that basically said if mortgage rates—a 30-year home loan rate today is what? Today, it is running 6.5, 6.7. If we weren't borrowing as much money as we are today, it would be 5.5, a full percentage point lower. I was showing how that is several thousand dollars a year on the average home price in America.

The next time someone is talking about we need to do stuff on home affordability, we absolutely do. One of the most powerful things we could do is actually convince the bond markets that the borrowing isn't going to keep going up and going up, that actually the Federal Government—and, remember, it is federal governments all over the world just bingeing because of their demographics. They now have their retirement populations. They need to finance those benefits, and almost everything we are doing now is on borrowed money.

Just to understand, there is a principle out there, whether it be your home loan being actually over a full point higher in interest rates because of Federal Government borrowing, but we are also suppressing your wages. Because that capital, when it is in the market, helps a business, plant and equipment, keep investing in more productivity. Higher productivity actually means you can pay people more.

Remember your old high school economics class? The two ways you raise wages: inflation—well, that doesn't get you anything; it just means your wages go up, but your purchasing power has gone down—or productivity. You are making more whatever you did because you invested in plant and equipment or better processes or better technology. That technology can't be financed because the Federal Government pushed up interest rates and consumed the capital.

All right, that hopefully is making sense.

Let's do this. Remember I was trying to talk about housing affordability? This is also another chart to just sort of understand what this means. On an average-priced home in my marketplace, which is the Phoenix, Scottsdale, Tempe sort of area, a home is just a little under $500,000 with no downpayment, so we just mortgage the whole thing. What if you could get what our model says, if we weren't borrowing so much, and get a 5.5 percent rate in today's market?

If you actually look at what we have done to mortgage rates, that differential costs homeowners several thousand dollars over that year, just to understand what this does.

Let's have a little more fun here. Now, I did this one because I am going to do a whole section here on labor force participation. You go, who cares?

□ 1850

It is a big deal, and we are seeing some really funky numbers out there in some of that, and some of it is because we are getting older. Some of it is younger people are entering the labor force later, but there is some hope on that side of the ledger.

But there is some difficulty here. So I decided I would actually grab a couple of slides from Arizona just to sort of demonstrate labor force participation rates in Arizona. You see this red line here? So the blue is America.

Why has Arizona crashed? Well, we actually had some problems. Arizona, particularly the Phoenix and Tucson area, had become sort of the back office, the call centers, the back-office accounting centers of America. Much of this type of job has now become automated, and now we are starting to see it in our job numbers and the number of people who are actually choosing to leave the labor force because they are older and they actually have given up looking.

But take a look at this chart, and you start to understand what we are seeing, and this number is actually fairly recent. This is as of May 2026, so this is old data.

We always think of Arizona as being this remarkable growth center. The reality right now: We have stumbled, and we are going to have to really do some things to actually start to deal with the reality of what is going on in our labor market.

As you actually take a look at it even further—just because I love my State and I care—this is the national unemployment rate. You see this spiking here? This is basically us right now, particularly what has been happening over the last several months. Our employment rates are actually really starting to spike up more; we are starting to see a real differential in Arizona compared to the rest of the country. This is what happens when you don't fixate on bringing the next generation of employment into your marketplace.

All right? So let's geek out a little bit more. I am going to show you this chart because it is absurd. It is a chart that makes me—Social Security actuaries basically published a report, what, 3 weeks ago, and, yes, I have a tabbed copy, and I meant to bring it up here, but we were out doing the tour.

I want you to see something. You tell me how the Social Security actuaries came up with this number. So right here, this is actually the U.S. population and they have it falling and falling and falling. So a little beyond—so call it 2027, and then, suddenly, they have the U.S. population coming back up.

We don't see this on Census Bureau data. We don't see this in some of the university data. We don't see this on some of the population statistics groups. Somehow the actuaries for Social Security actually say that we are going to get several years down. The population is going to—you know, birthrates are going to continue to fall. Fertility rates are going to continue to fall, but then, suddenly, magically, they are going to come back.

And that is why so many of us are so concerned about the long-run numbers they have published, because this growth rate in fertility population, I don't think matches reality.

When you have people talking about in 6 years to 6 years and 3 months, the Social Security actuaries have the trust fund being empty, but don't worry, because the long-run rate is we are in real trouble. But it actually has, we believe, completely unsupportable population statistics in it.

All right. So that was my attempt to mock the Social Security actuarial report.

I am sorry for me going fast, but I only have about 20 more minutes to try to do this.

This chart is really, really important, and it is new to us.

So net entries into the labor force. If the Social Security trust fund is empty in 6 years and 3 months, if the Medicare trust fund is empty pretty much at the same time, the model says that if we follow the law, those of us on Social Security will take a 22 percent to 24 percent cut. That means the doubling of senior poverty in 6½ years to 7 years from now.

The Medicare trust fund will be empty. One of our problems in the Medicare healthcare spending is that we refuse to have a conversation of how to lower healthcare prices. We keep having discussions of how to manipulate and do financial engineering on healthcare. So we have turned healthcare into a financing issue instead of the adoption of technology, where you can functionally wear your own medical lab, you can use technology to actually refer yourself, those things. Because we are terrified to actually explain to the armies in our hallways who are here lobbying us that in less than 7 years, Medicare spending will double.

It will go from $1 trillion last year to some 6 years to 7 years from now, $2 trillion, and, at that time, the trust fund is empty. If you are a hospital, you are taking at least a 12 percent cut.

This is what is happening in the numbers. Why this is important is that: One of the ways you grow an economy is either with a stable or growing population, and particularly if that population has risen in skill sets. That is why so many countries around the industrialized world fight like hell for talent-based immigration.

You don't bring mass poverty across the border. You go out and recruit really smart people, because they pay a hell of a lot of taxes. This chart is basically saying that in just a few years, our labor force actually starts to decrease, and that is 2.8 million in 2030. That is how many years from now, Mr. Speaker? It is 2026. So think of this. In 4 years, the data says that the U.S. available labor population actually starts to shrink by over 2.8 million people.

Now, you tell me. How am I supposed to make the money, the math, the data, and the finances work for these programs? You have to do the unified theory of—whether it be a talent-based immigration system, the adoption of technology, the redesigning of incentives, you are going to have to do dozens and dozens of things, and we are not willing to do that yet.

All right. Look, this is a complicated board. It doesn't work on television. It doesn't really work on a floor speech, but I just need you to understand that what we are looking at is because we are aging as a population without enough young people, that our percentages of who are available to us—this is 2026. This is 1977. It would basically explain that when I was a kid in the 1970s, for every dollar we spent on seniors, we spent almost $7 on people who were functionally young.

Today, that number has flipped, and it has just flipped because the demographics have flipped. It is the same thing as what happened here with who is available to be in the labor force.

Much of our labor force population now is much older. The jobs available for the young are half what we had when I was young. It is just baby boomers.

We knew people were going to turn 65 for how many years? I mean, this place, in some ways, is so incredibly absurd in its unwillingness to basically do basic math. I remember sitting in a statistics class in around 1981, and the professor then was talking about what baby boomers meant to the economy. Here I am, a Member of Congress all these years later, and it is like we are just now discovering it.

All right. Here is actually something—it is hopeful, but the next slide will actually take the wind out of your sails.

So prime-age labor force participation, so the people we consider sort of in their prime working years, actually, we are doing really well here. Some of the growth in the economy, some of the investment in the economy, for prime age, we have 84 percent. But here is my problem: Labor force participation of those 55 and up has been crashing.

There are lots of reasons to debate this and discuss this. Is this skill sets? Is it the adoption of technology? Is it the wealth effects of as asset prices have gone up so much, we have people who are able to retire early? It is a combination of everything, but these workers are often our most productive.

So just understand that prime working-aged people are actually doing really well working and being in the labor force. Those of us who are older, we have been disappearing like crazy, and we actually see that in our productivity numbers.

All right. Mr. Speaker, I warned you this was going to be a little geeky.

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Arizona has 10 minutes remaining.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Excellent. I am probably going to use every one of them. No, I will try to go as fast as I can here.

The U.S. population age 65 and up, and I go back to 2011: 41 million. This year, I have 63 million.

Okay. Wonderful. I am one of these. I am basically 64. Now, understand, my wife and I are both 64, and I have a 4-year-old and a 10-year-old, so we are very optimistic about the future, or we are out of our minds, but we all knew this was happening.

□ 1900

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. We did what to shore up the trust funds? We did what to basically incentivize our brothers and sisters to stay in the labor force if they wanted to?

We had dozens of things—I have been here 16 years, and I have spent most of that time trying to get this place to actually deal with the reality of let's save Social Security. Let's actually save Medicare. Let's do those things that help us grow. Let's adopt the technology so we can crash the price of healthcare.

I have had some success on the edges, but I lose to the armies of lobbyists that are in the hallways here that lose their minds because we may change their business models.

Mr. Speaker, we are now borrowing about $90,000 every second. Today, we will borrow about $7 billion. The current burn rate so far this fiscal year, just this fiscal year, we are going come in close to $2.2 to $2.3 trillion of borrowing, and yet, we have higher interest rates.

How long is the bond market going to keep saying we are going to finance you because how much of the benefits that our brothers and sisters who are older have earned we are actually borrowing the money?

Seniors per hundred workers—and actually, here is just the simple math. How many of us grew up always hearing you have got 23 people per retiree, and that is how we finance Social Security? I have shown some charts here where in the end of a decade from now, you have about 2.3, and it is this: In 2011, we had 21.9 working-age folks per senior. Today, actually, that number has eroded 47 percent increase in that change. It is almost a 50 percent change in that time, and it actually steepens. Part of the steepening isn't because we have more seniors. It is also because we have substantially fewer young people.

All right. Mr. Speaker, 65 will continue to grow as a share of the population. In 9 budget years, 21.4 percent of the population will be in their benefit ages. Our system wasn't prepared for this. In 25 or 26 months from now, I should have double checked the math, over half of the Federal spending will go to those of us 65 and up. That is not half of the tax receipts.

Remember, if we are borrowing $2.3 trillion on top—but think about that. Our government functionally is an insurance company with an Army.

All right. This is actually one of my intense frustrations. Let's take a look. The trustee's report projects this significantly more optimistically than the other sources. Remember I showed you a chart there, and I was somewhat mocking the trustee's report, basically saying they have this magic thing where fertility rates crash and crash and crash, and that is within the next 9 years, and then suddenly, magically it explodes upward. No one else has that.

Here is the Medicare and Social Security actuary's trustees saying, oh, well, we are going to go along, but magically when we get to 2030, they are going to start to go up. This has created a distortion. That is actually why you see groups like my Joint Economic Committee, Penn Wharton, so many of the others, saying the trustees are missing it. The debt the United States is in is dramatically more devastating.

Mr. Speaker, 2030, 2035 isn't that far away.

I am sure we are all going to get together and decide we are going to do a debt deficit commission. I am sure we are all going get together and lay out the incentives of how we actually manage this crisis. I am sure we are going to do those things to convince the bond markets that we are creditworthy because here is part of the frustration.

Greece, today, can sell a 10-year bond cheaper than the United States. Greece today has a better forward credit rating than the United States. We are now 13 or 14 on the credit stack where other countries can actually sell a 10-year bond cheaper than we can.

And I keep wondering. I have been coming behind this microphone for almost a decade and a half. We have been introducing pieces of legislation that could revolutionize the costs of healthcare, could actually make government dramatically more efficient, and I almost can't get a single Member of Congress to consponsor any of this legislation because you have to go to war with all the lobbyists because it means changing the bureaucracies or the business models out there. It is like they basically have this attitude: Screw the society. Screw my kids. Screw your retirement, as long as I don't have to tell the truth about the math.

Today, your government borrowed about $90,000 a second. Yesterday, we borrowed about $90,000 a second. Tomorrow, we are going to borrow—that is like $7 billion today. We will argue for hours here on the floor for millions.

I need you to see a chart. If this is a billion dollars, if this is a trillion dollars, millions is basically this tiny little—the lack of calculators here is a destruction of this Republic.

There are those who actually tell me, DAVID, it is waste and fraud. It is this and that. I have done presentations to show you our best calculations of waste and fraud. It is a problem, but it is a sliver because the majority of what we call waste and fraud is actually the waste. It is the way we have designed programs.

Mr. Speaker, I don't believe my brothers and sisters here are actually willing to do the hard things and tell the truth about the math and then redesign these programs because it means getting the crap kicked out of you by the lobbying and the business models out there. That means creating a revolution of taking on the debt and deficits.

We will pay a remarkable price for the fact that the Penn Wharton models within a decade had us actually already approaching the no-go numbers of being able to sell our U.S. debt. At that point the bonds explode, and the bond market runs this country.

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

HONORING SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the South Carolina House delegation is humbled to pay tribute to our beloved late U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham. We have several Members here tonight to speak.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina, (Mr. NORMAN) of Rock Hill.

Mr. NORMAN. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I thank Congressman WILSON for organizing this tribute to a dear friend of all of us, not only in South Carolina but all over every State in this country.

I wish everyone could have been in the Senate well when DARLINE, his sister, took the oath of office from the President pro-tempore of the Senate and then took the desk that Lindsey had occupied for 24 years in the Senate. It was moving. It was a tribute to Lindsey Graham that she was able to do this and appointed by Governor McMaster.

Lindsey understood that success in South Carolina meant looking out for every South Carolinian. Whether it was a major defense project or a small-town infrastructure need, he fought to bring Federal resources back to South Carolina and make sure that every corner of our State had a voice in Washington, D.C.

From securing the Medal of Honor for a marine, Major James Capers—it was a 5-year timeframe to work to get Major Capers the Medal of Honor, Lindsey was a part of that—to supporting our military installations, strengthening our border security, defending the rights of States and advancing priorities that benefit South Carolina, we worked side-by-side on issues that mattered to those back home.

□ 1910

He believed in delivering results, not just making speeches. He knew that the work of elected officials is measured by what they accomplish for the people they represent, and he consistently fought to ensure that South Carolina received its fair share of opportunities.

We didn't have to agree on every issue. Lindsey never had an enemy that I knew of, and you could disagree with him while not being disagreeable.

When there was an opportunity to move the State forward, Lindsey was willing to put the work in. This was evidenced to me when I went on a trip to Munich, Germany, back in 2020. I think it was a 4-day trip.

I watched him go to every meeting of every country that was there primarily to share our ideas and to bring companies back to the United States, which benefited every State in the Union. He had a passion for that, particularly a passion for Ukraine and other countries that he had a belief in.

His legacy will include far more than legislation. He will be remembered in the communities that benefited from his advocacy, the veterans he fought for, the historic sites he worked to preserve, and the love he continuously included and worked for for countless South Carolinians.

Lives were improved, families benefited from the efforts that they showed. He had a constituency staff second to none. If you called Lindsey Graham's office, he did what he could to help you out, regardless of whether you were from South Carolina or not.

He was a funny man. Like any good comedian, it is not what he said, it is how he said it.

Lindsey Graham made his life work for the betterment of South Carolina and the betterment of others. He will be sorely missed in this State and sorely missed by DARLINE, who he raised and adopted after both parents died.

We thank him for a life well lived. Again, I thank JOE for having this moment to recognize a great man.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. NORMAN for his heartfelt comments.

Indeed, I agree with and appreciated talk radio show host Kelly Nash, WVOC, who correctly began statewide broadcasting Monday that South Carolinians are heartbroken upon learning of the passing of U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham on Saturday.

I will always be grateful for my decades-long association with Senator Graham, as we served together. He was the South Carolina Air Guard Staff Judge Advocate, and I was the South Carolina Army Staff Judge Advocate serving together. Courageously, after one of our drill days, he announced to me his candidacy for the State House from Oconee County, South Carolina.

I immediately congratulated him, but then I caught myself, and I remembered that, in fact, nobody from our party had ever been elected from Oconee County to the State House. Indeed he made history and became the first Republican elected from Oconee to the State House of South Carolina.

Sunday morning, when I spoke with President Donald Trump, I knew he shared the grief of all South Carolinians. It was just heartfelt to hear him as we reviewed the service of Senator Graham, understanding that he truly was a champion for peace through strength, dedicated to public service, his military career, his service as a veteran, and his service in the State House, U.S. Senate, and in every way backing up the people of South Carolina.

Senator Graham's last week of life was symbolic of his dedication for America. He attended the NATO summit in Ankara, Türkiye. While he was there, he met with President Ahmed al-Sharaa of Syria. It was really very significant because he had been skeptical, as many people, about the new Government of Syria. He, upon meeting with President al-Sharaa, identified that President Donald Trump was correct, give Syria a chance, and so it was exciting that he announced that he looked forward to actual progress with the new Government of Syria to be working with the United States.

Additionally, he next went to Kyiv, Ukraine, where he met with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. While he was there, it was so impressive that he had the opportunity to also visit a drone manufacturing facility to see the extraordinary success of the people of Ukraine, who are going to be victorious over war criminal Putin.

With the development of drone technology, indeed, the people of Ukraine are an inspiration. While he was there, he was able to announce that in working with President Donald Trump that there would be sanctions on war criminal Putin and on Russia. Indeed, it is so meaningful that indeed as soon as we got back to Washington, the U.S. Senate—I thank Senator JOHN CORNYN and others—have made it possible that there will be a Russian Sanctions Act which, indeed, will be in the name of Lindsey Graham as the Lindsey Graham Russian Sanctions Act. It will be so impressive to help back up the people of Ukraine.

Additionally, when Senator Graham arrived back in Washington on Saturday, how incredible that he had the strength and fortitude to have a very long conversation with President Donald Trump to review the activities of the week and the successes that he saw of the Trump administration to provide peace through strength, but suddenly there was sudden death right after the phone call.

With that, myself personally, when I learned of the passing of the Senator, I was at Souda Bay in Greece visiting Navy personnel of the U.S. Navy to, indeed, thank them for their service. As soon as I heard about the passing, within an hour, I sent a tweet: "With the passing of Senator Lindsey Graham, he will always be cherished as an American patriot, tireless for peace through strength, successful defeating totalitarians. All three generations of the