

services, leaving victims and survivors without options for safety and vulnerable to further victimization.

Madam Speaker, the time is now to deliver access to the services victims and survivors so desperately need during a critical moment when the need for victim assistance has skyrocketed, and programs are being forced to cut lifesaving services for victims.

Yes, it will be the fair assessment of justice. That is what we are here to do; fair operatives of justice. So I ask my colleagues to support this legislation and to join us tomorrow to support the Violence Against Women Act, to recognize that it is our job to promote justice.

□ 1630

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER), who has done so much on this bill.

Mrs. WAGNER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for yielding. A good friend in Congress for years, we are so glad to have the gentleman back.

I also thank Chairman NADLER for leading this legislation, along with so many others.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1652, the VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act. I am proud to co-lead this critical legislation, which will ensure that victims of serious crimes can continue to access the services that they need to heal and rebuild their lives.

The Victims of Crime Act, or VOCA, grants are the primary source of support for programs dedicated to survivors of domestic abuse, sexual assault, trafficking, child abuse, and other very traumatic crimes.

These grants are funded by Federal criminal monetary penalties, not by taxpayers. However, with the Department of Justice increasingly seeking nonprosecution and deferred-prosecution agreements instead of prosecuting Federal crimes, VOCA grants are facing catastrophic cuts.

In my own home State of Missouri, we are expecting a 25 percent cut to VOCA funds in the upcoming year if this bill is not signed into law. Missouri law enforcement and victim service providers, along with prosecutors, need Congress to enact this legislation so they can protect and care for their communities.

If we do not act swiftly to stabilize the VOCA funding, thousands of Americans will be unable to access lifesaving services. These programs have never been more important. The pandemic has put women and children, in particular, at an increased risk of abuse and domestic violence. We cannot leave victims without support during frightening and vulnerable times.

This bipartisan and bicameral legislation will help those victims recover as our justice system prosecutes the criminals responsible, which is why I am also hopeful that when the Senate

passes this, we will have the opportunity to actually make this law.

I am grateful that the House is taking swift action to secure services for victims. Again, I urge my colleagues to support the VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act.

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, in closing, I urge passage of this bill, I recommend that all Members vote "yes," and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for the purpose of closing.

Last year, all 56 State and territorial attorneys general sent a letter to Congress warning us that the balance and financial health of the Crime Victims Fund is in jeopardy and urging that we act swiftly to address the problem. They explained any decrease in the funds available for distribution results in a decrease in the number of victims and survivors that are served, as well as potential loss of essential staff in victim service programs.

The VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act heeds their call and would ensure that this fund has the resources it needs to continue delivering essential services to victims of crime. This important legislation is supported by more than 1,670 national, regional, State, territorial, and local organizations.

I thank all of my colleagues who have supported this bill. I am aware of no opposition to this bill at all, and I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1652, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mrs. GREENE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1620, VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2021; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 6, AMERICAN DREAM AND PROMISE ACT OF 2021; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1603, FARM WORKFORCE MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2021; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1868, PREVENTING PAYGO SEQUESTRATION; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 17, REMOVING THE DEADLINE FOR THE RATIFICATION OF THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 233 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 233

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 1620) to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. An amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 117-3, modified by the amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees; (2) the further amendments described in section 2 of this resolution; (3) the amendments en bloc described in section 3 of this resolution; and (4) one motion to recommend.

SEC. 2. After debate pursuant to the first section of this resolution, each further amendment printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules not earlier considered as part of amendments en bloc pursuant to section 3 of this resolution shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, may be withdrawn by the proponent at any time before the question is put thereon, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

SEC. 3. It shall be in order at any time after debate pursuant to the first section of this resolution for the chair of the Committee on the Judiciary or his designee to offer amendments en bloc consisting of further amendments printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution not earlier disposed of. Amendments en bloc offered pursuant to this section shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees, shall

not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

SEC. 4. All points of order against the further amendments printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution or amendments en bloc described in section 3 of this resolution are waived.

SEC. 5. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 6) to authorize the cancellation of removal and adjustment of status of certain aliens, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. An amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 117-4 shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 6. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 1603) to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for terms and conditions for nonimmigrant workers performing agricultural labor or services, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment printed in part C of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 7. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 1868) to prevent across-the-board direct spending cuts, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 8. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 17) removing the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment. All points of order against consideration of the joint resolution are waived. The joint resolution shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the joint resolution are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 9. House Resolution 232 is hereby adopted.

SEC. 10. Notwithstanding clause 7(a) of rule X, during the One Hundred Seventeenth Congress, the period described in such clause shall end at midnight on April 22.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 1 hour.

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Mrs. FISCHBACH), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, today, the Rules Committee met and reported a rule, House Resolution 233, providing for consideration of H.R. 1620 under a structured rule. The rule self-executes a manager's amendment by Chairman NADLER, makes in order 41 amendments, and provides en bloc authority to Chairman NADLER.

□ 1645

The rule also provides for consideration of H.R. 6, H.R. 1603, and H.J. Res. 17, under closed rules.

The rule provides 1 hour of debate each, equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their designees for H.R. 1620, H.R. 6, H.R. 1603, and H.J. Res. 17.

The rule provides for one motion to recommit on each bill. The rule also self-executes a manager's amendment by Chairman NADLER for H.R. 1603.

The rule provides for consideration of H.R. 1868 under a closed rule. It also provides 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the Committee on the Budget or their designees.

Finally, the rule provides that H.R. 232 is hereby adopted and extends the deadline for the committee funding resolution until April 22, 2021.

Madam Speaker, we are here today to protect the vulnerable among us, to strengthen the foundation of our democracy, and ensure humane working conditions for the people who feed America.

We are here to live up to our best ideals as a Nation by creating protections against some of the worst threats that a person can face, threats like domestic violence.

In the minute that I have been talking, 20 people in this country have been abused by their partner. By the time we are done tonight, that number will be over a thousand.

As someone who worked as a 911 dispatcher for nearly 18 years, as someone who has been on the other end of the

line from domestic violence, as someone who has heard gunshots silence a young girl's screams for help, I am telling you, the thousand people victimized while we are here tonight need and deserve our help.

That is exactly what the Violence Against Women Act does. It makes vital new investments in prevention. It strengthens essential protections for the most vulnerable among us, including immigrant, LGBTQ, and Native American women, and it improves services for victims, prevents abusers and stalkers from getting firearms, and much, much more.

VAWA is one of many vital protections we will discuss today, but it isn't the only one.

Madam Speaker, this September will mark 100 years since an amendment was first proposed for our Constitution to guarantee women equal rights with men. It finally passed Congress in 1972.

This simple amendment, which reads in part, "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged," is being held up on a technicality. States took so long to sign on that the arbitrary deadline that was set by Congress, this body, has passed, even as 38 States have ratified the amendment.

Congress created this problem, and Congress must fix it. H.J. Res. 79 will remove the deadline for ratification and finally allow us to ensure women are treated as equals to men in our democracy.

The need for equal rights under the law is not debatable. Too often, we have seen the results of unfair and unequal policies for women. This bill will help end those injustices.

As we strive to make our Nation a more perfect union, we need to consider how we treat immigrants, too. Immigrants are the invisible backbone of this country. They are our family members, our neighbors, our frontline workers, woven into every aspect of the American fabric.

Dreamers grew up in our communities. They pledge allegiance to our flag. They played in our fields, prayed in our churches, and worked in our stores. They want to contribute to the only Nation that they have ever called home.

The American Dream and Promise Act helps them do that. It creates a pathway to citizenship for our Dreamers. And it updates our temporary protected status and deferred enforced departure laws to prevent devastating deportations.

The fact is, too often the contributions of aspiring Americans are left out of our dialogue about immigrants. But this pandemic has put a spotlight on just how vital they are.

Without immigrants working our fields, your last meal would have looked much different. Without them enduring record-setting temperatures, facing threats of wildfires, and doing it all without proper PPE, the price you pay to feed your family would go way up.

Deaths among Latino farmworkers increased by 60 percent during the pandemic. They are sacrificing their lives to feed us. The question is: What are we willing to do in return?

The Farm Workforce Modernization Act creates a pathway to legal status for more than a million farmworkers and addresses our future labor needs by modernizing our outdated system for temporary workers. This bill will give farmworkers the dignity and recognition they deserve, while giving our farmers the stability they need to run their businesses.

Now, before I move on to another topic, I want to say something about my personal immigration story. Just like many other Dreamers, I was sent here by my parents to escape the violence my family faced in Guatemala. I know exactly what it is like to decide between the violence and poverty of staying or the dangers and unknowns of trying to immigrate here.

What I know is that we cannot legislate a solution for immigration when we ignore the factors that drive it. Strongmen, narco-traffickers, have taken hold in Central America, and the rule of law is under assault.

The organizations that once fought to hold corrupt actors accountable have been dismantled, and their former employees are now being pursued by those very same corrupt actors. Attorneys General, unfortunately, are asylum seekers in our own country.

We don't just have a responsibility to help stabilize the region; it is imperative if we are ever to stop the rush of people trying to come here.

I will close by saying every policy I describe today is a policy I am truly proud of. Just like the American Rescue Plan did last week, Democrats are making clear, with our actions, exactly what our priorities are.

It doesn't matter how good our agenda is if we can't deliver on the bills we pass. The one thing standing in our way right now is an inside-the-beltway term called "PAYGO." If we don't address it now, it will trigger massive cuts. It goes without saying that this would be completely unacceptable at a time when Americans are in urgent need of more support, not less.

Republicans passed legislation in 2017 to avoid PAYGO, in order to provide tax cuts for the filthy rich, so they clearly understand the need to avoid draconian cuts. I expect them to join us in preventing them.

H.R. 1868, the final bill we are here to discuss today, will do exactly that. I look forward to a fruitful debate on these bills.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from the Rules Committee, the Representative from California, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule, a continuation of the

Democrats' weeks-long partisan push to fulfill their partisan wish list.

First up is H.R. 1620, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, which is a highly divisive distortion of the original Violence Against Women Act, that will jeopardize the safety of women.

By extending services to men who identify as women and allowing them to utilize programs that were designed to protect vulnerable women, the bill puts the safety of women at risk. The bill expands the definition of domestic violence to include economic and emotional duress, driving needed resources away from combatting violent crimes against women and promoting an unproven restorative justice approach instead.

Democrats have told us again and again that it is time to rethink our approach to law enforcement. But the same Democrats who want to defund the police are now pushing this unfunded mandate, to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars, upon law enforcement. That doesn't help anyone.

Next is H.J. Res. 17, which removes the established deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment. As the deadline for States to ratify the ERA has long passed, the constitutionality of this legislation is suspect, at best. Congress does not have the authority to simply extend the deadline some four decades later.

I also have concerns about this amendment radicalizing gender to enshrine pro-abortion rights in the Constitution. I do not need a constitutional amendment to tell me I am equal. The Constitution and Federal law already require equal protection for all Americans.

If my colleagues on the other side were serious about the equal rights amendment, they would ensure that the process for adoption was done entirely by the book, rather than saying "good enough," as they move forward in this questionable manner.

Next, H.R. 6, the American Dream and Promise Act of 2021, will provide amnesty to millions of illegal immigrants, incentivize illegal border crossings, and worsen the surge of illegal immigration we are currently seeing. The bill will provide green cards to criminal aliens at a time when the southern border is already overwhelmed, costing taxpayers hundreds of billions more.

H.R. 1868 addresses the very real budgetary consequences of last week's massive partisan spending package being signed into law. While we can all agree that we should avoid cuts to mandatory spending that have been automatically triggered by this level of spending, there was an opportunity to work across the aisle on a bipartisan solution. It is unfortunate that the majority has chosen, once again, to forge ahead on their own with highly partisan policies.

For these reasons, Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to think twice be-

fore supporting this rule. We can do better for the American people.

Finally, I want to address H.R. 1603, the Farm Workforce Modernization Act, a bipartisan effort to reform our agricultural worker programs to address the workforce needs of our agricultural community.

While I appreciate the efforts of my colleagues, including my colleague from the State of Washington, Congressman NEWHOUSE, and others on both sides of the aisle to negotiate in good faith on this legislation, I will point out that this bill is not without its flaws. It does not address the already high cost of the H-2A program to make it a more economical solution to producers.

It introduces a new private right of action against employers that risks costly litigation that our producers cannot afford. These types of issues are why stakeholders, such as the American Farm Bureau, have concerns with this legislation. Make no mistake, a viable workforce for our agriculture industry is a national security issue. However, I would like my colleagues to recognize that, with the current language, this bill is not the end-all and be-all solution for our farmers and ranchers. While this legislation may pass the full floor this week as it stands, I hope our counterparts in the other body improve the bill before it is sent to the President.

Madam Speaker, I urge opposition to this rule, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1700

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I thank the manager of the bill for her leadership and the rule.

Let me, first of all, rise in support of H.R. 6 because there are millions of young people waiting for this relief in the DACA promise.

The American Dream and Promise Act is long overdue. These are nurses and doctors, these are hardworking young people, these are college students who are ready to serve America.

Let me also rise in support of the Farm Workforce Modernization Act for the many, many farmers across America who are supporting that and needing that.

And I don't know who would be against making sure that there are no Medicare cuts as we proceed to give a lifeline to the American people through the American Rescue Act. I stand solidly behind that bill.

But let me spend most of my time, Madam Speaker, on the question of the Violence Against Women Act, H.R. 1620, and H.J. Res. 17.

First of all, there is no divisiveness, and I really stand openly against that interpretation. Is there divisiveness on helping rape victims across America who, as President Biden has said, live

in States that are not blue States or red States, but they live with the scourge of domestic violence, one of the most dangerous calls that police officers make?

In 2018, we could not get the Violence Against Women Act, which I wrote, to the floor because our Republican friends would not proceed. At that time there was a Republican President, a Republican House, and a Republican Senate. Nothing happened, and women suffered.

My women's center right now is teeming with women who are impacted by domestic violence during this pandemic. They are crying out for this legislation, and they don't see divisiveness.

What they do see is enhanced legal assistance.

What they do see is \$110 million for rape prevention.

What they do see is intervention, with training for men and boys.

They see a space that provides training and refuge for culturally distinct women who are victimized who can go to a quiet, calm place and deal with culturally sensitive counselors and others.

What they see is cooperation between the victim and law enforcement by providing and making sure that they have the kinds of resources and legal representation that is necessary. No one goes without legal representation, whether they are immigrant or Native American.

They see an enhanced response to the victimization of Native American women who, in fact, there are those who victimize them on their particular reservation or pueblo and then run off outside of that, and they are not prosecuted. We changed that.

They see the closing of the boyfriend loophole.

They see the taking away of guns from stalkers.

Yes, this is a lifeline. The Violence Against Women Act, constitutionally grounded, due-process protected for those who may be accused, but it is legislation that women have been waiting for.

This bill expired in 2018. We wrote it in 2018, we built on it in the last Congress, and the amendments that were both Republican and Democrat are still in this bill because we believe in bipartisanship, and it is a bipartisan bill with Members from the Republican Conference, who are in this bill in terms of cosponsors.

As it relates to H.J. Res. 17, let me say that Congress has the authority to extend the deadline for ratification of the ERA.

The ERA says that women do not have to live in discomfort and live under equality and live in inequality. They live in a Nation of equality, and they live in inequality in housing, in income, in access to credit, in employment, in many ways. Why are we continuing this in the 21st century?

So what does H.J. Res. 17 do? It extends the deadline for the compliance

with the equal rights amendment for the States to be able to reach the 38 margin.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. It extends that time beyond the time that was last extended. When we extended that time, we extended it by majority vote in the United States Congress.

A decision came out just recently about the fact that the deadline had expired, but what it did say is that the deadline was created by Congress and that Congress obviously has that authority.

When we researched this in 1978 in the Judiciary Committee, there was no requirement that that extension of the deadline constitutionally require a two-thirds supermajority vote. Simple majority. Are you going to suggest that women now should be denied the ERA when a number of States have already sanctioned this? There are some States that have rescinded, but that will be the jurisdiction of the United States Congress when appropriate.

I ask my colleagues to support VAWA, H.R. 1620, and H.J. Res. 17, removing the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment. It is time for VAWA. It is time for the ERA.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE), the ranking member of the Rules Committee.

Mr. COLE. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this rule. This rule and the accompanying legislation, sadly, is not about passing law. It is about making a point.

All five of the bills dealt with in this rule have not been marked up by any committee in this Congress at all, and all of them are filled with poison pills that are designed to make sure most Republicans will not vote for them, and they cannot pass the Senate of the United States.

The two bills dealing with illegal immigration will not just help DACA people, it will legalize millions of people in this country illegally.

The measure on ERA, the timeline ran out for that 42 years ago. This matter cannot be reversed now.

Frankly, the matter dealing with the budget, as my friend from Minnesota suggested, we said last week you are going to run into this problem, you are going to cut Medicare. There are billions of dollars of wasted spending in that reconciliation bill that could actually offset those cuts. We should be considering that.

Let me turn now to the Violence Against Women Act, Madam Speaker. I have been one of the strongest supporters of that legislation since I arrived in Congress, and I particularly am pleased with some of the measures dealing with Native American women, particularly some of the changes in

this bill that extend it to children, that extend it to Tribal law enforcement officers. Those are good changes.

But there are other measures coupled with it dealing with the Second Amendment or dealing with, frankly, people that are not biologically female that will put this bill at risk on this floor and certainly in the United States Senate.

Madam Speaker, none of this was ever designed to become law. Two years ago, we made that mistake. Three years ago, actually, a little over two years ago, in 2018, and none of the good things happened. Let's not make that mistake again. Let's reject this rule. Let's modify these bills. Let's send the Senate something it can work with and pass. If we do that, we have a chance of not making a point, but of actually making law that benefits every single American.

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, let the RECORD show that Oklahoma's Fourth District has 146,168 eligible Medicare beneficiaries that will be harmed if H.R. 1868 does not pass.

Let the RECORD show that Minnesota's Seventh District has 152,451 eligible Medicare beneficiaries that will also be harmed if H.R. 1868 does not pass.

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD an October 18, 2019, USA Today article entitled, "1 in 3 American Indian and Alaska Native women will be raped, but survivors rarely find justice on tribal lands."

[From USA TODAY, Oct. 18, 2019]

1 IN 3 AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE WOMEN WILL BE RAPED, BUT SURVIVORS RARELY FIND JUSTICE ON TRIBAL LANDS

(By Maren Machles, Carrie Cochran, Angela M. Hill and Suzette Brewer)

Twila Szymanski lowered the scope on her rifle, took aim and hit a target in the distance. The shooting range is where she and her husband go to relax and forget the things they worry about, she said.

Some experiences are hard to shake.

"To trust somebody you know after a sexual assault happens . . . it has been so difficult to work through that," Szymanski said.

Szymanski, 40, has lived on the Fort Peck Reservation in northeast Montana since she was born and is an enrolled member of the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux tribes. She said she's been assaulted three times.

"I was a victim when I was 13, a victim when I was 14 and a victim when I was 34," she said.

Twila Szymanski is a lifelong resident of the Fort Peck Reservation. "Native women have told me that what you do when you raise a daughter in this environment is you prepare her for what to do when she's raped—not if, but when," said Sarah Deer, University of Kansas professor and author of "The Beginning and End of Rape: Confronting Sexual Violence in Native America."

More than half of American Indian and Alaska Native women will experience sexual violence in their lifetimes, according to the Department of Justice.

"You talk to Native women who have lived their whole lives on a reservation, and they say, 'I can't think of anyone, any woman that I know who hasn't been victimized in this way,'" said Deer, a citizen of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma.

National data on sex crimes in tribal communities is scarce, so Newsy spent 18 months focused on two reservations: the Fort Peck Reservation in Montana and the Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota. After analyzing exclusively obtained documents and conducting dozens of interviews, a stark picture emerged.

Sexual assault investigations can fall through the cracks when tribes and the federal government fail to work together. Even for those few cases that end in a conviction in tribal court, federal law prevents most courts from sentencing perpetrators to more than a year.

Survivors who come forward to report assaults often find themselves trapped in small communities with their perpetrators, and several said the broken legal system contributed to their trauma.

The federal government has a unique political and legal relationship with the 573 federally recognized tribes. The tribes are sovereign and have jurisdiction over their citizens and land, but the federal government has a treaty obligation to help protect the lives of tribal members. This legal doctrine, called the “trust responsibility,” goes back to the treaties the United States signed with tribal nations in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The array of Supreme Court decisions and federal laws that followed resulted in a complicated legal arrangement among federal, state and tribal jurisdictions, making it difficult for survivors of sexual assault to find justice.

Sarah Deer is author of “The Beginning and End of Rape: Confronting Sexual Violence in Native America.” “A lot of times, when I try to explain it, people don’t even believe me because it’s so bizarre,” Deer said. “And the reason it’s bizarre is because there’s been this patchwork of laws that don’t talk to each other over the last century.”

ONLY ONE YEAR

The tribal courthouse on the Fort Peck reservation is a small brick building. The front desk is lined with pamphlets about dating violence and sexual assault.

“The trauma that has developed over the generations . . . some of the assaults are generational, and they’re within the same home,” said Chief Judge Stacie Smith, a member of the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux tribes. “Pretend it wasn’t there, and maybe it’ll go away, you know, the next generation, it won’t happen again. But it continues.”

Smith wants to break the cycle, but tribal courts face major restrictions, including a one-year limit on sentences regardless of the crime and almost no jurisdiction over non-Indians.

Stacie Smith is chief judge of the Fort Peck Tribal Court. “When you think about rape and you think about somebody who is a perpetrator of that kind of crime, and you think, ‘What do they deserve?’ one year doesn’t usually sound like the right answer,” Deer said.

In 2010, the sentencing cap was expanded to three years per offense through the Tribal Law and Order Act as long as the tribes met certain requirements. Only 16 tribes have implemented the three-year sentencing enhancement.

Fort Peck is one of them.

When the law took effect, there were no attorneys, no one with a law degree in the court system.

Smith decided to leave her young daughters to attend law school hundreds of miles away. This would help the tribal court meet the federal requirements and give it more authority.

The tribal court was able to hand out three-year sentences starting in late 2012.

From 2013–2018, there were three sexual assault convictions, but none of them had enhanced sentences. The longest sentence was still one year.

“We use the enhanced sentencing sparingly because we want it to have meaning,” said Scott Seifert, a member of the Comanche Nation of Oklahoma and Fort Peck’s lead tribal prosecutor.

GOING FEDERAL

Tribal court is not the only option for those seeking justice for sexual assault. In most cases, the FBI, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and U.S. attorneys’ offices are federally mandated to work with the tribes to investigate and prosecute “major crimes,” which include sexual assault.

“So if you have a rape case or a child sex abuse case and you do want to see that perpetrator put away, the best possibility for you is that it will go federal,” Deer said.

That responsibility falls to the U.S. attorneys’ offices, which have seen their funding and staffing in Indian communities cut by more than 40% in the past seven years, according to the Department of Justice.

Data Newsy obtained from the DOJ shows that the Montana U.S. Attorney’s Office declined 64% of cases of sexual assault in the past four fiscal years.

Kurt Alme is the U.S. attorney for Montana. The U.S. attorney for Montana, Kurt Alme, said a lot of cases are declined because of weak or insufficient evidence, “and it is something that has to be worked on,” he said.

According to the BIA, tribal courts received less than 5% of the funding that was needed in 2016. Law enforcement received 22% of what was needed, and jails received less than 50%.

Less than half of the law enforcement agencies that the bureau funds and oversees are properly staffed, said Charles Addington, director of the BIA Office of Justice Service and a member of the Cherokee Nation.

In August 2018, Fort Peck tribal police had funding for 21 positions, but nine of them were vacant, said Ken Trotter, criminal investigations supervisor for the Fort Peck Tribes and a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa.

“We have a hiring pool that is literally nothing here on the reservation, even though we open it up to off-reservation people,” he said. “There’s no houses for sale. No houses for rent. Where’s that person going to live?”

Constant turnover and understaffing can lead to an under trained police department, Deer said.

“[The survivor is] waiting for help. They don’t know if help is coming. They don’t know if the help is going to be compassionate and trained,” Deer said. “The system is not feeling like a safe, productive system to them anymore.”

Big money but little justice Three hours east of Fort Peck, the Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota sits on the Bakken oil basin and has an annual budget of \$400 million. The reservation is home to the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation, or the Three Affiliated Tribes.

Driving around the remote reservation, council member Monica Mayer pointed to a multimillion-dollar housing project that she said will soon have an aquatic center, baseball diamonds and mini golf.

A \$17 million public safety and judicial center was built, and staffing increased in the court system. In the past three years, the reservation has hired more than a dozen additional officers to help an understaffed police department.

Monica Mayer is a tribal council member on the Fort Berthold Reservation. Despite this financial independence, the justice sys-

tem appears to be failing sexual assault survivors who report.

“At every level, we are not adequately functioning to provide the services that are needed in a critical situation,” Mayer said.

The Fort Berthold tribal court does not have enhanced sentencing. The court sentenced three people for sexual assault from 2013 to mid-2018, according to court records. Sentences ranged from eight days to six months.

The tribes’ relationship with its federal partners—the BIA, the FBI and the U.S. attorneys—is crucial to helping survivors get justice. Based on interviews and records obtained from federal and tribal agencies, it’s unclear whether all sexual assaults on Fort Berthold were fully investigated by any agency in the past six years.

The tribes are supposed to refer every major crime to either the BIA or the FBI for investigations. Both are charged with overseeing all major criminal investigations on Fort Berthold and will determine which agency takes the lead.

The tribal criminal investigators had records of 66 sexual assault cases from January 2016 to September 2018. The BIA had records of only 10 investigations during that same time period. The FBI declined to provide any records.

After Newsy asked about the status of these cases, Three Affiliated Tribes Police Capt. Grace Her Many Horses, a member of the Oglala Sioux tribe from the Pine Ridge Reservation, said she would do a case file review.

“The priority for me, right now, is to go through those case files to find out what’s been declined, why, and is there anything we can do to make it happen,” she said. “I guess part of that is on me, too. I should know this by now.”

Her Many Horses said she finished the case file review nearly a year later, but she did not provide the details of what she found, nor did she disclose whether the police referred all 66 cases up to their federal partners.

Exactly one week after Newsy’s last trip to Fort Berthold, during which reporters asked how sexual assaults and rapes are handled on the reservation, the Department of Justice and the BIA released a joint statement saying, “A number of concerns have been raised about public safety and criminal investigations on the Fort Berthold Reservation.”

Citing “the high rate of violence against women and children,” it said the BIA was increasing the number of special agents from “one to two.” As of the start of October, no second agent had started working on Fort Berthold.

The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights issued two reports on funding in Indian communities, one in 2003 and an update in December 2018, called “Broken Promises.” The report said, “The federal government continues to fail to support adequately the social and economic well-being of Native Americans,” and this “contributes to the inequities observed in Native American communities.”

TRYING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Twila Szymanski works as the deputy court administrator for the Fort Peck Tribal Court, maintaining records and stats.

Szymanski reported only one of her three assaults—the one when she was 14. Her case made it into federal court.

The defendant pleaded guilty in 1995. He was sentenced to three years’ probation and no prison time.

Twila Szymanski is the deputy court administrator for the Fort Peck Tribal Court. “Justice wasn’t served, in my opinion,” she said. “He was back in the community quickly, and I had to see him when this was all fresh.”

Szymanski is confronted with the memory of what happened to her each time a case comes up and each time she sees her perpetrator in the community.

She said she uses her position in the court to go through cases and stop them from dropping through the cracks, and she is running for Fort Peck associate judge in the election this month.

"When the system has failed you time and time and time again, you don't feel empowered," Deer said. "It feels like a disconnect between this moment of 'Me Too' and the reality of Indian country and sexual assault."

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. RESCENTIALER), my good friend and another colleague from the Rules Committee.

Mr. RESCENTIALER. Madam Speaker, the rule before us today provides for consideration of H.R. 6, a bill creating a pathway to citizenship for millions of people who entered this country illegally, while it does nothing to enforce our immigration laws or secure our borders.

You heard that right. This bill does nothing to enforce our immigration laws. It does nothing to secure our borders. And it does so as a record number of illegal immigrants pour across our Southern border. And yet, House Democrats are passing a bill that will further incentivize illegal immigration and will worsen the Biden border crisis.

The numbers speak for themselves. Over 100,000 migrants were encountered at our Southern border just last month. The CBP facility in Donna, Texas, was at 729 percent capacity last week. Let me repeat that. That facility was at 729 percent capacity.

And, alarmingly, CBP confirmed that four people were arrested at the border, three of whom were from Yemen, one of whom was from Serbia, and those individuals matched the names on the FBI's Terrorist Screening Database.

So despite my liberal progressive colleagues' claims to the contrary, this surge is directly the result of the Biden administration's decision to halt the border wall construction, to reimplement Obama-era catch-and-release policies, and to cancel President Trump's asylum agreements.

This Chamber should work to address the border crisis going on, Biden's border crisis. We should not pass legislation that encourages and rewards illegal immigration and further incentivizes this crisis, yet that is what H.R. 6, in fact, does. This bill places the interest of those who broke our laws above the interests of those who followed them.

It has no enforcement provisions. It includes loopholes to give green cards to gang members and criminals. It even puts U.S. taxpayers on the hook for grant programs to help illegal immigrants obtain green cards.

Again, H.R. 6 would do absolutely nothing to address President Biden's border security and humanitarian crisis at the Southern border.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the rule and vote "no" on H.R. 6.

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, the situation at the border has nothing to do with the Dream and Promise Act. If anything, former President Trump's attempt to eliminate all resources contributed to the crisis at the border. The Dream and Promise Act does not apply to future migrants, just those who were already in the country before 2021.

This Dream and Promise Act has a very high criminal bar. An applicant is disqualified if they have any one of the following: A felony conviction, one misdemeanor conviction involving moral turpitude, more than two misdemeanors, or one misdemeanor for domestic violence.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER).

Mrs. WAGNER. Madam Speaker, I rise in stark opposition to H.J. Res. 17, which would retroactively and unconstitutionally remove the deadline to ratify the equal rights amendment.

Ratification of the equal rights amendment will expand taxpayer-funded abortions and imperil basic pro-life protections that States have enacted based on the will of their people through their State legislatures.

I am a committed defender of rights for women and girls, and I have led efforts in Congress to end sex trafficking, address the rape kit backlog, and help women balance staying in the workforce and caring for their children.

As a mother and as a proud grandma, I want my sweet granddaughter to feel secure in the knowledge that she is entitled to the same rights and opportunities as men.

□ 1715

However, I cannot support this attempt to circumvent the amendment process and enshrine access to taxpayer-funded abortion in the Constitution by a simple majority vote rather than with the required support of two-thirds of Congress or the States.

Congress has twice given States time to ratify the equal rights amendment, but the deadline has long since passed. While some States ratified the ERA after the deadline, others—up to five—have withdrawn their ratification.

I strongly agree and associate myself with the late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's words when she made the point: "If you count a late-comer on the plus side, how can you disregard States that said, 'We have changed our minds'?"

If Democrats want to test the long-standing bipartisan agreement on limiting taxpayer-funded abortions, they should follow Justice Ginsburg's guidance and start the process over, just as our Founders intended.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I would also like to set the record straight when it comes to the Violence Against Women Act, or VAWA. My amendment was removed, in a partisan fashion, from VAWA this Congress, stripping vital sex trafficking funding for victims, for children. This has always been included, and it was stripped out and not allowed in the amendment process. Also not allowed was my PRENDA amendment that would have stopped sex selection in the womb taking the lives of young girls.

Madam Speaker, I urge opposition to this legislation.

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, my colleagues across the aisle are not supportive of provisions to protect LGBTQ-plus individuals in this bill, but LGBTQ-plus members of our community experience domestic violence, too. Abusers do not discriminate based on sexual orientation, and neither should this body.

Legislators who oppose equality are trying to turn this into a debate about abortion to distract from the issue at hand. I would like to clarify that the ERA doesn't include any requirement to provide specific healthcare services, including abortion. It is about equality under the law.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, the most recent Marist poll found that 7 in 10 Americans, including nearly half who identify as pro-choice, want significant restrictions on abortion. Yet, the ERA as written will be used in an aggressive litigation strategy to nullify those restrictions, including the Hyde amendment, waiting periods, parental involvement, women's right-to-know laws, conscience rights, and the late-term abortion bans like the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act.

NARAL Pro-Choice America has said: "The ERA would reinforce the constitutional right to abortion" and "require judges to strike down anti-abortion laws."

The National Organization for Women said: "An ERA—properly interpreted—could negate the hundreds of laws that have passed restricting access to abortion."

Abortion activists, Madam Speaker, successfully litigated using State ERAs in both New Mexico and Connecticut to compel taxpayers to pay for abortion on demand.

Last year, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg spoke on the legal impermissibility of extending the deadline for ratification and said she "would like it to start over." I couldn't agree more.

Madam Speaker, two leaders of the National Organization for Women (NOW) wrote: "During the 1972 ERA ratification campaign, several prominent women's leaders denied that an ERA would apply to abortion"

Ever since, pro-abortion leaders have largely ignored, trivialized, or denied the fact that

activists plan to aggressively use the federal ERA as currently written in a litigation strategy to overturn all pro-life laws and policies including restrictions supported by huge majorities of Americans. According to the most recent Marist poll (January 2021):

7 in 10 Americans including nearly half who identify as pro-choice want significant restrictions on abortion,

58 percent of all Americans oppose using tax dollars for abortion,

55 percent want to ban abortion after 20 weeks,

70 percent of Americans oppose abortion if the child will be born with Down Syndrome,

80 percent of Americans believe that laws can protect both a pregnant woman and the life of her unborn child.

While I fundamentally disagree with abortion activists who refuse to recognize an unborn child's inherent dignity, worth, and value, at least both sides now agree that the ERA as written will be used in court to promote abortion.

NARAL—Pro-Choice America said: "The ERA would reinforce the constitutional right to abortion . . . (and) require judges to strike down anti-abortion laws . . .".

The National Right to Life Committee states that "the proposed federal ERA would invalidate the federal Hyde Amendment and a state restrictions on tax-funded abortions."

As director of reproductive-justice initiatives and National Women's Law Center senior counsel Kelli Garcia said, the ERA would help create a basis to challenge abortion restrictions."

And NOW said: "An ERA—properly interpreted—could negate the hundreds of laws that have passed restricting access to abortion . . .".

Those laws restricting abortion include the Hyde Amendment, waiting periods, parental involvement, women's right to know laws, conscience rights including the Weldon Amendment and any late term abortion ban like the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2003.

Should the ERA be ratified without clarifying abortion-neutral language—to wit: "Nothing in this Article shall be construed to grant or secure any right relating to abortion or the funding thereof"—it is absolutely clear that abortion activists will use the ERA as they have successfully used state ERAs in both New Mexico and Connecticut—to force taxpayers to pay for abortion on demand.

By now, my colleagues know that:

The Supreme Court of New Mexico ruled in 1998 that the state was required to fund abortion based solely on the state ERA and said the law "undoubtedly singles out . . . a gender-linked condition that is unique to women" and, therefore, "violates the Equal Rights Amendment."

In like manner, the Supreme Court of Connecticut invalidated its state ban on abortion funding and wrote in 1986: "it is therefore clear, under the Connecticut ERA, that the regulation excepting . . . abortions from the Medicaid program discriminates against women."

Today in Pennsylvania, activists are suing to eviscerate the abortion funding restriction in that state claiming that the Hyde-type restriction violates the Pennsylvania Equal Rights Amendment.

I believe that all human beings—especially the weakest and most vulnerable including un-

born baby girls and boys—deserve respect, empathy, compassion, and protection from violence.

Madam Speaker, last year, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg spoke on the legal impermissibility of extending the deadline for ratification and that she "would like it to start over".

According to Vox, Justice Ginsburg said, "There's too much controversy about late-comers, plus, a number of states have withdrawn their ratification. So, if you count a late-comer on the plus side, how can you disregard states that said 'we've changed our minds?'"

Five states—Idaho, Kentucky, Nebraska, Tennessee, and South Dakota—voted to ratify the ERA but later rescinded that ratification.

I strongly believe in equal rights for women. I've introduced the ERA with the abortion-neutral language I mentioned a moment ago.

Over the course of many years, I have consistently sponsored and promoted women's rights legislation to ensure equal pay for equal work including most recently, the Paycheck Fairness Act.

In the struggle against wage discrimination, I voted in favor of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act.

To help ensure that women are not disadvantaged in their careers because of time taken to attend to their families, I was an early and strong advocate of multiple legislative initiatives to provide family medical leave—including the groundbreaking bill that became law, the Family and Medical Leave Act.

I voted to ensure that women's rights are protected in higher education by strongly supporting Title IX.

I have supported legislation to amend pension and tax policies that negatively impact women, and I supported numerous bills to establish certain rights for sexual assault survivors including the Survivors' Bill of Rights which is now law.

Since the mid-1990s, I have led the effort to end the barbaric practice of human trafficking, a human rights abuse that is an unimaginable exploitation of women and girls that thrives on greed, disrespect, and secrecy.

Twenty years ago, the U.S. Congress approved and the President signed legislation that I authored—the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000—a comprehensive whole-of-government initiative to combat sex and labor trafficking in the United States and around the world.

The Violence Against Women Act (See Division B) was reauthorized and significantly expanded by my law. Last Congress, I cosponsored the Violence Against Women Extension Act of 2019.

In 2019, I authored another bill that was signed into law—my fifth major law on human trafficking—The Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Act.

After a young college student from my district, Samantha Josephson, was brutally murdered by the driver of what she thought was her Uber ride, I introduced Sami's Law which passed the House—but never got a vote in the Senate—to make the ride share industry safer for all. In recent months, it has been shocking to learn that thousands of women who use Lyft or Uber have been sexually assaulted and some have been murdered. I re-introduced Sami's Law in February.

Yesterday, it was reported that another woman was sexually assaulted in Ft. Lauderdale by an "off-duty" Uber driver.

Ensuring equal rights for women and serious protections against violence requires laws, policies, and spending priorities to achieve those noble and necessary goals—without putting unborn baby girls and boys at risk of death.

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD a March 16 USA Today opinion piece from activists Dolores Huerta, Carol Jenkins, and Eleanor Smeal titled "There is no deadline on women's equality. Add the equal rights amendment to the Constitution."

[From USA TODAY, March 16, 2021]

THERE'S NO DEADLINE ON WOMEN'S EQUALITY. ADD THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION.

(By Dolores Huerta, Carol Jenkins and Eleanor Smeal)

For the second time in a century, a global pandemic has occurred at the height of a determined movement to expand women's rights under the U.S. Constitution. The 1918 flu pandemic nearly halted the drive for ratification of the 19th Amendment on women's suffrage. But advocates rallied, lobbied President Woodrow Wilson for support and urged Congress to pass a joint resolution adopting the amendment. That was followed by ratification by the states and final certification in August 1920.

Today, the campaign for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment is in the middle of another global pandemic with women losing jobs at a much higher rate than men, especially affecting women of color. In these first 100 days of the Biden-Harris administration and during Women's History Month, there is a real opportunity to make constitutional history again with lasting change for women's rights and gender equality by adding the ERA to the Constitution.

No rights denied 'on account of sex'

Congress approved the ERA in 1972. It says, very simply, that "equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex."

President Joe Biden and Congress now have the opportunity to rally as well. This week, the House of Representatives will consider a joint resolution clearing the way for the ERA to be added to the Constitution. If the Senate also adopts the resolution, it could become part of the Constitution this year.

The ERA won ratification by the necessary three-fourths of the states when Virginia became the 38th state last year. Earlier, Nevada ratified in 2017 and Illinois in 2018. However, the ERA has yet to be formally enshrined into the Constitution because of an arbitrary timeline in the amendment's preamble—not the legislative text sent to the states for approval—which set 1979 for ratification. Congress changed the timeline by extending it to 1982.

Congress can again weigh in by removing the timeline and recognizing the final three states, because Article V of the Constitution puts the amending process with the Congress and ratification with the states.

Button supporting the Equal Rights Amendment on April 2, 2013, in Little Rock, Arkansas. Congressional action is needed to support the attorneys general of Virginia, Nevada and Illinois, who went to federal court asking the national archivist to include the ERA in the Constitution.

But a U.S. district judge ruled this month that the three states did not have standing to bring the case, and the 1982 deadline remains in effect.

Now is the time for Congress to recognize there can be no time limit on equality. The

House and Senate should approve a joint resolution “removing the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment.” The measure, introduced in the House in January, already has more than 200 co-sponsors.

The vast majority of Americans across demographic and partisan lines agree that women should have equal rights with men in this country. In a 2020 Pew Research Center survey, more than 9 in 10 U.S. adults said it is very important (79%) or somewhat important (18%). Fully 78% of U.S. adults—including majorities of women, men, Republicans and Democrats—favored adding the ERA to the Constitution.

‘All men would be tyrants if they could’

Abigail Adams is often quoted as saying, “Remember the Ladies.” In March of 1776, she wrote more than these three words to her husband, John, just months before the Declaration of Independence was adopted and as he was engaged in drafting the U.S. Constitution. She had some ideas about what should be included “in the new code of laws” he was making: “I desire you would remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. . . . Remember, all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to form a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation.”

That rebellion has been taking place through the hundreds of peaceful ERA marches and rallies that led up to the 2017 Women’s March, events that galvanized millions of women and men nationwide to new levels of political activism. The #MeToo movement sparked public outrage over sexual assault and misogyny in the workplace.

In 2020, women again far outnumbered men as voters with a gender gap that has become decisive in presidential, Senate and House elections. And women and men alike supported the Equal Rights Amendment by electing a pro-ERA majority of members in the House and Senate.

An estimated 1 million more women than men have lost their jobs during the COVID-19 lockdowns, and the pandemic shows that most essential workers are women, most of them are Black and Latina, and most still have the majority of caregiving responsibilities. These along with other economic realities make constitutional rights for women more urgent than ever before.

The pandemic has sparked a reexamination of the role of government and the need for social safety net and economic policies that work for all. In short, the new reality of 2021 demands that Congress approve the ERA resolution. It will mark a historic commitment to women’s rights by ensuring equality under the law for current and future generations.

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, COVID’s impact on women shows the continued need for equality. We have the power to remove the ERA ratification deadline and make it a reality.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

If we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to provide for consideration of Congresswoman MILLER-MEEKS’ H.R. 1897, the REACT Act.

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my

amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) to speak further on the amendment.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I thank my good friend, Congresswoman FISCHBACH, for yielding me time.

I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question so we can take up my bill, H.R. 1897, the REACT Act.

My bill would require the Department of Homeland Security to test all migrants illegally crossing our border who they plan to release into our communities for COVID-19.

Yesterday, I traveled to El Paso, Texas, to meet with the men and women of the United States Customs and Border Protection. I saw firsthand the crisis they are facing and believe it is our job as Congress to do everything in our power to address it.

CBP is currently encountering more than 3,000 migrants on average per day, which is rapidly approaching levels seen at the height of the 2019 crisis. To put this in perspective, President Obama’s Secretary of Homeland Security, Jeh Johnson, stated during his tenure that 1,000 apprehensions a day was considered a bad day. We are at more than three times that now, and on top of it, we continue to face a global pandemic.

In February, CBP encountered over 100,000 migrants on the southwest border trying to illegally enter our country. This does not include those migrants who may have gotten away or evaded detection, some of whom may be positive for COVID-19.

The Department of Homeland Security announced today that we are on track to encounter the highest number of migrants along the southwest border in the last 20 years. Seasonally, migration gets worse in the spring months of April and May, so we are likely to see these numbers increase over the coming months.

Yesterday, I heard directly from the Border Patrol agents that few, if any, of the thousands of migrants we saw in CBP custody are being tested for COVID-19. These migrants, and children, in particular, are being held in facilities that are already at capacity, and often for longer than the 72-hour limit permitted by law. According to recent reports, as of March 8, 185 migrants released into Brownsville, Texas, have tested positive for COVID-19.

Border security and immigration is not an issue that only affects border States. It affects every community across the country. If the Biden administration continues to release these migrants, they will not stay in our border

communities. Instead, they will travel to every State. Without proper testing and quarantine, they are likely to bring COVID-19 with them, and the communities to which they are transferred are unaware.

As a physician and former director of the Iowa Department of Public Health, I know that the COVID-19 pandemic is not yet over. We must ensure that any individuals the Biden administration insists on releasing into our communities do not have COVID-19. This is also why I support reinstating the PAUSE Act, to prevent the introduction of new COVID-19 cases from Canada and Mexico.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation to require that we keep all of our communities and these migrants safe and to stop spreading COVID-19 by voting “no” on the previous question.

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, President Biden inherited a dismantled and gutted immigration system. The prior administration’s strategy of cruelty, chaos, and confusion was ineffective and set the stage for our current challenges.

I include in the RECORD a March 15 Columbus Dispatch article titled “Undocumented immigrants pay billions in taxes each year—and have been for 25 years.”

[From the Columbus Dispatch, Mar. 15, 2021]
UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS PAY BILLIONS IN TAXES EACH YEAR—AND HAVE BEEN FOR 25 YEARS

(By Danae King)

Every year, Arturo pays thousands of dollars in taxes from the revenue produced by his central Ohio-based painting company.

But he will never receive Social Security benefits. Or Medicare. Or Medicaid.

That’s because Arturo, whose last name is not being used for his safety, is an undocumented immigrant from Mexico—one of about 6 million who pay taxes annually, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

Jorge Beltran is a Columbus tax preparer who is certified by the IRS to file taxes for undocumented immigrants. He hopes to shatter misconceptions about immigrants not paying taxes and being drains on society.

A report from the office shows that 50% to 75% of undocumented immigrants pay billions in taxes each year—and have been since the Internal Revenue Service created a program 25 years ago allowing people without a Social Security number to file taxes.

When it comes to state and local taxes, undocumented immigrants pay more than \$11 billion a year, according to a 2017 report from the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, a nonpartisan nonprofit based in Washington, D.C. In Ohio, they paid \$83.2 million in state and local taxes in 2017, according to the institute.

Jorge Beltran, left, reviews tax documents with client Ana Narciso. Beltran is a Columbus tax preparer who is certified by the IRS to file taxes for undocumented immigrants. He hopes to shatter misconceptions about immigrants not paying taxes and being drains on society. Narciso has legal status to be in the United States.

“When you hear people who are citizens—who may be against immigration or immigrants, especially undocumented—say, ‘Oh, they’re here and sucking up all the government resources and taking handouts and

welfare.' That's not the case," said Jessica Rodriguez Bell, a Columbus immigration attorney who has undocumented clients.

"These people are not eligible for those benefits, and many times they're paying into the system like we are. It's frustrating to hear that a lot."

Still, many attorneys recommend their undocumented clients pay taxes, Rodriguez Bell said.

"The reason for that is that, one, it's income they've been paying in and are likely entitled to a refund of some sort," Rodriguez Bell said. "Then, also because in the future, even if they don't have a current immigration case pending or even if they're not eligible for relief at this time . . . oftentimes you want to demonstrate good moral character and that you've been an upstanding citizen while you've been here."

Years of tax returns also establish that a person has been living in the United States, she said.

To some, though, the issue is not whether or not undocumented immigrants pay taxes, said Mark Krikorian, executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies, a Washington, D.C.-based conservative think tank.

"There's this sort of implicit assumption that if you pay your taxes everything else is fine," he said. "Paying your taxes doesn't wipe away everything else that you've done."

Krikorian said that the real question is what is the balance of taxes undocumented immigrants pay versus the services they consume.

"There's no real debate about less-skilled workers," he said. "Whether they're legal or illegal, they use more in services than they pay in taxes."

A 2010 report from another Washington, D.C., think tank, the Brookings Institution, however, suggests that while U.S.-citizen children of undocumented immigrants can be costly when they're young, those costs are paid out through a lifetime of taxes.

The mere act of filing taxes could be seen as a risk for undocumented immigrants because it could result in the federal government pursuing legal action to return the immigrants to their home country. But Rodriguez-Bell said she hasn't seen any such negative consequences.

"The IRS is a separate department, so it's not something where we've ever seen information exchanged between the IRS and, say, ICE," she said, referring to Immigration and Customs Enforcement. "This is not something that's going to get you in trouble, and you're not doing something illegal by doing that. It can only help your situation in the future if you are filing."

In 1996, the IRS created the Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) to allow people working in the United States without Social Security numbers to pay taxes. It is a 9-digit number, the same length as a Social Security number, issued only to those who are not eligible for Social Security numbers.

In order to help undocumented immigrants get a tax ID number and file, the IRS certifies what are called acceptance agents. There are 13 in Columbus, 79 in Ohio and more than 5,000 nationwide.

Jorge Beltran, the owner of Belmont Services LLC, a tax preparation company on Columbus' Northwest Side, has been a certified acceptance agent with the IRS since 2008. The vast majority of Beltran's clients are undocumented immigrants, and he's passionate about letting people know that they pay taxes.

"Imagine if more people knew this," Beltran said. "These are not people asking for a handout. They're not asking for unemployment. They're not asking for any benefits. Even if they wanted to, they couldn't."

Consider his clients Javier and Norma—whose first names only are being used, as with other undocumented immigrants in this story, for their safety—who both worked in food service before the pandemic. In March 2020, Javier got laid off but had no access to unemployment or COVID-19 relief payments due to his status. Over the course of the rest of the year, he worked six different jobs to support his family, which includes their three U.S.-born children.

The couple made \$56,369 in 2020 and got a refund of \$3,337, which made a big difference in their lives, Beltran said, possibly paying for five months of their rent. If they had Social Security numbers, they could've gotten \$6,900 in federal COVID relief payments in 2020 to help support their family, Beltran said.

"They contribute to all of our communities," he said. "They pay the school system from their taxes. They pay for the roads from their taxes, and they spend money they make in the grocery stores and movie theaters and everywhere but nobody knows about it."

Beltran shared the story of another two of his clients, Cirilo and Patricia, who live in Mount Vernon and have been in the country for almost 20 years. Cirilo works two jobs as a cook, but only made \$26,784 last year, paying \$3,706 in taxes. His earnings had to support his six children—four of whom have Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status, allowing them to work and go to school legally, and two of whom were born in the United States.

Nicole, who owns a painting business with her undocumented immigrant husband, Arturo, both pose for a portrait on Friday, March 12, 2021. Undocumented immigrants pay taxes and own businesses that employ people and help the local economy.

Arturo and his wife, Nicole, a U.S. citizen whose family is from Mexico and who owns their painting company with him, are Beltran's clients as well. They employ 47 people and paid \$118,250 in estimated taxes this year, according to Beltran.

"Talk about being productive members of society," he said. "Forty-seven people can feed their families, help pay the schools, whatever, with the employment they have and that's generated by this company."

More than \$11,000 from the family's taxes went to the city of Columbus.

The couple started their business after Arturo got injured in his job as a butcher and was fired. He started working for a friend as a painter, but had always dreamed of working for himself and owning a business. So, with the help of a friend, they started their own business six years ago and now support themselves and their four children.

"He comes from nothing in Mexico. His parents are farmers, and he has just a middle school, almost high school education," Nicole said, of her husband. "It was really important for him not to be stuck. He came to the United States to make something for himself, to provide a better future for his children."

Immigrants are here to make the country better, Nicole said.

"This is what makes America great," she said. "Immigrants coming here and finding their way and helping the country prosper, too."

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, during the last 4 years, millions of immigrants faced uncertainty as the Trump administration pursued cruel immigration policies. With passage of H.R. 6, we are beginning a new chapter in our Nation's immigration policy.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO).

Mr. KATKO. Madam Speaker, I will note, in response to my colleagues across the aisle, that there is nothing wrong with enforcing the immigration laws that are on the books. That is all we are talking about doing at the border, and keeping the border secure.

Madam Speaker, yesterday, I visited the southern border, and what I saw was unacceptable, full stop. I witnessed the dangerous and rapidly growing impacts of Biden's border crisis.

I spoke to Border Patrol agents on the front line of the crisis and witnessed firsthand what they are up against. Thousands of migrants are showing up every week, hanging onto the words and promises of President Biden's goal of relaxing border restrictions.

Our Border Patrol agents are underresourced and overwhelmed. They have been put in an untenable situation, with little regard for their health or safety.

Department of Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas recently announced the Department would begin allocating FEMA resources. FEMA is the agency that is in charge of overseeing the pandemic and delivering vaccines to our American citizens. He has taken resources away from American citizens to deal with this crisis on the border. If FEMA is involved, it is, by definition, a disaster.

Last week, senior Department of Homeland Security officials told the committee that Customs and Border Protection doesn't have the capacity to test and quarantine migrants in their custody, and that there was no planning being done to ensure migrants are not released by the Federal Government at the border if they are COVID-19 positive. Thousands have been released.

I saw with my own eyes hundreds of people in this facility. Not a single one was tested. And only half of the Border Patrol agents have been inoculated. We don't know how many have COVID-19, and quite frankly, I don't think they want to know.

In the midst of the ongoing pandemic, it is the Department's job to ensure it doesn't release anyone who is COVID-19 positive. For this reason, I support efforts to defeat the previous question and bring up commonsense legislation to require that any individual released from CBP or ICE custody tests negative for COVID-19.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO).

Mr. KATKO. Madam Speaker, President Biden's knee-jerk reversal of productive, effective border security policies from the previous administration

was a political calculation that has, quite frankly, backfired and created a humanitarian, security, and public health crisis.

We can't allow our Nation's progress in overcoming the ongoing pandemic to be undermined by dangerous policies allowing individuals with COVID-19 to be released into our communities.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote to defeat the previous question.

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD a statement by Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro N. Mayorkas in which he states the many issues associated with the southern border and what we are doing to address those issues.

For example, Border Patrol facilities and border personnel that had not had complete access to a COVID-19 vaccine now have complete access to the vaccine. It talks about the disruptions of the previous administration and their lack of commitment to deal with tender-age children and many other issues that could help inform this conversation moving forward.

[From the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Mar. 16, 2021]

STATEMENT BY HOMELAND SECURITY SECRETARY ALEJANDRO N. MAYORKAS REGARDING THE SITUATION AT THE SOUTHWEST BORDER

There is understandably a great deal of attention currently focused on the southwest border. I want to share the facts, the work that we in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and across the government are doing, and our plan of action. Our personnel remain steadfast in devotion of their talent and efforts in the service of our nation.

The situation at the southwest border is difficult. We are working around the clock to manage it and we will continue to do so. That is our job. We are making progress and we are executing on our plan. It will take time and we will not waver in our commitment to succeed.

We will also not waver in our values and our principles as a Nation. Our goal is a safe, legal, and orderly immigration system that is based on our bedrock priorities: to keep our borders secure, address the plight of children as the law requires, and enable families to be together. As noted by the President in his Executive Order, "securing our borders does not require us to ignore the humanity of those who seek to cross them." We are both a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. That is one of our proudest traditions.

THE FACTS

We are on pace to encounter more individuals on the southwest border than we have in the last 20 years. We are expelling most single adults and families. We are not expelling unaccompanied children. We are securing our border, executing the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) public health authority to safeguard the American public and the migrants themselves, and protecting the children. We have more work to do.

This is not new. We have experienced migration surges before—in 2019, 2014, and before then as well. Since April 2020, the number of encounters at the southwest border has been steadily increasing. Border Patrol Agents are working around the clock to process the flow at the border and I have great respect for their tireless efforts. To un-

derstand the situation, it is important to identify who is arriving at our southwest border and how we are following the law to manage different types of border encounters.

SINGLE ADULTS

The majority of those apprehended at the southwest border are single adults who are currently being expelled under the CDC's authority to manage the public health crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic. Pursuant to that authority under Title 42 of the United States Code, single adults from Mexico and the Northern Triangle countries of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras are swiftly expelled to Mexico. Single adults from other countries are expelled by plane to their countries of origin if Mexico does not accept them. There are limited exceptions to our use of the CDC's expulsion authority. For example, we do not expel individuals with certain acute vulnerabilities.

The expulsion of single adults does not pose an operational challenge for the Border Patrol because of the speed and minimal processing burden of their expulsion.

FAMILIES

Families apprehended at the southwest border are also currently being expelled under the CDC's Title 42 authority. Families from Mexico and the Northern Triangle countries are expelled to Mexico unless Mexico does not have the capacity to receive the families. Families from countries other than Mexico or the Northern Triangle are expelled by plane to their countries of origin. Exceptions can be made when a family member has an acute vulnerability.

Mexico's limited capacity has strained our resources, including in the Rio Grande Valley area of Texas. When Mexico's capacity is reached, we process the families and place them in immigration proceedings here in the United States. We have partnered with community-based organizations to test the family members and quarantine them as needed under COVID-19 protocols. In some locations, the processing of individuals who are part of a family unit has strained our border resources. I explain below additional challenges we have encountered and the steps we have taken to solve this problem.

UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN

We are encountering many unaccompanied children at our southwest border every day. A child who is under the age of 18 and not accompanied by their parent or legal guardian is considered under the law to be an unaccompanied child. We are encountering six- and seven-year-old children, for example, arriving at our border without an adult. They are vulnerable children and we have ended the prior administration's practice of expelling them.

An unaccompanied child is brought to a Border Patrol facility and processed for transfer to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Customs and Border Protection is a passthrough and is required to transfer the child to HHS within 72 hours of apprehension. HHS holds the child for testing and quarantine, and shelters the child until the child is placed with a sponsor here in the United States. In more than 80 percent of cases, the child has a family member in the United States. In more than 40 percent of cases, that family member is a parent or legal guardian. These are children being reunited with their families who will care for them.

The children then go through immigration proceedings where they are able to present a claim for relief under the law.

The Border Patrol facilities have become crowded with children and the 72-hour timeframe for the transfer of children from the Border Patrol to HHS is not always met.

HHS has not had the capacity to intake the number of unaccompanied children we have been encountering. I describe below the actions we have taken and the plans we are executing to handle this difficult situation successfully.

WHY THE CHALLENGE IS ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT NOW

Poverty, high levels of violence, and corruption in Mexico and the Northern Triangle countries have propelled migration to our southwest border for years. The adverse conditions have continued to deteriorate. Two damaging hurricanes that hit Honduras and swept through the region made the living conditions there even worse, causing more children and families to flee.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made the situation more complicated. There are restrictions and protocols that need to be followed. The physical distancing protocol, for example, imposes space and other limitations on our facilities and operations.

The prior administration completely dismantled the asylum system. The system was gutted, facilities were closed, and they cruelly expelled young children into the hands of traffickers. We have had to rebuild the entire system, including the policies and procedures required to administer the asylum laws that Congress passed long ago.

The prior administration tore down the lawful pathways that had been developed for children to come to the United States in a safe, efficient, and orderly way. It tore down, for example, the Central American Minors program that avoided the need for children to take the dangerous journey to our southwest border.

The previous administration also cut foreign aid funding to the Northern Triangle. No longer did we resource efforts in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras to tackle the root causes of people fleeing their homes.

And, there were no plans to protect our front-line personnel against the COVID-19 pandemic. There was no appropriate planning for the pandemic at all.

As difficult as the border situation is now, we are addressing it. We have acted and we have made progress. We have no illusions about how hard it is, and we know it will take time. We will get it done. We will do so adhering to the law and our fundamental values. We have an incredibly dedicated and talented workforce.

ACTIONS WE HAVE TAKEN

In less than two months, Customs and Border Protection stood-up an additional facility in Donna, Texas to process unaccompanied children and families. We deployed additional personnel to provide oversight, care, and transportation assistance for unaccompanied minors pending transfer to HHS custody.

We are standing up additional facilities in Texas and Arizona to shelter unaccompanied children and families. We are working with Mexico to increase its capacity to receive expelled families. We partnered with community-based organizations to test and quarantine families that Mexico has not had the capacity to receive. We have developed a framework for partnering with local mayors and public health officials to pay for 100% of the expense for testing, isolation, and quarantine for migrants. ICE has also developed additional facilities to provide testing, local transportation, immigration document assistance, orientation, travel coordination in the interior, and mechanisms to support oversight of the migrant families who are not expelled.

Working with Mexico and international organizations, we built a system in which migrants who were forced to remain in Mexico and denied a chance to seek protection under

the previous administration can now use a virtual platform—using their phones—to register. They do not need to take the dangerous journey to the border. The individuals are tested, processed, and transported to a port of entry safely and out of the hands of traffickers. We succeeded in processing the individuals who were in the Matamoros camp in Mexico. This is the roadmap going forward for a system that is safe, orderly, and fair.

To protect our own workforce, we launched Operation Vaccinate Our Workforce (VOW) in late January. At the beginning of this administration, less than 2 percent of our frontline personnel were vaccinated. Now more than 25 percent of our frontline personnel have been vaccinated.

We directed the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to assist HHS in developing the capacity to meet the surge of unaccompanied children. FEMA already established one new facility for HHS to shelter 700 children. They have identified and are currently adding additional facilities. We are working with HHS to more efficiently identify and screen sponsors for children. In two days, we recruited more than 560 DHS volunteers to support HHS in our collective efforts to address the needs of the unaccompanied children.

We are restarting and expanding the Central American Minors program. It creates a lawful pathway for children to come to the United States without having to take the dangerous journey. Under this expansion, children will be processed in their home countries and brought to the United States in a safe and orderly way.

In addition, DHS and HHS terminated a 2018 agreement that had a chilling effect on potential sponsors—typically a parent or close relative—from coming forward to care for an unaccompanied child placed in an HHS shelter. In its place, DHS and HHS signed a new Memorandum of Agreement that promotes the safe and timely transfer of children. It keeps safeguards designed to ensure children are unified with properly vetted sponsors who can safely care for them while they await immigration proceedings.

THE PATH FORWARD

We are creating joint processing centers so that children can be placed in HHS care immediately after Border Patrol encounters them. We are also identifying and equipping additional facilities for HHS to shelter unaccompanied children until they are placed with family or sponsors. These are short-term solutions to address the surge of unaccompanied children.

Longer term, we are working with Mexico and international organizations to expand our new virtual platform so that unaccompanied children can access it without having to take the dangerous journey to our border. As mentioned, we are expanding the Central American Minors program to permit more children to be processed in their home countries and if eligible, brought to the United States in a safe and orderly way.

We are developing additional legal and safe pathways for children and others to reach the United States. While we are building a formal refugee program throughout the region, we are working with Mexico, the Northern Triangle countries, and international organizations to establish processing centers in those countries so that individuals can be screened through them and brought to the United States if they qualify for relief under our humanitarian laws and other authorities.

For years, the asylum system has been badly in need of reengineering. In addition to improving the process by which unaccompanied children are placed with family or sponsors, we will be issuing a new regulation

shortly and taking other measures to implement the long needed systemic reforms. We will shorten from years to months the time it takes to adjudicate an asylum claim while ensuring procedural safeguards and enhancing access to counsel.

President Biden laid out a vision of a “multi-pronged approach toward managing migration throughout North and Central America that reflects the Nation’s highest values.” To that end, we are working with the Departments of Health and Human Services, Justice, and State in an all-of-government effort to not only address the current situation at our southwest border, but to institute longer-term solutions to irregular migration from countries in our hemisphere that are suffering worsening conditions. This is powerfully exemplified by the President’s goal to invest \$4 billion in the Northern Triangle countries to address the root causes of migration.

CONCLUSION

The situation we are currently facing at the southwest border is a difficult one. We are tackling it. We are keeping our borders secure, enforcing our laws, and staying true to our values and principles. We can do so because of the incredible talent and unwavering dedication of our workforce.

I came to this country as an infant, brought by parents who understood the hope and promise of America. Today, young children are arriving at our border with that same hope. We can do this.

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1730

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. HERRELL).

Ms. HERRELL. Madam Speaker, I rise because I am concerned about the release of aliens into my community without COVID-19 testing.

Dr. MILLER-MEEKS’ changes to this legislation are vital to protecting Americans from the spread of COVID-19.

As our Nation continues to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, our State is still largely locked down, our schools are shuttered, and many of our businesses have been closed due to orders from State and local officials.

In many areas along the border, the CBP has restarted catch and release in the midst of this unprecedented pandemic. This is completely illogical, especially while American citizens continue to live under such restrictions. In fact, again, I can point to a double standard.

Madam Speaker, it is very unfair to think that we want to do something to protect these young families, these unaccompanied children, when we know for a fact that they are coming across the border at the age 1, 3, and 5 alone, without any supervision. We know for a fact that they are being raped and pillaged along the way. And if we feel that is somehow a benefit to the children, let alone being exposed in coming into this Nation with COVID, then we are fooling not only ourselves, but, again, the American people. We aren’t just putting the immigrants in harm’s way, but also the American people.

Madam Speaker, we should be more mindful of what is happening. This is a

health pandemic we are living in. This is a crisis. We have suicide rates that we have never seen before amongst students. Our businesses are shut down. We must do something to protect the American people first.

We also must protect the migrants. But allowing our borders to be porous without the COVID testing is, again, a mistake, not only for the Nation, but for the migrants trying to come here. It is dangerous for both Americans and migrants.

We deserve better than that in America. Our Americans deserve better than that. And we must support Dr. MILLER-MEEKS’ bill and insist that there is COVID testing before migrants are released into America.

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, as difficult as the situation is at our southern border, we are addressing it.

The Biden administration has acted, and they have made progress. They have no illusions about how hard it is, because they inherited a dismantled program. And to protect our own workforce, they have launched Operation Vaccinate our Workers, VOW, in late January.

At the beginning of the Biden administration, less than 2 percent of our frontline personnel were vaccinated. To date, more than 25 percent of our frontline personnel have been vaccinated. That is leadership. That is not avoidance of the problem that we face.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, in closing, there is a crisis at our border. Whether the Democrats acknowledge it or not, our border patrol agents are overwhelmed, detention facilities are way over capacity, and COVID-19 is spreading unchecked throughout. This puts the health of both individuals detained and the border agents at risk.

We currently require a negative COVID test to travel in the U.S. So why should the southern border be any different?

The border crisis is a direct result of the administration’s lax immigration policy, and it is putting our communities at further risk of contracting COVID-19.

Madam Speaker, I urge a “no” vote on the previous question, and a “no” vote on the underlying measure.

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

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Last week, we passed a historic American Rescue Plan, which set out a vision of who we are as a nation. We are a country that can conquer this virus, a country that cares about eliminating childhood poverty, and a country that is dedicated to ensuring that

everyone—everyone, not just the rich—are able to emerge from the pandemic and do better.

The bills before us today are a continuation of this vision of a country committed to doing better for the people. Too many people in America live in fear, fear because they are not protected under the law, but these bills before us today say: “No more.”

The Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act says to domestic abuse survivors: “You are safe. You are going to be safe.”

H.J. Res. 17, which removes the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment says to women: “You are equal.” “We are equal.”

The Dream and Promise Act says to Dreamers: “You, too, can have a shot at the American Dream.”

And the Farm Workforce Modernization Act tells our farm workers: “You can do your job without fear of deportation.”

H.R. 1868 tells Americans: “Don’t worry about draconian cuts. Let’s focus on recovery.”

Madam Speaker, the bills before us today will continue the Democratic Congress’ work to do better by all the American people.

Madam Speaker, I urge a “yes” vote on the rule and the previous question.

The material previously referred to by Mrs. FISCHBACH is as follows:

AMENDMENT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 233

At the end of the resolution, add the following:

SEC. 11. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution, the House shall proceed to the consideration in the House of the bill (H.R. 1897) to require a diagnostic test for COVID-19 for an inadmissible alien released from the custody of the United States Customs and Border Protection or the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 12. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 1897.

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question are postponed.

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 5 o’clock and 37 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PANETTA) at 6 o’clock and 30 minutes p.m.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1620, VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2021; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 6, AMERICAN DREAM AND PROMISE ACT OF 2021; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1603, FARM WORKFORCE MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2021; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1868, PREVENTING PAYGO SEQUESTRATION; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 17, REMOVING THE DEADLINE FOR THE RATIFICATION OF THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 233) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1620) to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 6) to authorize the cancellation of removal and adjustment of status of certain aliens, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1603) to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for terms and conditions for nonimmigrant workers performing agricultural labor or services, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1868) to prevent across-the-board direct spending cuts, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 17) removing the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment; and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question on the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 212, nays 200, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 78]

YEAS—212

Adams
Aguilar
Alfred
Auchincloss

Axne
Barragán
Bass
Beatty

Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer

Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bourdeaux
Bowman
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brownley
Bush
Bustos
Butterfield
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Cartwright
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crist
Crow
Cuellar
Davids (KS)
Davis, Danny K.
Dean
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Delgado
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Escobar
Eshoo
Español
Evans
Fletcher
Foster
Frankel, Lois
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Gomez
Gonzalez, Vicente
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Grijalva
Harder (CA)
Hastings
Hayes

Higgins (NY)
Himes
Horsford
Houlihan
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jacobs (CA)
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (TX)
Jones
Kahale
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (NJ)
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Lamb
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee (NV)
Leger Fernandez
Levin (CA)
Levin (MI)
Lieu
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Luria
Lynch
Malinowski
Maloney
Carolyn B. Maloney, Sean
Manning
Matsui
McBath
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Mfume
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moulton
Mrvan
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Newman
Norcross
O’Halloran
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta

Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Perlmutter
Peters
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Porter
Pressley
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Ross
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schrier
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Sires
Slotkin
Smith (WA)
Soto
Spanberger
Stanton
Stevens
Strickland
Suzuki
Swalwell
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tlaib
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Underwood
Vargas
Veasey
Velázquez
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wexton
Wild
Williams (GA)
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NAYS—200

Aderholt
Allen
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Banks
Barr
Bentz
Bergman
Bice (OK)
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Brooks
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burchett
Burgess
Calvert
Cammack
Carl
Carter (GA)

Carter (TX)
Cawthorn
Chabot
Cheney
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Cole
Comer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Curtis
Davidson
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Duncan
Dunn
Emmer
Estes
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fortenberry

Foxx
Franklin, C.
Scott
Fulcher
Gallagher
Garbarino
Garcia (CA)
Gibbs
Gimenez
Gohmert
Gonzales, Tony
Gonzalez (OH)
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Granger
Graves (LA)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hagedorn
Harris
Harshbarger
Hartzler
Hern