

S. 2520. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for engagements with State, local, Tribal, and territorial governments, and for other purposes.

PRESIDENT BIDEN'S COVID CRISIS

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to address President Biden's COVID crisis.

Sadly, COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations in the United States have reached record highs in the past week. Many Americans are having trouble finding COVID at-home tests and difficulties in scheduling a time to be tested with their healthcare provider.

What is President Biden's response?

In a recent COVID Zoom meeting with Governors, President Biden said: "There is no Federal solution."

Now, this mishandling of the pandemic is disappointing. Operation Warp Speed, developed under the previous administration, provided significant vaccines in record time. This initiative also established a robust distribution plan, innovative treatments, medical equipment, and ever-growing testing capacity.

Madam Speaker, in addition to this, our families are struggling to pay for everyday goods as inflation reaches a 40-year high. We are facing a self-inflicted economic crisis as this administration encourages our workforce to stay home. Our students continue to face uncertainty in their learning with last-minute school closures despite schools receiving ample COVID relief funding.

To distract from these failures, President Biden and congressional Democrats are trying to change the rules in the Senate to pass their Socialist agenda.

VOTER SUPPRESSION

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

Mr. GALLEGO. Madam Speaker, on January 6 we witnessed a violent coup attempt in our Capitol fueled by the big lie.

Our country continues to face a slow-moving coup in the form of voter suppression.

I have seen firsthand in my home State of Arizona voter suppression laws targeting people of color and a State senate that would rather waste taxpayer money on a sham audit instead of upholding our sacred democratic right to vote.

The Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act is critical to protecting the vote in my State and States across the country where restrictive laws are being put into place to strip people of their right to vote. Arizona will stand strong together this weekend. Thousands will gather this Saturday in Phoenix for democracy and voting rights.

Passing this bill today answers their call by guaranteeing access to democracy for every Arizonan.

Today the House showed where it stands. We won't shrink from protecting our democracy and the voting rights of all Americans. It is past time for the U.S. Senate and Senator SINEMA to do the same.

HONORING THE LEGACY OF GRANVILLE CRANE

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

Mr. PALAZZO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of the late Granville Crane, surviving crew member of the USS *Indianapolis* and recipient of the Congressional Gold Medal.

Mr. Crane was born in 1925 and turned 95 years old this year. He joined the ship's crew at the age of 16, one of the youngest crew members to join at the height of World War II.

In 1945 he participated in a top-secret trip to deliver parts for the first nuclear weapon ever used in combat and was aboard the same ship when it was torpedoed and sunk that year.

Hundreds of men went down with their ship, and many more faced dehydration, shark attacks, and exposure before there was any hope of rescue. Of 1,195 men aboard, Mr. Crane was one of only 316 who survived. As Mr. Crane waited to be rescued, he clung to his faith.

Mr. Crane will be remembered as a family man, a hero, a survivor, a patriot, and a great man of God.

On behalf of the Fourth Congressional District and our great Nation, we are forever in Mr. Crane's debt. Our prayers are with Mr. Crane's family at this time. May he rest in peace.

MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. CARTER of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, 20 States, including Louisiana, still have the same hourly pay floor as the Federal minimum wage: \$7.25.

Louisiana also has the second highest poverty rate of any State. That is because minimum wage is a poverty wage—a full-time salary is less than \$16,000 a year. No one can survive on that, much less raise a family on that wage.

While the Federal minimum wage has not increased since 2009, the costs of housing, medicine, food, and childcare have all exponentially increased. We cannot simply subject millions of our constituents to endure the trials of poverty. It is not a mystery. We can, we must, and we know how to help. It is time to finally increase the Federal minimum wage and lower the costs with the Build Back Better Act.

INFLATION SURGE

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

Mr. HILL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the latest Consumer Price Index data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics just yesterday.

This new data shows a 7 percent annual increase in inflation—the largest 12-month increase since 1982. The last time inflation was this out of control, Michael Jackson had just released "Thriller". So from moonwalking to now sleepwalking with President Biden, we have continuously seen negative real wages, meaning that our pay is actually decreasing when you account for inflation.

The President's only idea is to print and spend more money. Gasoline is up 50 percent. Propane, kerosene, and firewood are up 34 percent; and beef, veal, and bacon are up 18 percent. Higher inflation is eroding the true purchasing power for all American families, and these record-breaking CPI numbers underestimate the real cost of inflation.

Americans need leadership that will prioritize getting our economy and our Nation back to its pre-pandemic performance.

□ 1230

AMERICA'S CHILDREN ARE COUNTING ON US

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

Ms. SCANLON. Madam Speaker, January 14 marks the first time in 6 months that families will not receive an expanded child tax credit payment, a program to support children and families that Congress passed last spring with the American Rescue Plan.

For the last 6 months, working and low-income families have had the relief of knowing that every month they would receive \$250 per child, and \$300 for kids under six.

These payments have been a lifeline for families, helping them put food on the table and provide for children as the pandemic rages. As a result, child poverty and hunger then dropped in this country by almost half.

More than 76,000 families in my district received these monthly payments, and they are worried about what will happen now that the payments have ended. Just last weekend, two constituents, a dad and a grandmother, approached me to say how important the CTC program had been.

We cannot go backwards. The Senate must move quickly to pass the Build Back Better Act and extend the child tax credit. America's children are counting on us.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF BATTALION CHIEF DAVID MAEKER

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

Mr. ELLZEY. Madam Speaker, I am honored to recognize an outstanding constituent of Texas 6, Battalion Chief David Maeker, who has dutifully served the people of Waxahachie for the past 26 years.

David was Battalion Chief in 2018 but was leading in and out of the fire station well before that. Throughout his career, he has set the tone for what it means to be a good leader.

I am incredibly proud to announce that Chief Maeker was named Firefighter of the Year for Waxahachie in 2021, an outstanding honor for which he deserves to be recognized.

David also helps his community. He has done so by starting a nonprofit called Compassion for the Fatherless, which works with an orphanage overseas in fulfilling the needs of children by providing them with a strong foundation to be successful in life.

David, you truly lead by example. I, and the citizens of Waxahachie, thank you for your incredible service and leadership in our community and to those who need it most.

Congratulations on the well-deserved honor.

DEMOCRATS DELIVER ON INFRASTRUCTURE

(Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise to announce it is finally infrastructure year for Georgia's Fifth Congressional District.

I have seen firsthand how the infrastructure bill will transform the entire Fifth Congressional District in Georgia. To share just a few projects: We are going to repair crumbling bridges in the city of South Fulton; extend the Peachtree Creek Greenway in Brookhaven; make Forest Park a more pedestrian-friendly city; and maintain Hartsfield-Jackson's title as the world's busiest airport. We are delivering for the people.

I am especially proud that the infrastructure bill includes the Reconnecting Neighborhoods Program, based on legislation that I wrote. This program will reconnect neighborhoods like the Sweet Auburn district that was intentionally divided by the construction of Federal interstates.

This is a matter of racial justice because far too often, it was Black neighborhoods that were divided. I have met with community leaders to hear what they need from the program, and I will continue to be their voice in Washington as they build back better.

And I almost forgot. While we are making these decades-overdue investments in infrastructure, we are going to also create millions of good-paying,

union jobs. Democrats have delivered for the Fifth District and our country, and we are not done yet.

POTENTIAL TREATMENTS FOR COVID-19

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

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, it was a very disappointing recess. I knew at least three more people who passed away because of the COVID.

For that reason, I was very disappointed in President Biden's comments earlier today on television, in that I think he could have brought up things that would have prevented some of these unnecessary deaths.

First of all, President Trump's COVID was cured by monoclonal antibodies 16 months ago. Nevertheless, in my district, we have a shortage of monoclonal antibodies. I have doctors or clinics calling me wondering where they are. It is a good question.

They were available for the President of the United States 16 months ago. But, for some reason, President Biden and his team have shortages of monoclonal antibodies in my district that I am convinced would have saved some of these lives.

The next thing I will point out is that my doctors tell me that people are better off if they are taking vitamin D, vitamin C, zinc, quercetin. All these things would save people's lives if they were taking them up front before they got the virus.

But again, President Biden gives a big speech. No comments on this; just let people die.

FIGHT FOR VOTING RIGHTS

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Sometimes it is extremely difficult, Madam Speaker, to really convey in this form both the pain and the emotion of one's journey in life.

I worked for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the conference that Dr. Martin Luther King and Ralph David Abernathy organized and gathered foot soldiers for from around America. They were, in fact, the beloved community, and included the likes of John Robert Lewis and many others that sit in this House today.

I walked on plantations and tried to register sharecroppers. And so, I come today to recount for us the words of Dr. King: "We shall overcome because the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice."

We need to enact democracy reform now more than ever because State lawmakers introduced over 440 suppression bills in 49 States.

We cannot allow the other body to stand on some sort of pro forma dignity that they cannot overturn the filibuster, when people died for the vote.

We honor Dr. King on Monday. I want that vote to be in his honor that we have voting rights.

HYPOCRISY IN PLANS FOR GREEN AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, we have a lot of lofty goals in this country about green energy, renewable energy, and such. But we are not providing the ways in order to get there.

One of the important components is the mined products that we need to go into various equipment and vehicles, et cetera. We are not able to mine the critical minerals, the rare earths in this country.

For example, to get a permit to open a type of mine or expand a mine, it could be 15, 16, 18 years in this country while our neighbors just north of the border, a 2- or 3-year process to secure the permits to mine products that are desperately needed in this country if we are ever going to talk about meeting the goals you would have for renewable energy, electric cars, and all that in order to lower the carbon footprint.

So what is the hypocrisy here? In my home State of California, you can hardly get mining done. You can hardly even keep electricity flowing because of taking away power plants due to—those are power plants that would be zero CO₂. I don't understand the hypocrisy. So we have to get smart about this.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF EU- ROPEAN PARLIAMENT PRESI- DENT DAVID SASSOLI

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

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a champion for democracy, David Sassoli, President of the European Parliament, who passed away earlier this week.

President Sassoli was a respected leader of conviction and principle; a distinguished Italian journalist-turned-public-servant dedicated to his service to helping vulnerable women, homelessness, individuals and the rights of refugees.

Sassoli was a symbol of balance and generosity to Europe. His leadership and commitment to social justice will not be forgotten. He will be remembered as a stalwart defender of the shared European and American values of human rights, the rule of law, and equality.

I send my deepest condolences, as I know Members of the House do, to the people of the European Union. And my thoughts and prayers are with his family and loved ones.