

Why do they want to do this?

They want to do this so that they can compound the injury to those who need a mortgage deduction, which will be eliminated for any home that you buy in the future.

If you have medical expenses, that will be eliminated. You will not be able to deduct that, whether you are a young family with a catastrophic illness or a senior citizen.

Then those of you who are trying to increase your opportunities for the future—help your children—you will not be able to deduct student loan interest, tuition, and other education expenses.

Elections matter, but actions matter. This tax bill is a crippling, devastating bill, and it will create the complete opposite of what Republicans say they believe in—a huge deficit, with a huge debt, on the backs of the American people. Vote “no” on this tax bill.

TAX REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise today to co-anchor this Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour.

I also want to take the time to acknowledge our chair, the Honorable CEDRIC RICHMOND from the State of Louisiana.

For the next hour, we have a chance to speak directly to the American people on issues that are important to the Congressional Black Caucus. The issue right now that seems to be of the most importance to the Congressional Black Caucus and the constituents that we represent, and the American public, for that matter, is tax reform, and the plan that is being considered that the Speaker has indicated that he would like for us to vote on this week.

We have a few Members here who would like to take the time to also express their interest in this. This is a very big deal, obviously. We don’t do tax reform that often. The last time we did tax reform was in the early 1980s, and that was, obviously, something that was very bipartisan. This experience has not been bipartisan whatsoever, and we are concerned also about the effect that it is going to have on our constituencies.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to open it up for Members to talk about whatever it is that they would like to, but I did

want to let you know that the main topic was going to be tax reform.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative PAYNE for his participation again and for always participating in the CBC Special Order hours. We know that these are very important. Our constituencies, again, want to hear how we stand on these issues. They are getting a lot of press right now. So I thank the gentleman very much for being here this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), my friend and colleague.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman VEASEY for hosting tonight’s Special Order hour.

Mr. Speaker, we are here, as the gentleman from Texas has stated, to discuss many different issues that face the American people.

H.R. 1, which is interesting that it holds that number, because based on what we see, that tax cut will only work for the top 1 percent, so we feel that it is appropriate that it was designated H.R. 1.

Mr. Speaker, this tax bill, cut tax scam will devastate over a period of time the working class, people trying to move into the middle class, and middle class families. Eventually, some people might see a bit of a cut, but for most people, there will be an increase.

I do not understand why we continue to think that trickle-down economics is going to work in this country. It has failed time and time again. To give breaks to the most wealthy, somehow we feel that that is going to overflow and trickle and drip down to the middle class. Sometimes a drip is very slow. We continue to wait for this economic equation to work one time in the country’s history because, up to this point, it has not worked.

Why would we not allow families to continue to deduct their interest on student loans? Why?

Most of these families are fighting to get their children into college and have to take out loans.

What is it about the country that we need to tax those people?

Tell me why it is that they cannot deduct this interest.

Two of my sisters are teachers, both in education—one in alternative high school work and one a kindergarten teacher for 25 or 30 years. In kindergarten, you are looking to help a youngster become creative, find their gift. On many occasions, with the school not being able to supply things, they would go to the educational stores and buy flashcards and buy other items to enhance the children’s education, out of their pockets, out of their personal moneys.

Now you are going to say that they cannot deduct those expenses that they are using to educate our children, our next leaders? Why?

Yet, if you go from a 75-foot yacht to a 100-foot yacht, you are allowed to deduct the difference. Why?

It absolutely makes no sense what we are doing with H.R. 1. It is a billion-

aire’s tax scam, and we need to make sure the American people understand that.

Secretary Mnuchin was on the talk shows on Sunday. He said: Well, we can’t promise everybody is going to get a tax break.

So they are even, finally, being honest about it.

Mr. Speaker, everybody might not benefit from this tax cut, but all of the people that they are interested in will benefit from this tax cut.

We need to be honest with the American people. We need true tax reform. My colleagues on this side of the aisle are ready to do that, but the majority continues to stifle any bipartisanship that we can have on this issue.

We need to move forward in a positive way for the American people. We need to come together in this body to help the American people. We do not need another tax cut for the rich.

In New Jersey—a State that only gets 77 cents back on the money that it pays to the Federal Government—for every dollar, we get 77 cents back in services. So we are subsidizing other States.

□ 1945

I heard today that West Virginia, for every dollar it sends, gets over \$4 back.

Not to allow New Jersey’s citizens and other subsidizing States—Connecticut, Maryland, New York—to have the tax break on State and local exemptions is almost like double taxing people.

I just am here to say that this is an issue that is very important to the American people. They do need relief and they do need help, but we need to do it in a bipartisan manner that makes sense for the entire country—not just the top 1 percent, but the entire Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. VEASEY for his leadership on these Special Order hours. He has demonstrated a gift in bringing issues to the American people and to the country in a manner that is very even-tempered. Some of us get a little excited, but Mr. VEASEY seems to be able to keep his composure and still be strong in his message, and I applaud him for that.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative PAYNE very much for speaking this evening on the importance of this tax bill and that we debate this and really, again, just keep or constituents informed. Mr. PAYNE takes every one seriously, and I know he has tried to participate in as many of these as he can, and I thank him for that—again, the importance of talking about this tax bill, talking about the Republicans’ past attempts at failed trickle-down policies and trying to bring those same policies and put them in this tax reform bill and trying to rush us into a floor vote this week.

We should all be working together to try to come up with some sort of bipartisan solution, some sort of bipartisan policy position that will be good for everyone, because I can tell you, Mr.

Speaker, that for many of the low-income and working class and lower middle class constituents and middle class constituents in the district that I represent, I know that people are going to be hurt.

Mr. Speaker, I know Mr. PAYNE is concerned about that. I know the 49 members of the Congressional Black Caucus are concerned about that.

This is very serious, and it could have very long-lasting implications, as has been pointed out by advocacy groups and others from all sides of the political spectrum. It is not just Democrats or the Progressive community that is concerned about this. There are a lot of people who are concerned about a variety of the different programs here that are going to be affected.

Mr. Speaker, again, I appreciate everything that Mr. PAYNE brings to this, particularly with him representing New Jersey, because we know that, for that particular part of the country, housing and other goods can sometimes be even more expensive, and it can be a very tough hardship on families. When you add this tax bill to the fold, it makes it even more daunting.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, we have the highest property taxes in the country, and it is really an effort for families to stay in their homes and pay those property taxes. Any relief they can have along the way helps their quality of life in this country, and that is what we are here striving for, to make sure that everyone can benefit and enjoy the fruits of this country.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, we want to make sure the American Dream doesn't become the American nightmare while people are trying to figure out how they are going to make their house payment and pay for their house.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for the time.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. PAYNE very much for his remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague from the city of Houston, Harris County, our country's fourth largest city, SHEILA JACKSON LEE. I thank Representative JACKSON LEE for always participating in these Special Order hours.

Mr. Speaker, I know that, in particular, the gentlewoman's concern is Houston, being such a large part of our State, a large part of our Nation's capital economy, and the effects of this tax bill. When you start talking about something affecting Houston, with it being the fourth largest city, it can have very consequential effects on our entire State, because their economy is such a big part of what makes Texas go.

Mr. Speaker, I again thank the gentlewoman for being a part of this.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for his leadership, his stewardship of these very special ways of communicating to the American people.

I just left a meeting on temporary protected status, so I will try to sum-

marize my remarks, because I think it is very important to join in the Congressional Black Caucus Special Order.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman, Mr. RICHMOND, and my colleague Mr. PAYNE and my colleague Mr. EVANS, who will join us in that effort, because this is a way to communicate with our colleagues of the urgency of some of these issues.

So let me first of all take a moment that really gives me great consternation, great concern, and that is that, as I said in my remarks, while the President was out of the country, that I will always wish him safe travels and safe return, but you have to think about how we have turned the corner on the dignity of the Presidency when you have to monitor the tweets or the words that are being said by that Office when they are out of the country.

There is one point I have to make, because I am a product of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Barbara Jordan was able to be the first African American from Texas, since Reconstruction, elected to the United States Congress, along with Andy Young from Georgia, after the Voting Rights Act.

Mr. Speaker, there was nothing untoward. It was just simply allowing one person one vote. Heretofore, in the Deep South and in the Southwest, African Americans were denied the right to vote by suppression, poll tax, and a number of tactics; but the Voting Rights Act eliminated or prevented, had to have preclearance, any discriminatory factor that could be raised that would keep minorities from voting, that one vote, one person.

It pains me to read the headlines: "Trump Says He Believes Putin's Election Meddling Denials."

I believe that it is important for people of goodwill, for Members of the United States Congress, to denounce these comments and to ask for the dignity of this Office to really put Americans first and put this Nation first, because that is not what is being done.

All of the intelligence agencies, 17 plus, have indicated that not only did they influence, they intruded, they skewed the election. They didn't just meddle. You cannot ask a former KGB officer to tell you that he didn't meddle in our elections. Elections matter.

This is no comment on who won or lost. This is a comment on reality. The elections were skewed to one person, and it was confirmed by the intelligence agencies, and it is time for the highest Office to speak on behalf of the American people.

That brings me right to the Trump tax cuts, the Republican tax cuts. I spoke earlier during 1 minutes to try and correlate between tax cuts and the needs of the American people.

These major tax cuts will offer more benefits to corporations, which, by the way, are having their biggest season of profits that we have ever had. They are succeeding beyond imagination. They have not only stock prices going up, but the profits that they are able to stock away are going up.

Take that in the backdrop of this tax bill, having to cut and violate the Medicare trust fund and Medicaid in order to find the dollars to be able to give the top 1 percent the greatest tax cut and to give corporations a 20 percent tax cut in the United States and a 12 percent tax cut overseas, which, in addition to giving them that money on the corporate rates, which is a reasonable thing to discuss, but by the inequity of the lower amount being overseas, you can imagine that jobs are still going to leave and go overseas.

This is a tax cut that is made for the basket, if you will, of goodies for the top 1 percent. This is not worrying about working Americans.

Let me put into the RECORD what you will lose.

You will lose the mortgage interest.

You will lose the fairness of the child tax credit.

You will lose the student loan interest, tuition, and other education expenses; personal casualty losses; tax preparation costs; medical expenses; alimony payments; moving expenses—which will impact victims of Hurricane Harvey, my constituents in Kashmere Gardens, northeast Houston, Third Ward, Acres Home, the Heights, Jacinto City, places where individuals have been impacted; this moving expense, elimination of that as a deduction, will impact individuals who are trying to restore their lives—and employee business expenses.

This bill will hurt the average working American. It is a frightening bill. I would almost like to say it is a bill made near purgatory on the way to you know where. This is a disgusting attack on hardworking Americans.

I want to also put in the RECORD my concern about extending the temporary protected status for Haitians as well as El Salvadorans and a number of other countries that are facing the 6-month deadline that seems to be what has come out of the administration.

All of these countries have devastation, and all of these countries are deserving, if you will, of an extension for the people who are here because they are, in fact, suffering still. Haiti is suffering still from the earthquake. El Salvador is suffering.

I want to mention one of my constituents, Jose, and his wife, who were deported during the horror and the hysteria of the announcement from the administration of: I am going to be hard on deportation.

A hardworking family man, a manager of a paint store, was deported out of this country back to El Salvador where there is no work, there is no opportunity, and they are still suffering from the devastation of years past. This is what we are in the midst of.

Let me, finally, express, as I indicated, my concerns about extending the temporary protected status certainly for Haitians and others. We are working on that as we speak.

Then let me come back to Hurricane Harvey. There are about 50,000 people in the hotels. We are still in need.

I am going to close with this.

We just experienced Veterans Day. What a pleasure to be able to speak with the many veterans, the Buffalo Soldiers, who celebrated at the downtown celebration, the American Legion. The Aldine Mail Route had a parade. Stafford had a parade. Many places had a parade. I want to celebrate our veterans by saying thank you.

When I spoke to young people, eighth graders, I told them about the value of joining the United States military, putting on the uniform. Policy does not relate to the value of the men and women who put on the uniform.

□ 2000

I believe that it is certainly of concern that we should understand what the needs of the military are. And if this proposal goes forward of giving waivers for individuals with depression, bipolar disorder, getting waivers, let me be very clear, I advocate for the full utilization of people, and those people who have mental health issues.

It is very important, as they are recruited into the United States military, that all of the resources needed to have them perform at the fullest of their capacity, we must ensure, as Members of Congress, that that happens. That must be our responsibility because, as we look at our veterans and we see the sacrifice, we see what war means, we have to make sure that we embrace them solidly and respect them and honor them.

So I thank the gentleman for allowing me to share a few thoughts. I will simply say that the gentleman is absolutely right, this tax legislation will be devastating, costly, and hard for the country to dig out of the deepening debt that is going to be created.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus in drawing attention to the Republican Leadership's latest plan to hurt the American taxpayers, especially those who did not support the President during the election.

The Republican tax cut bill will hurt hospitals.

The House tax bill would remove tax-exempt status of private activity bonds for construction of a non-profit facility such as a hospital.

This could potentially impact a fourth of the rural hospitals in Texas and many urban hospitals that may be planning construction or extensive renovation projects in the next few years.

Many non-profit hospitals depend on tax exempt private-activity bonds (PABs) as a financing tool.

PABs are tax exempt for certain entities, including qualified 501(c)(3) organizations including hospital bonds, but under the new tax reform legislation being considered by this body, the tax exemption will be removed.

PABs play a critical role in helping not-for-profit hospitals and health systems access low-cost capital.

Access to low-cost capital financing allows qualifying entities to keep infrastructure expenditures low.

This increases the ability for qualifying hospitals and health system to use these savings

to increase more efficient, more affordable care.

Federal tax-exempt financing is part of what continues to help health care providers and hospitals serve our nation and support rural communities.

The Texas Organization of Rural & Community Hospitals opposes removal of tax-exemption for PABs and urges Republicans to stop threatening small and rural hospitals.

The Republican Tax plan amends Title 26 of the United States Code 529 that deals with Qualified tuition programs.

The Code was intended to encourage persons to attain higher education and provide incentives for persons who pursue doctorates.

Most people know that going back to school to obtain a degree is a difficult choice to make with full time jobs and family obligations.

Having a degree can substantially increase income and provide choices that would otherwise be unattainable to the recipient of advanced degrees.

The benefit to the economy and our nation's leadership in the sciences rests with the number of people who attain undergraduate and graduate degrees.

The Republicans have gone into this section 529 of the tax code and extended the tax write-offs to those sending their children to K-12 private schools.

Other ways the Republican Tax bill hurts taxpayers who pursue college educations for themselves or their children.

Repeal of Lifetime Learning Credit;
Repeal of the Student Loan Interest Deduction;

Repeal of the qualified tuition reduction;
Repeal of educational assistance program;
Termination of private activity bonds; and,
Creation of a new excise tax on endowments at private colleges and universities.

The Republican leadership of the House is also causing problems for private sector investments in Colleges and Universities.

The tax bill threatens tax write offs for donations to colleges and universities and will limit tax credits associated with university-industry partnerships.

The Republicans claim that their Child Tax Credit proposal would help working families, but it simply does not do enough.

The House tax plan proposes a nonrefundable \$600 increase in the Child Tax Credit (CTC), and would make more families earning six figures eligible to claim the CTC.

This proposal wouldn't help the women who need it most.

In addition, whatever benefits this CTC proposal would provide pales in comparison to those that would be received by the wealthy and corporations under this tax plan.

The bill cuts taxes for major corporations who already pay far less than their fair share.

Republicans claim that economic growth will more than pay for the lost revenue but we've tried this before.

When trickle-down economics fails again and this bill explodes the nation's deficit, Republicans will call for huge spending cuts to critical programs that hardworking Americans depend on to make ends meet.

The plan's negative impact on the Lone Star state would be particularly hard.

Independent analyses show the Republican plan would actually raise taxes on about 1.5 million Texas households, or 12.4 percent of households next year.

On average, families earning up to \$86,000 annually would see a \$794.00 increase in their tax liability, a significant burden on families struggling to afford child care and balance their checkbook.

According to the IRS, 23 percent of tax filers, or 2.8 million Texas households, deduct their state and local taxes with an average deduction of \$7,823 in 2015.

The Ryan-McConnell plan eliminates this deduction, which would lower home values and put pressure on states and towns to collect revenues they depend on to fund schools, roads, and vital public resources.

Placing further strains on middle-class Texans is the elimination of the personal exemption, which deducts \$4,050 for each taxpayer and dependent on a return from taxable income.

In 2015, roughly 9.3 million dependent exemptions were claimed in the Lone Star State.

The GOP's reckless and irresponsible tax plan is made all the more obscene by its disproportionate and immoral handouts to the wealthiest few.

According to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, millionaires in Texas, 0.31 percent of filers in 2015 would receive almost 57 percent of the benefits from the tax plan.

Texans deserve a tax plan that puts working and middle class families first, not more deficit-exploding tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires.

We need bipartisan tax reform that creates jobs, fuels economic growth, and puts more money into the pockets of hard-working American families.

A recent Pew Research Center report found little support for cutting taxes for high-income households, which is defined as more than \$250,000 or large businesses and corporations.

In fact, 43 percent favored raising taxes on high-income households and 52 percent said corporate taxes should be raised.

The Republicans persist with their scheme of raising taxes on hard-working middle class families to pay for tax cuts for the rich.

It is reckless to explode our deficit which according to the Tax Policy Center, would skyrocket by \$2.4 trillion over the first decade.

The wealthy must pay their fair share, but the GOP tax scheme offers them a free lunch at the expense of those who are most in need of a helping hand.

The power of the purse rests with the House of Representatives and it is our job to make sure that the American People are treated fairly.

Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the House Committees on the Judiciary and Homeland Security Committee, I also rise today to express my strong objection to the announced intention by the Trump Administration not to extend Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Haiti, Honduras, and El Salvador.

On May 24, 2017, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) redesignated Haiti for 6 months of Temporary Protected Status (TPS), rather than the full 18 months requested by the Government of Haiti, Haiti experts in the United States, and the Congressional Black Caucus, among others.

DHS' decision did not reflect the realities on the ground in Haiti, which include Haiti's food scarcity crisis, cholera epidemic, and the ongoing challenges posed by the unprecedented 2010 earthquake.

In a letter sent on November 3, 2017, the Congressional Black Caucus urged DHS, once again, to fully extend Haiti's TPS designation for 18 months by the November 23, 2017 deadline in light of the aforementioned conditions in Haiti, as well as the exacerbated damage caused by Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

In a report published in October 2017, the highly regarded Global Justice Clinic concluded that conditions justifying Haiti's qualification for TPS in 2011 remain as acute today as they were then.

The study also found that 40,000 Haitians uprooted by the 2010 earthquake are officially displaced and that many more likely remain unofficially displaced in dangerously inadequate shelters.

The cholera epidemic that was tragically caused by international efforts to aid Haiti in 2010 more than doubled following Hurricane Matthew and is expected to directly affect more than 30,000 people by the end of 2017.

Hurricane Matthew also exacerbated the food insecurity crisis in Haiti, placing 2.4 million Haitians—22 percent of its population—in the grips of an acute food insecurity crisis.

The Haitian government has been working diligently for years to improve its economy, public health conditions, and infrastructure in coordination with the United States government and international community.

In order to accomplish this task, Haiti relies in large part on remittances that its citizens receive from TPS beneficiaries in the United States.

Therefore, the negative consequences of terminating Haiti's TPS designation would be twofold.

It would end essential remittances that significantly contribute to Haiti's recovery while also forcing the poorest republic in the Western Hemisphere to absorb the cost of reintegrating thousands of citizens all at once.

Such actions could be catastrophic to Haiti's recovery efforts and run counter to Congressional efforts to improve American relations in the region through the recently-passed United States-Caribbean Strategic Engagement Act (Public Law 114–291).

Finally, it is essential to note that Haitian TPS beneficiaries directly contribute to the United States.

They pay taxes, spend money, contribute to Social Security and Medicare, and help promote American prosperity in numerous sectors, such as the restaurant and food service, construction, and hospitality industries.

About 30 percent of TPS beneficiaries are homeowners, stimulating the real estate industry and contributing to the local property tax base.

Also, one in nine TPS beneficiaries in the labor force is self-employed, meaning they not only create jobs for themselves, but also create jobs for others.

A recent report found that the expiration of Haitian TPS would cost the United States economy more \$2.8 billion over a decade in lost gross domestic product.

Mr. Speaker, we need to be both smart and compassionate when it comes to extending TPS for Haiti.

The compassionate thing to do is extend TPS for Haiti.

But just as important, extending TPS for Haiti is the smart thing to do because it strengthens the American economy and ad-

vances the national interests of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, here are the top reasons why temporary protect status (TPS) for Haiti should not be revoked:

1) Trump Administration Actions:

The DHS termination of TPS decision threatens families and key industries in the United States and threatens the stability of nations in our region.

On November, 2017, the Washington Post reported that the State Department irresponsibly recommended that Temporary Protected Status (TPS) be revoked for over 300,000 Honduran, Nicaraguan, Haitian and Salvadorans living and working in the United States.

This is paving the way for the mass deportation of over 300,000 individuals who are legally in the US—many of whom have children who are US citizens.

It was an inhumane, foolish and terrible decision to make, given TPS holders' contributions to our economy including critical hurricane recovery efforts, to say nothing of the national security and humanitarian implications of kicking these individuals out.

That's why everyone from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, to national security experts, to Catholic bishops has expressed strong support for extending this vital program.

These nations are in no condition to receive 300,000 returnees.

In Haiti, forcing the return of 50,000 people would disrupt the fragile recovery, exacerbate the food, housing, and public health crises, and potentially destabilize the new government.

In El Salvador and Honduras, the return of over 250,000 people would strain government services and lead to job displacement in countries besieged by violence, narcotics trafficking and weak institutions.

The revocation of TPS will further destabilize fragile countries in our neighborhood. With remittances making up more than 15% of the GDP of TPS-designated countries, the sudden loss will put an added strain on the U.S. foreign aid budget while families who have long relied on this source of income will have no other option than to attempt to come to the U.S. as undocumented workers.

That's why Congress must act without delay to pass CHC-endorsed bill by Rep. NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ—the American Promise Act—would ensure individuals who have resided in the U.S. under these programs for a period of three years can remain in the country and pursue a path to naturalization.

2) TPS Revocation Is Not in America's National Interest:

Americans with Temporary Protected Status (TPS) are hardworking individuals who are contributing to our economy, our communities and our industries.

TPS recipients have passed numerous criminal background checks and have often been living in the U.S. for over a decade.

With more than 300,000 TPS beneficiaries expecting a Trump Administration decision on their fate, and some 800,000 DACA beneficiaries depending on Congressional action to shape their futures, we are entering a stretch of time that will be of huge consequence to 1.1 million immigrants who are deeply rooted and legally present in America.

Regardless of how you might feel about the policy, TPS holders from these countries have been in legal limbo for at least 16 years.

They are perhaps the most vetted, legally present, and work authorized community in our country.

They have submitted to numerous criminal background checks, once every 18 months.

Life has gone on for these folks—they have families here, are contributing to our economy, and our communities.

There are an estimated that 273,000 U.S.-born children in the country have parents with TPS.

Economic, legal, and policy experts have highlighted the disastrous economic impacts of revoking Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for hundreds of thousands of Americans, as country-specific deadlines loom.

3) Positive Economic Impacts of TPS

Approximately 250,000 TPS recipients are currently employed—approximately 94% of men and 82% of women.

The average TPS recipient works between 40–45 hours per week.

Given the length of time on the job, many of these workers are senior, specialized and not easily replaceable such as construction site supervisors and nursing home professionals.

The five leading industries that would face mass layoffs are construction (50,000+), restaurants and other food services (32,000+), landscaping services (15,000+), child day care services (10,000) and grocery stores (9,000+).

The mass layoffs of 250,000 TPS recipients would cost employers approximately \$967 million in immediate turnover costs.

The revocation of TPS status would cost the U.S. an estimated \$164 billion in Gross Domestic Product.

Revocation of TPS status would result in a loss of \$6.9 billion in Social Security and Medicare payments over a decade.

Given that 30% of TPS recipients are homeowners, the consequences of simultaneously dumping 60,000 mortgages could disrupt housing markets across the country including Texas (13,000 mortgages), Florida (5,000+ mortgages) and Virginia (4,100 mortgages).

Mass deportations of TPS recipients would cost taxpayers more than \$3 billion dollars.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague, my fellow Texan, for her eloquence in laying out the issues with the Republican tax plan.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. EVANS), my friend and colleague, for being here. I thank the gentleman for always offering his insight on these matters. I know that, in addition, just like the gentlewoman from Texas, that he is open to a broad array of topics. I appreciate any insight the gentleman wants to give us on tax reform or any of the other issues that the American public wants to hear from their congressional representatives on this day.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. EVANS).

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from the great State of Texas. He has consistently done a very great job in leading these efforts for the Congressional Black Caucus, as well as our chairman, CEDRIC RICHMOND.

Mr. Speaker, this is an interesting time that we are in, obviously, in the country, and it is a rather challenging time. Mr. Speaker, I would like to let

you know, last year this time, on November 14, 2016, I was sworn in. So I have been here for 1 year, Mr. Speaker. In that 1 year, when I stood in this well of this House, I talked about the importance of putting country first and moving America forward.

I said at that particular time that I thought it was extremely important that we work together, and all my colleagues, at that time, from Pennsylvania, stood with me, Democrats and Republicans alike. I talked in this well of the House on November 14, 2016, about the need to concentrate on the people first; that I thought it was extremely essential that we understood that we should talk about the issues that are most important to people and not what is important to us; that we now are in a governance mode, not a political mode.

There will be time to have discussions about political next year, but this particular time we need to put people first.

Mr. Speaker, our country has not seen bipartisan tax reform since 1986, and that was when President Reagan was President of the United States, and Speaker Tip O'Neill was Speaker of this House.

I think it is safe to say, the U.S. Tax Code is in need of major facelifting. But let me make it very clear when I say the way the Republican Party and the Trump administration are going about tax reform is all wrong.

One of my main priorities in Congress is to help keep moving the city of Philadelphia forward. The Republican tax bill impedes our ability to move our city forward. At a time when older cities and suburbs are pressed for funding, this destructive tax plan is yet another way the Republican Party is taking resources from our cities.

What do I mean by this?

On Friday past, Mr. Speaker, I joined with the mayor of the city of Philadelphia, Mayor Jim Kenney; the city council president, Darrell Clarke; Congressman BOB BRADY; and HELP USA to hold a press conference to call attention to how our neighborhoods would be hard hit by this Republican tax plan.

We stood in front of what used to be a school building in Philadelphia, but has now been transformed into a supportive housing facility that will soon house 37 veterans and individuals aged 55 and older. It is these kinds of investments and transformations that will move our neighborhoods forward that are at stake under the GOP tax plan. We have a lot to lose under the Republican tax plan.

Mr. Speaker, you may recall that the President, at that time, Candidate Trump, went to the city of Philadelphia and asked, specifically targeted to the African-American community: "What do you have to lose?" That is what he said.

He talked about the schools. He talked about the neighborhoods. He talked about all of the challenges that

we face in urban America and, particularly, to the African-American community.

So, Mr. President, we have a lot to lose under the Republican tax plan. The repeal of private activity bonds would be devastating for hospitals—I have a number of hospitals in my district. Temple University, Einstein, Lankenau, University of Penn, Saint Joseph's University—universities, and other nonprofit institutions in Philadelphia and Montgomery County who depend on these bonds and rely on public-private partnerships to address critical infrastructure needs, finance valued projects, and ensure affordable housing.

The list of harmful provisions in this bait-and-switch tax bill goes on and on.

I just received a letter from Chairwoman Val Arkoosh and Vice Chair Ken Lawrence of the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners. They wrote to me to tell me how residents in Montgomery County are alarmed by what is happening in this tax bill. They are extremely concerned about the fate of the State and local tax deductions. Without SALT, taxpayers are going to be feel an extreme tax hike. They are extremely concerned about the fate of the State and local tax deductions because this will have an extreme impact on local government.

That is just not right, Mr. Speaker.

Just the other day, I spoke with local labor leaders who expressed their great concerns on this tax scam. Mr. Speaker, that is true, it is a tax scam. It is something where jobs will continue to go overseas, not to our communities.

In a district that has 27 percent poverty in the Second Congressional District, I am truly concerned about the loss of jobs. They are incredibly fearful of what this plan means to the lives of hardworking families across our Commonwealth. They know it is going to be too many of their families who are going to be among those hit the hardest.

Mr. Speaker, remember what I said when I got elected and sworn in. I said that we need to put people first. This tax scam does not put people first.

These are the stories, fears, and concerns of real people in our neighborhood. These are the people we should be concerned with. These are the people on the front line; people who have serious questions about the intentions of this tax plan.

What is the Republicans' response?

To push it through for a win. Let me repeat that. To push it through for a win. That is wrong and unacceptable.

We are in the business of building a stronger tomorrow for our students, our seniors, our veterans, hardworking families, and all who call our neighborhoods home.

Instead of taking away more resources from our cities and suburbs, we should be looking for ways to build, invest, and enhance the existing infrastructure our cities have to offer to make them what they are, to attract

prospective home buyers and current homeowners. Let me repeat that. We should be looking for making ways more attractive to prospective home buyers and current homeowners.

Mr. Speaker, we have a real opportunity here to make a difference. Again, I am happy to be a part of the Congressional Black Caucus under Chairman RICHMOND's leadership, as well as Mr. VEASEY, in leading this effort because this is the kind of effort that we have to raise the consciousness and convince people they must resist.

We must resist, no matter what they say the numbers are, and keep our voices loud so that they can hear that we are not accepting what is taking place here.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here with my colleagues expressing the concern and the outrage that I have about this tax scam. This is not about the people. This is about the interest groups. We have a chance to make a change, Mr. Speaker, and we need to work together.

I said almost 1 year ago on this day, in this well of this House, that the only way we can move America forward is when we work together. I don't say that just to be saying it. I say it because that is what I did when I was in the Pennsylvania Legislature, working together to make a difference. That is the only way we are going to move the needle, when people work together.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much for laying out those concerns about the tax plan, and he did so very eloquently. I always appreciate the gentleman's participation.

Kind of building on what the gentleman talked about, I just want to give the American public out there and the constituents that we represent in the Congressional Black Caucus just a quick outline of who exactly this plan will hurt.

I am very concerned about this terrible tax plan because it is going to cut rates for the highest 1 percent of earners and corporations, while increasing the tax burden on lower and middle class families, while the Republicans are falsely going around claiming that they are going to be helping these individuals and these families. That is just not the case. That is not the case at all.

For example, let me give you one area that has been touched upon that I am concerned about, and that is State and local taxes. You won't be eligible any longer for the deduction, which means many individuals end up paying twice the amount of taxes on the same income.

The elimination of deductions for student loan payments: we have talked extensively on this House floor, on the Democratic side, about what students loans are doing to this country and the costs of a higher education. We know that a lot of people seek out higher education just because of the benefits that it can yield incomewise, and everybody is, again, always trying to see

how they are going to live that American Dream. They want to be able to pay their taxes, pay their car payment, pay their house note, whatever it may have happened to be. When you look at the fact that people won't be able to write off their student loans to help pay for their education anymore, that is really going to hurt and probably convince a lot of young people that they just shouldn't seek out higher education.

□ 2015

We want young people to seek out a higher education. I mean, even the blue-collar jobs out there we know are becoming harder and harder to keep and maintain, and they require some form of education. Even going to community college for a couple years after they graduate from high school almost seems to be something that they have to do.

The Center for American Progress found that 78 percent of Black students, in comparison to 57 percent of White students, took out Federal loans for their undergraduate studies. And again, just not being able to write those off means that dream that everyone has, regardless of race, being able to buy their first home, the American Dream, they are going to have to put that off because they can no longer pay off these very costly student loan interest payments. These tax deduction eliminations are going to be very troubling for so many people in the community in light of the fight just to build generational wealth.

Again, these trickle-down tactics, we have been talking about trickle-down economics now for a very long time, but some of these trickle-down tactics are proving not to work, and it is disheartening to see the finish line just being moved again and again, just over and over again. Every time people seem like they are doing better, just to see that finish line moved once again and making it just hard on these families that I talked about earlier that fall in those lower middle class, working class, middle class tax brackets.

You are talking about, when you look at this really closely, the restructuring of these tax brackets under the Republican plan would make it so that the lowest income earners' tax rates are going to increase from 10 to 12 percent, the lowest earners out there. Some of the poorest amongst us will have their tax burden increased, and it will make it so much more difficult for them to climb that economic ladder of opportunity. It is already hard to climb that ladder of opportunity.

Just think about it for just a minute, if you have two kids and you have a 10 percent tax burden, and you are making a small amount of money a year but you are out there working hard every day. You are trying to get overtime. You are punching the clock as much as you possibly can. You are having Grandma watch the kids just so you can pull that extra shift to get those hours in, but you are a single

mom and you are just really out there just busting it each and every day, week after week, and you still don't have any money in the bank. You are still having a hard time making ends meet. You are still getting rent notices put on the door once a month. It is just so tough, and just to know that we are not really going to be doing anything at all in this body. The Republicans aren't going to be doing anything to help these individuals be able to climb out of that hole and just be able to see the light. Just knowing that that mom and those kids are going to probably struggle under this tax plan until the kids leave the house, it is just really disheartening.

In addition to that, even the tax provisions that are aimed at helping working families are actually reserved, again, for just the wealthiest few in the community.

White House Republicans highlight their expansion of the child tax credit. Many of the lowest income parents who are in need of assistance will only be eligible to receive a partial amount of the tax credit, if any of the expansion at all.

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, the GOP child tax credit keeps the lowest income workers from benefiting from the expansion of the credit, despite numerous studies finding that the child tax credit's benefit children by improving school performance, higher college enrollment, and increasing earnings in adulthood.

Further, this tax plan refuses to take the interests of African-American communities as a whole into consideration, ensuring those who are striving to reach the American Dream will simply fall short.

Again, there is just so much in this bill that is going to be tough.

You are talking about repealing the estate tax. There are so many people whom I have heard—Rockefellers, Buffetts, Bill Gates, and others—who are saying that they are fine paying that, that they are absolutely okay with paying that. You think about what we are going to take away from people so they don't have to pay that estate tax. I mean, it is just amazing.

You have heard so many of my colleagues talk about it earlier here, but when you start talking about the local and State tax deductions, when you start talking about the student loan deductions that people really count on, when you start talking about child tax credits, when you start talking about new market tax credits, so many programs and so many things out there that are really helping individuals, helping our economy, and we want to give it back so a few wealthy people don't have to pay estate taxes? I mean, it is just really sad, Mr. Speaker, when you think about that.

One of the things that I think that we ought to do, instead of giving ultrarich people a pass on paying a billion dollars that they can pass down to

heirs, is that we ought to start thinking about doing something to help grandparents who are raising grandchildren.

I will never forget, when I was in the State legislature, I had a principal come up to me on the house floor, and I was showing the kids—I believe it was on the senate floor. We had walked to the other side. And there is a picture of the Battle of San Jacinto that hangs there in Austin at the capitol, and I was showing the schoolchildren, and the principal pulled me aside and she said: I want to thank you for talking about grandparents who are raising grandchildren.

She said: Over 50 percent of the kids at the elementary school where I am principal are raised by someone other than their parent, and 99 percent of the time it is the grandparent.

Instead of giving superrich people, ultrarich people a pass on paying the inheritance tax, why don't we give grandparents who serve as primary caregivers for their grandchildren out there a \$500 refundable tax credit? That would help out so much, because you have to think about what these grandparents are facing.

They didn't think that their Social Security check or their pension check was going to have to be used to help pay for school supplies, help pay for school clothes, help pay for backpacks, help pay for school uniforms, help pay for kids' haircuts, prom dresses. The grandparents of America out there are really balancing a lot now, more than any other generation of grandparents have.

We could take the money that we are going to give away to the Bill Gateses and the Warren Buffetts and the Rockefellers and other folks like that, and we could give it to these grandparents, grandparents who represent people from every congressional district in this country.

Oftentimes, you start talking about grandparents who are raising grandchildren, there has been some kind of issue with drugs or alcohol in the kids' parents' life or some other reason why the parents can't take care of the kids. We know that that is true, particularly with the issues that we have had with the opioid crisis. We know that this is an area that is growing in all congressional districts, all races, all backgrounds.

Again, why not give our grandparents out there that are buying backpacks with their Social Security check, why not give them a \$500 refundable tax credit to help them make ends meet? If we were to do that, these grandparents would be able to have a little bit more money to buy healthier foods instead of buying processed foods. They could buy fruits, vegetables, other things like that that could really go a long way in just helping them maintain their household.

That is what I am eager to do. I want to sit down with colleagues and come up with something that is fair. I think

that everybody here that I have talked to has said that they want to work in a bipartisan manner to be able to pass a tax reform bill that is fair, that is done under regular order, that is done with transparency and done in the light, but the way that this is happening, it is just not right.

We know, again, that these trickle-down economics just simply do not work, and we need to start all over. We need to head back to the drawing board and sit down as Democrats and Republicans like they did back in the eighties when Reagan was President and Tip O'Neill was Speaker and work out some of these issues that the American public has.

We know that people are very anxious about some of the things that they have been hearing about this tax reform bill, people from all congressional districts and, again, all backgrounds. We in the Congressional Black Caucus, we are concerned about the impact that this is going to have in the African-American communities around this country—and all of the communities, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker.

Again, let's just sit down at the drawing board, talk about some of these things, and come up with something that is fair that the American public can feel good about, knowing that Members of Congress, that they are not trying to gain advantage over one another, that we are trying to come up with a fair way how to reform our Tax Code, keep our businesses here, and keep a little bit more money in people's pockets at the end of the week or the end of the month, whenever they get paid, so they can take care of their families and buy a home, take care of their grandkids, do whatever it is they need to do in order to make ends meet.

Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for this evening, and I yield back the balance of my time.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2874, 21ST CENTURY FLOOD REFORM ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF THE CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2810, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia (during the Special Order of Mr. VEASEY), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115-408) on the resolution (H. Res. 616) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2874) to achieve reforms to improve the financial stability of the National Flood Insurance Program, to enhance the development of more accurate estimates of flood risk through new technology and better maps, to increase the role of private markets in the management of flood insurance risks, and to provide for alternative methods to insure against flood peril, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the conference report to accompany

the bill (H.R. 2810) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, and which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REFORMING OUR TAX CODE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MAST). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to be here once again and follow up on the gentleman from Texas and his remarks that I think hit the nail on the head with regard to what working class families out in the heartland, in the Deep South are facing every single day.

I think it is important that every policy that we push here in the United States Congress is a policy that addresses some of those deep concerns that they all have.

Sometimes I think that this town gets into a little bit of a bubble. Two separate political parties that talk to each other, talk at each other, talk within each other, but we are in the midst of deep change in the United States. We are in the midst of the kind of structural change we have not seen in our country in a long, long time.

We have an economic system, a Tax Code, a trade regime, that has not, quite frankly, been up to task to meet the needs of working class families.

We have a healthcare system that, even though many changes have been made, I think, to help people get coverage, to help them afford their healthcare, it is still not up to task with the deep needs of our country.

We have an education system that is not quite up to speed.

The deliberations in this body need to be a little bit deeper. I think we need to take a little bit of a step back.

We have tax reform that is on the docket this week.

We have a consistent dialogue with other nations with regard to how we are going to organize our trade relationships with other countries, whether it be in North America, whether it be with China or Europe or any other country.

□ 2030

Mr. Speaker, I will just say that after looking at the tax bill that has been presented in both the House and the Senate, the Congressional Budget Office has said that this tax bill will run a deficit and a long-term debt for our country to the tune of \$1.7 trillion. So this tax reform that our friends on the other side are pushing has a \$1.7 trillion hole in it.

What has to happen is that the United States Government, because the

Republicans are going to pass a tax cut, which the majority will go to the wealthiest people in the country, and because there will be this hole in the budget now, this country—our taxpayers are going to have to go to China, go to Saudi Arabia, and we are going to say: Hey, can you loan us some money? We have got this big deficit. We have got this debt we are running up in the United States. Can you loan us like \$1.7 trillion? Because we are going to give that money back to the wealthiest people in the country, in the hopes that it stimulates the economy and grows jobs and wages. And, oh, by the way, we tried that in 2001, and 2003, and it didn't work.

To me, I think it is very difficult for us as a country to say we are going to give China more power over us. We are going to give China more say in the negotiations that we have with them, whether it is North Korea, whether it is them moving bases out into the South China Sea where they are actually building islands so that they can put bases on them and project more force in that area of the world.

We are going to have less negotiating power with them as they continue to move into Africa and extract natural resources to feed their industrial machine. We are going to ask them for \$1.7 trillion to give a tax cut that goes primarily to the biggest corporations in the country and the wealthiest people in the country.

Now, that doesn't make a whole lot of sense to most people. It sounds like a little bit of a scam. And the \$1.7 trillion, which you have got to watch, we are borrowing it, and then we have to pay interest on the money that we are borrowing. So if interest rates go up, we are going to start paying more.

Meanwhile, back here in the United States, we have got a number of challenges that we have got to deal with. We have got to rebuild our country. The President, while he was campaigning, said: We are going to do \$1 trillion in infrastructure improvements in the United States. I am a builder. We are going to rebuild the country.

It is now November, and we have not heard anything about an infrastructure bill or building roads and bridges and all the rest. In fact, we have had a President who campaigned—might see a little theme developing here—the President also campaigned and said: We are going to expand healthcare. We are going to expand Medicare. We are going to expand Medicaid. We are going to make it cheaper, accessible. It is going to be beautiful, and it will be easy to do. I can do it.

And so goes life.

The two bills, in both the House and the Senate, from the Republicans, as analyzed by the Congressional Budget Office—not as analyzed by Democrats—it was analyzed by the Congressional Budget Office, which is a neutral third party. They are kind of the umpire down here. They are the referee in