

Through the nineties, these men and women were working the factory 24/7 in three shifts, putting out over 2 million picture tubes a year. They used to say: They will never close us down. We make this company too much money.

And then it came, May of 2001. Management called everybody into the plant and gave them the news. The plant was closing in August, 3 months from then, because they were moving to Mexico.

People were shocked. Nobody saw this coming. They tried to negotiate with the company, and Matty and Chuck remember the answer. It was: Are you willing to take a \$13-an-hour pay cut and work for \$3.25 an hour?

Matty remembers the pride that these people had at the plant working the last few months, the pride that they did their jobs with. There was no vandalism. There were no work stoppages, no slowdowns. They finished out their jobs showing the pride in the work that they had had for a generation. He remembers the tears on that last day and how people passed out lists of names and phone numbers so they could all stay in touch.

Chuck remembers on the last day how that trophy for the best 27-inch TV tube was still in the company lobby.

All three of them remember the aftermath. They remember the divorces. They remember the suicides.

Matty still had two daughters in public school. He went through his family savings, and he had to cash in some of his retirement money, take the penalty. Now he works as a security guard making \$10 an hour. He is 66, and he can't afford to retire.

Chuck was out of work for years, and eventually he found a job making half the money. He is also 66, and he can't retire.

John can't forget having to tell his daughter, Lindsey, in May 2001 he was losing his job. She was in tears. She was graduating high school the next month. She wanted to go to college.

When Chuck found out the current Republican tax plan is to drop corporate tax to 20 percent for companies doing business in America but to 10 percent for American companies doing business overseas, this is what he said: Haven't we lost enough already under NAFTA? Now you are going to reward companies for shipping more jobs overseas?

Mr. Speaker, this tax bill will ship more jobs overseas. This bill stinks, and I won't vote for it.

LIVING THE AMERICAN DREAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, today we recognize an individual who embodies the American Dream and the grit and determination that defines the people of Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

Pasquale Palino was born in Naples, Italy, in 1963. A resilient worker and a

passionate chef, he worked in the restaurant industry in Italy before marrying his wife, Anna Scotto.

Having two children, Carmela and Gennaro, Pasquale decided to leave Italy with his young family and come to the United States. He settled in Bensalem, Pennsylvania, and opened a restaurant, Pasta al Dente.

Soon after, he welcomed his third child, Nunzia. After spending a short while back in Italy, Pasquale returned to the United States. A family man, Pasquale had two more sons, Giovanni and Aniello. Pasquale opened Vecchia Osteria in 2009, where his incredible talent led to great success and allowed him to open Acqua e Farina, an authentic Neapolitan pizzeria, in 2017.

Mr. Speaker, Pasquale crossed oceans to pursue his dreams. He works tirelessly to put a smile on people's faces through the food that he makes.

Mr. Speaker, our communities and our Nation are better because of people like Pasquale Palino.

□ 1030

HONORING BUCKS COUNTY FIRST RESPONDERS

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the first responders of Bucks County. Recently I was privileged to speak to nearly 300 first responders at the 45th Central Bucks Chamber of Commerce's Emergency Services Award Dinner and to offer them our heartfelt thanks.

As an EMT myself, I understand the love that these individuals have for their neighbors and for their community. Mr. Speaker, I was honored to recognize these 20 individuals pictured here.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD each of their names.

Robert Dondo
William Fluck IV
Eoghan Lowry
Karen Gibbons
Lisa Aron
Steven Vance
Michael Nyari
Keller Taylor
Zuri Kalix
Darren Carroll
Christopher A Horner
John Thomas
Jim Snock
Mark Potent
Scott Martin
Jessica Leal
Kevin Murphy
Michael Ray
Nancy Mayers
Pat Mattes

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, we honor and we thank each of these brave heroes in our community for putting themselves in harm's way to protect us in Bucks County. They are living their lives serving a cause bigger than themselves. What a noble way to spend their life.

TAX BILL IS HARMFUL TO VETERANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the ranking member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, as the co-chair of the National Guard and Reserve Components Caucus, as the co-chair of the Congressional Veterans Jobs Caucus, and probably more importantly, as a retired enlisted soldier to bring to your attention a number of provisions in the GOP tax bill that will negatively impact the men and women currently serving and transitioning from the United States military.

Mr. Speaker, I want to be clear. Tax reform is a laudable goal. It would have been nice had we actually done it, had we actually had debates, had we actually had witnesses. Zero, zero, zero. What we have is a closed-door bill brought forward and forced upon the House. In my opinion, trying to think that the American people would not watch what happens here is pretty risky.

These are folks in the military who risked everything to give us the right to debate things here. We should at least probably debate their future in an open manner. I hope we will strongly consider, Mr. Speaker, each of these following provisions in this bill that will put the prosperity of America's heroes at risk.

As the legislation is written, this tax plan includes provisions that will specifically harm members and veterans to help pay for tax cuts for corporations and the ultrawealthy.

How can you justify giving a tax cut for carrying interest, but not for carrying a rucksack?

That is what that vote will be today. Be very clear about this. When you cast your "yes" vote, you are being very clear.

The first thing it does is it repeals tax credits proven to help veterans find employment when they come home, such as the repeal of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, which includes the Help Hire Our Heroes Act. This credit is available to employers who hire veterans who have a service-connected disability, or are unemployed, or receive SNAP benefits.

Between 2013 and 2015, the Work Opportunity Tax Credit helped nearly 300,000 veterans find employment. But, again, don't take my word for it. The people who are telling you not to do this are the Air Force Sergeants Association, the United States Air Force Association, AMVETS, Army Aviation Association of America, Association of the United States Army, Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States, Gold Star Wives of America, Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America, Marine Corps League, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, Vietnam Veterans of America, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. They are telling you, if you vote "yes," you are hurting the opportunities of America's veterans.

The GOP tax bill also repeals the disabled access tax credit. This simply allows small businesses to claim a tax

expenditure when they make their buildings more accessible for people with disabilities. Its elimination will discourage small businesses from making their workplaces accessible and friendly to those disabled veterans.

Mr. Speaker, by eliminating the deduction for interest payments or student loans, the GOP tax bill will make education even more expensive or out of reach for our veterans. While the GI Bill pays a portion of it, it does not pay it all. A large percentage of veterans also rely on student loans. This will hurt many veterans who rely on that to make school work.

This bill will make it more expensive for military families to sell their homes. How wrong is that?

The bill requires a homeowner to have owned and lived in a home for at least 5 years of the last 8 years to get a tax exemption on the money made from the sale of their home. No one serves in one location that long. No exemption was written in it. Had it been brought to the floor, we would have offered an amendment, and I bet you money, my Republican colleagues would have accepted it.

They didn't get that chance because somebody wrote it for them and passed it down here and is going to tell them to vote "yes" on it. That is simply wrong. I don't question their commitment to veterans. I question the way they wrote this bill. That is real life. These things will really happen, and it is verified by all kinds of outside sources.

By repealing the medical expense deduction, the GOP tax bill will hurt veterans struggling with costly medical bills. Most veterans aren't in the VA. Most veterans don't qualify for the VA because they make more money than the threshold, or they are not disabled to the point where they get there. So most of them receive their health benefits through their employer. But when those expenses get too great, one of the things we have in current tax law is they are allowed to deduct those expenses. They are taking that away.

When you vote "yes" today, you are taking that away and giving billionaires a tax break. Once again, it is going to be a choice. It is very simple, yes or no; green light, red light. You will be able to decide on that. This hurts veterans.

By prioritizing corporations and the ultrawealthy over the middle class, they are directly harming veterans. Be very clear: a veteran's median income is \$37,466. They are not going to see savings from this bill. If they are a disabled veteran or have a child going to college, they will pay more so that a very few of us can get a tax break.

Corporations, by the way, can deduct State and local taxes. Veterans can't. A corporation can deduct property tax. There is a lot more in here that is bad. Bring this back to the floor. Work with us. Protect America's heroes. Do what is right.

BUILD A BETTER TOMORROW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I tell folks back home that they should watch this time at 10 in the morning, where any Member can come down and talk about anything they want to talk about, because you can learn a lot about one another.

There are folks who come to this floor every single morning to celebrate somebody in their district back home, to build up the country with optimism, and with the belief that if only we unite, if only we work harder, we can make tomorrow better than yesterday was.

There are those Members who come to the floor on a regular basis to tear things down. I tell you, Mr. Speaker, I have been in this world for 47 years. I know it is easier to tear things down than it is to build things up. Something has happened in this institution where the currency is how quickly can you tear the other side down instead of how quickly can you partner with them to build things up.

Tax reform is hard. I have a bill for folks who are uncomfortable with the elimination of special carve-outs, deductions, exemptions, and lobbyist loopholes. For folks who are uncomfortable with those things, I have a bill that repeals absolutely every one. It is called the FairTax Act. It is H.R. 25.

We are not going to vote on that bill today because this institution is not comfortable eliminating absolutely everything all at once. But there is a difference of opinion, Mr. Speaker, in what the Tax Code is designed for. Is it designed to punish people that you dislike and reward people that you do like? Or is it designed simply to raise the revenue so that the government can do the things it needs to do?

I believe the latter.

My friends have come to the floor today and they have said: Oh, we are eliminating this exemption and that deduction, and that carve-out and that loophole, and those things help with the cost of education.

Well, I say to my friends: If we want to help with the cost of education, let's deal with education.

The Tax Code is not the solution to every problem. Oftentimes it is the source of those problems.

For folks who believe that the cost of medical care is too expensive, I agree. Another carve-out, another loophole, another exemption, the Tax Code will not solve that problem. It may mask that problem, but it will not solve it. We have to come together to solve the healthcare inflation problem.

I say to my friends who are worried about the medical cost deduction: I worry about that, too. I worried about it when the Affordable Care Act made it 33 percent harder for Americans to claim that; when it raised that base level from 7.5 percent to 10 percent, meaning so many more Americans couldn't claim it.

This bill doubles the standard deduction so that families don't have to worry about the magnitude of their burden. Simply, the fact that they have a burden means that they will be able to exempt it.

My friend from Pennsylvania came and told the story of two families from Pennsylvania working in a picture tube factory. It was a powerful story of American manufacturing disappearing. If I looked around this institution to find a millennial here, they wouldn't even know what a picture tube is. That factory was going to go out of business because technology surpassed it.

We are losing American manufacturing overseas every single day, not because we are not the hardest working people on the planet, but because we have the most punitive Tax Code on the planet. Everyone here knows it.

In 1986, everyone knew it. America had the least competitive Tax Code on the planet, but Democrats and Republicans came together—Ronald Reagan and Tip O'Neill—and they took America from worst to first. Decades of economic prosperity ensued. We are doing that very same thing today: worst to first.

Would be that it were Democrats and Republicans together that were doing that, but I tell you, Mr. Speaker, the time is not too late to come together to do that. It was a worthy goal in 1986. It is a worthy goal today. The Tax Code should not be picking winners and losers. It should be creating an economic environment where the American worker can succeed; where the American worker and its commitment is not at a disadvantage to the rest of the world, but it is at least on a level playing field, if not advantaged to the rest of the world.

We can do that together today, and I hope that we will. It will always be easier to tear things down and than to build things up, Mr. Speaker. But I know the men and women in this Chamber on a personal level, and I know they didn't come to tear things down. They came to build a better day tomorrow for their children, their grandchildren, and the constituents that they represent.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that we will fulfill that promise together.

TAX PLAN IS HARMFUL FOR GUAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) for 5 minutes.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my opposition to H.R. 1, the Republican tax plan, and the negative impacts it would have on my constituents in Guam.

This bill is an attack on the middle class and would do very little to help those who most need tax relief. I am especially concerned that H.R. 1 does not take into account the unique application of the Federal Tax Code to Guam and the other U.S. territories.