

so far, the only ones voting for this tax giveaway are my Republican colleagues. I say that accurately, not to be partisan, but just to be honest and accurate. They say we have to do this; it is going to stimulate the economy.

Well, also, in this package, this plan that they want to make into a law, basically what it will do, it will actually incentivize the biggest corporations in America, American corporations. It is going to incentivize them to go ahead and close up shop in your neighborhood and go set up shop somewhere else in the world.

And the only connection they are going to have with you, ladies and gentlemen, is they are going to want to sell those products to you, built by other than American hands in other parts of the world. The only other connection they are going to have is this: They are going to be able to bring their money, their profits, back to the United States, pretty much free and clear, and just count their money here, where they call themselves an American corporation.

I think it is important, ladies and gentlemen, that we recognize that this is something that is wrong. This is something that is going to hurt the middle class. This is something, again, if you are a teacher, if you are a police officer, if you are a busdriver, this is going to hurt you.

If you are a single mother who is working every single day, proud to do that, you are going to see that you are not going to have the support you need to make sure that that childcare continues for your child.

If you are a family member that has a mother or father whose only income is Social Security, they probably depend on Meals on Wheels. They probably depend on programs like that. Some of that comes from your Federal Government. But when these Republican colleagues cut \$1.5 trillion out of the United States budget, it is going to come out of you, ladies and gentlemen. The people who have worked hard, seniors who are finally retired and should have the dignity of having a dignified life and having at least one darned meal a day, that is where it is going to come out of.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am here to warn you, please call your Members of Congress. Please make sure that you let them know: I don't want that kind of giveaway.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair and not to a perceived viewing audience.

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON OUR AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEM

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

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I have a map beside me. It is not a Verizon or

an AT&T map showing its coverage. What this is is a snapshot, a moment in time, of the number of airplanes in the United States' airspace at any moment, over 90,000 flights a day. Think about that. That is over 200,000 takeoffs and landings.

We, in the United States, have the safest and the busiest airspace in the world; yet there are some in Congress who want to privatize this to a board made up of 13 members only. I personally think it is more of a monopolization, not a privatization of our airspace.

This is the taxpayers' airspace. This is not the airspace that we should be giving away to a 13-member board, or the control of.

Those who want to pass this AIRR Act, H.R. 2997, want us to compare it to Canada. Well, I have flown in Canada. Look at the map: below the line in the United States, above the line in Canada. It is not even apples to apples. It is not apples to oranges. It is apples to elephants.

And you say, well, that makes no sense. No, it doesn't. It does not make any sense to give control of this airspace, where our wonderful men in uniform and women who fly the military aircraft, the pilots like myself, but, more importantly, the carriers that carry all of us to here and there, the ability to control this airspace.

I am a small-government guy, Mr. Speaker, but there are three instances where government needs to be involved in the lives of our citizens: national defense, national intelligence, and national airspace.

I would argue that I have probably been in more control towers than any Member of Congress, and when you walk in, there are wonderful controllers who are looking at modern equipment, computer screens, display lights, who are moving aircraft here and there, very efficiently, very professionally.

There are those who have stood at this podium, Mr. Speaker, and held up pieces of paper like this and have scared our people into saying: Oh, this is the way controllers transfer control of airplanes from airspace to airspace.

That is a gross mischaracterization of what is happening. They use this as a backup if a grid goes down, but they don't use it to move traffic. They use modern computers.

The NextGen, or what we call the next generation of modernization of FAA, is called ADS-B, Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast. It allows separation of aircraft to come down. It has saved billions—that is with a B—in fuel and other costs, and yet we want to give all this modern equipment to the control of a 13-member board? I think not.

We have all had delays in airports. Most of them, I will tell you, are weather. But how many of us have pulled up in a plane and we are waiting for another plane to back out of a gate? That is not an air traffic control issue.

That is an issue with controlling the gates at the airport, and that goes back to the airlines.

How many of us have been delayed because they come on and when we are just fixing to board the plane, oh, you have a maintenance issue, or we are waiting for another pilot crew to get off one aircraft to pilot your aircraft? Again, those who would want to pass this act would make you believe that that is air traffic control's fault. No, it does not have to do with air traffic control.

CBO has said that if we give this airspace control to a 13-member private board, it will cause a \$100 billion deficit addition—\$100 billion. The Congressional Review Service has said that if we do that, that automatically allows sequester to take place. We don't need that. We are trying to get out of that now. Our wonderful men and women in uniform are having a hard enough time meeting quotas, meeting equipment, meeting training, everything, because of the sequester.

This would hurt military retirement funding. This would hurt our Border Patrol, men and women there protecting us from terrorist activity on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, we need modernization, but we don't need privatization. It is a bad idea any way you look at it.

We do need to pass a long-term FAA reauthorization act. I am all for that. Our FAA needs to have the stability of funding where they can look down the road more than 6 months at a time and plan for what is coming down and what they need to do to keep our airspace safe.

So, Mr. Speaker, we don't need this H.R. 2997 passed. We need just to fund FAA for a long time.

TAKING A KNEE FOR WHAT IS RIGHT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I think it is appropriate this morning to rise to share my passion and my love for this country, but also my frustration. I will use this graphic to set the tone for my remarks this morning.

Although the Republican tax proposal will be introduced tomorrow, I believe, if you look at this graphic and the headlines, it says that 80 percent of the tax relief will not go to you and you and you and to the American people, or maybe even staff and Members who are here who are Americans, salaried individuals; it will go, 80 percent, to the 1 percent of Americans.

Now, I am not going to talk about the tax legislation this morning. I want this to be a symbol of the wrongness of the direction of this country and the leader who leads this Nation. We are going down a wrong path.

Many of us thought we had come together in unity, we had overcome the divisiveness because we were different,

we had recognized the beauty of all of us, rural citizens in West Virginia, Ohioans in the mountains of the Appalachian area, Midwesterners, Southerners, Northerners, Westerners, Far West, immigrant and nonimmigrant. But, unfortunately, in 2016, although some lost and some won, as we moved toward a new administration with the hopes and dreams of those who had voted, we looked for the unifying of what I know that all Presidents have done.

It has been a privilege of mine to work with President William Jefferson Clinton, who didn't have an easy time but sought to unify the country. I worked with President George W. Bush, who did not have an easy time or an unconflicted election but sought to unify the country, in fact, was an enthusiastic signer of the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act; and President Barack Obama, who rode in on a sense of hope and unity. That is the task of a President.

In the midst of this, again, having been appointed to the Homeland Security Committee in the ashes of 9/11, having gone to Ground Zero while our brave first responders were recovering, were still looking for remains—it will penetrate my soul forever—unity was what we sought in spite of our difference of opinions.

So I rise to thank the first responders and the quick response of the NYPD and Fire Department on yesterday's terrorist act. Yes, it was a terrorist act. We live in a different world. But rather than rise to the occasion, this morning the words come from the White House:

The terrorist came into our country through what is called the "Diversity Visa Lottery Program," a Chuck Schumer beauty. I want merit-based immigration.

You tell me how many immigrants, how many Italians, how many Irish, and how many of those who escaped the Holocaust, who came before that from the Jewish community, how many of them would have met any test of merit. Did the slaves who were brought here as slaves meet a test of merit? All of these individuals helped build this Nation.

And on the morning when people are mourning of their lost loved ones, rather than bringing the country together, there is a politicizing, calling out names of Members. We are working on merit based.

Does he even understand what merit based is? Absolutely not.

Taking away from the conspiracy charge against Manafort, taking away from the conspicuous collusion with Russians that George Papadopoulos has indicated, oh, he is worrying about him lying. But I am worrying about him telling the truth, and he is. They wanted dirty stuff on the opponent; they wanted to work with Russia; they wanted to work with Putin; and they wanted to conspire against the United States of America—as well as the misunderstanding or the devastating com-

ments of his chief of staff about the civil war and NFL players being called inmates in a prison.

Mr. Speaker, I am fed up with dividing this Nation. We are going in the wrong direction, and I am not going to accept it. I am taking a knee with all of those who believe in justice and what is right. I did it before. I do it now. I take a knee.

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PROTECT RURAL AMERICA HOSPITALS

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

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, if the United States is going to maintain the ability to feed and clothe our own people and fuel this American economy, we need a strong and sustainable rural America like the district I represent in west Texas.

What would this country be without the hardworking energy and agriculture producers in small towns across this great land? The heart of small-town sustainability is access to healthcare. There are over 5,000 hospitals in the United States, and roughly half of them are in rural America, serving one out of every five Americans. Without access to basic medical services, communities in America's breadbasket and energy basin would not survive.

Hospitals serving rural communities face unique challenges: an aging population, low patient volume, higher percentages of Medicare beneficiaries, to name a few. Each translates into a higher per-patient cost which has left 41 percent of rural hospitals operating at a loss.

On top of this problematic patient volume and patient mix, ObamaCare has heaped a backbreaking \$54 billion in additional regulatory burden in unfunded mandates. Since 2010, the year ObamaCare was enacted, 80 rural hospitals have shut down, 11 of which were in my home State of Texas. If this rate continues, in less than 10 years, an unimaginable 25 percent of our Nation's rural hospitals will close. That would cripple rural communities across this country and deliver a devastating blow to our agriculture and energy economy, affecting all Americans, including our neighbors in urban and suburban America.

For some Texans, the nearest hospital is already 100 miles away. In an emergency, this distance can mean the difference between life and death. Point of fact: 60 percent of all trauma deaths occur in rural America, despite the fact that rural America only makes up 20 percent of the country's population.

Here is a startling fact and outright scary scenario: one-third of rural hospitals have been deemed vulnerable to closure. If all 673 of those hospitals were to close down, it could result in

over 130,000 jobs lost and almost \$300 billion in GDP lost. When unemployment goes down and wages go down in those small towns, folks move away in search of better opportunities.

In order to sustain the critical lifeline hospitals provide for our rural communities, I have introduced H.R. 4178, the Healthcare Enhancement for America's Rural Towns Act, or the HEART Act. Why? Because small towns are the heartbeat of America; the heart of our food, fuel, and fiber production; the heart of traditional American values. This legislation extends two programs vital to the sustainability of rural hospitals and the community they deserve: the Low-Volume Adjustment program and the Medicare-Dependent Hospital program. These programs account for less than one-tenth of 1 percent of all Medicare expenditures, but they go a long way to ensuring that rural community hospitals with a higher percentage of Medicare patients have adequate funding to serve the unique populations.

By extending the Medicare Low-Volume Adjustment program for 2 years, and for the first time permanently extending the Medicare-Dependent Hospital program, we can provide the assurance and continuity that our rural hospitals desperately need in order to serve our communities in the future. Just as importantly, we do this in a way that is budget neutral and without spending any additional taxpayer monies.

Let's pass this legislation. Let's protect the heart of rural America and give our community hospitals the certainty that they need to keep our people and our communities healthy.

AMERICANS BEWARE OF TAX BILL

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to talk about a job-killer tax bill that is coming to Congress this week, and if you don't watch out, it could be coming to your hometown soon.

Up until yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I thought the new GOP tax plan was just run-of-the-mill, upside-down class warfare waged by the wealthiest people in the country against everybody else. I knew 80 percent of the windfall of the tax cut would go to people making \$912,000 a year or more—the richest 1 percent of the country. I knew it would repeal the alternative minimum tax, the only reason that Donald Trump paid any taxes at all in the 1 year we know he paid taxes over the last few decades in 2005. I knew it would repeal the State and local income tax deduction, which would be terrible news for tens of millions of middle class people in States across the country, including mine in Maryland.

I knew it would repeal the estate tax which only affects the wealthiest one-half of 1 percent of the country. All of these provisions would help to create a