

## CONNECT THE DOTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, we have a reality show host masquerading as President of the United States of America who came to this Chamber yesterday in a Hollywood-style production and pretended to act Presidential.

But the question that we confront is one that Richard Nixon actually first raised, in November of 1973, when he said that the American people deserve to know whether or not the President is a crook. That was an observation that Richard Nixon made in the context of the Watergate scandal which began as a nickel-and-dime break-in at the Democratic National Committee headquarters in the summer of 1972, and, obviously, concluded with impeachment proceedings and the ultimate resignation of a President in disgrace.

Nixon made the observation that the American people deserve to know whether or not the President is a crook, and many people across the country are raising a similar question because 17 different intelligence agencies have concluded that the Russians, at the explicit direction of Vladimir Putin, interfered in our election for the purpose of helping Donald Trump. Yet, it is hard to get an independent investigation going in this place because my friends on the other side of the aisle continue to put party ahead of the country.

But that is just the beginning. We know that, as early as December of 2015, at least four different cronies of Donald Trump were in regular communication with Russian intelligence agents at the same time these individuals were hacking into the DNC, the DCCC, and the Clinton campaign, interfering with our democracy. These individuals were Michael Flynn, who came to become Trump's first national security adviser; Carter Page, who was his former foreign policy adviser; Paul Manafort, who was the chairman of the Trump campaign; and Roger Stone, a longtime affiliate.

If they were having these conversations at this time, we know they probably weren't talking about Russian vodka. What were they talking about? The American people deserve to know.

We also are aware that Michael Flynn had an illegal conversation, in December of 2016, with the Russian Ambassador where he discussed sanctions that were imposed on Russia because of their hacking. He then apparently lied about this conversation to the Vice President who then went out and misrepresented facts to the American people, and then Michael Flynn resigned in disgrace. But we still can't get an independent, nonpartisan investigation in this place.

But that is not all. We know that Donald Trump has not been bashful when going after our allies like Mexico or Australia or NATO or the European

Union or, this past weekend, France. He is not bashful about being critical, but he can't say a negative word about Vladimir Putin, a brutal dictator. It appears that this President is more determined to make the Kremlin great again.

But that is not all. He refuses to release his taxes despite promising the American people that he was going to do so prior to November of last year. What exactly is he hiding in these tax documents? Yet, we still can't get an independent investigation.

We also know that the White House Chief of Staff engaged in potentially unlawful conversations with the FBI, perhaps trying to get them to obstruct justice in the public sphere in the midst of an ongoing investigation.

All we are saying is connect the dots. This should not be a Democratic issue or a Republican issue. The American people deserve to know whether or not the President is a crook.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

## MONROE COUNTY ROADS PROJECT

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

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to congratulate and express my gratitude to Monroe County leaders who recently took steps to address the impact sea level rise is having on roads and infrastructure in my district.

Earlier this year, the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners took action that sets new standards for determining elevation of future county road improvement projects to account for future sea level rise. This is a problem my district is already facing. The 2015 King Tides led to flooding that lasted more than 3 weeks in several neighborhoods, causing damage to homes and businesses and leaving my constituents unable to move freely to and from their homes.

Mr. Speaker, few cities or counties around the United States are as advanced in sea level rise planning and implementation as Monroe County. I am grateful for their leadership, and I am committed to continuing to support their efforts any way I can here in Washington, from advocating for transportation infrastructure research grants that will help ensure we have the best engineering at our disposal to working with my fellow members of the Climate Solutions Caucus to discuss and build consensus for proposals that will mitigate the effects of rising sea levels.

It is critical we continue to work toward an infrastructure package that will give our communities the funds they need to bring our roadways like those in Monroe County into the 21st century.

## NATIONAL DEBT

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss one of the most serious issues facing the United States—the staggering national debt that will reach \$20 trillion this month, or \$62,715 per person living in our country. While the national debt grew over \$9 trillion under President Obama, we now have a new opportunity here in this Congress to work together with the new administration to propose and debate solutions that will address our country's debt and get our fiscal house back in order.

Every day, families across my district sit around the dinner table and make tough decisions about how they will spend their money. Most stick to their budgets because they don't have a choice, and their government should be no different.

In 2015, I was proud to support a 2-year bipartisan budget agreement that implemented new caps on discretionary spending for both fiscal years 2016 and 2017. Too often, enormous sums are wasted due to unpredictable budget cycles and government shutdown threats. With the adoption of this 2-year budget, Congress was able to reduce wasteful spending by providing certainty to agencies as they plan for the future.

The budget also included reforms to entitlement programs, which is the largest percentage of national debt. It is important that we protect programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid—the invaluable safety net for those who need the help—while working to implement reforms to make these programs solvent for future generations.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents sent me back to Washington to continue to build consensus with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to advance solutions that will rein in our national debt, and that is exactly what I plan to do. It is our duty, as elected officials, to leave our children and grandchildren with the same economic opportunities as previous generations, and that will continue to be one of my main priorities here in Congress.

## SMALL BUSINESS HIGHLIGHT

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have never had much of a sweet tooth, but it has recently been brought to my attention that my district is home to some thriving small businesses that are putting south Florida on the map for desserts.

Not far from my district office, Night Owl Cookie Company, recently named Forbes 30 Under 30, is delivering fresh-baked cookies to constituents across West Kendall. Since starting the business in 2015, when he would make and deliver cookies from his parents' kitchen, Andrew Gonzalez's success has flourished to three brick-and-mortar locations across Florida.

Further south is Knaus Berry Farm in the Redlands where families from all across south Florida will travel to pick up fresh produce and, of course, to wait in line for fresh, homemade cinnamon