

governance. In the debacle of last Friday, when the administration failed to carry forward on its promise to pass the worst healthcare bill in the history of the United States, the administration offered a definition or an explanation: the ACA was exploding. It is not exploding. The CBO has indicated that the ACA needs improving, but it has insured some 20 million-plus people and protected children—unlike the administration's bill, Mr. Trump's bill which, in fact, would throw 24 million people off of health care and cut \$880 billion. It is about governance.

That is why it is important to have a full investigation of the Russian collusion of all of those who are involved in Mr. Trump's campaign, and in his administration, including very close members of his senior staff.

That is why we should have a full investigation, which would include the Judiciary Committee. I demand that the classified documents that we have requested in a bipartisan letter should be given to the Judiciary Committee, and we should begin investigations on whether there are any questions of criminality.

It is about governance, Mr. Speaker; and the House of Representatives must know the truth so the American people can know the truth.

STAND STRONG AGAINST PREJUDICE

(Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to make it very clear that the people's House stands strong against prejudice.

Since January, we have seen a disturbing rise in bomb threats and violence targeted at Jewish Community Centers all over the country, including the Stroum Jewish Community Center in Mercer Island, Washington.

Our Nation is better than this. Today I am joining one of the strongest leaders I know on this issue—Representative KUSTOFF—in introducing the Combating Anti-Semitism Act. This bill is a direct response to the bad actors who are terrorizing our neighbors and friends.

If you threaten someone because of who or how they worship, this bill ensures you will be prosecuted for committing a hate crime. No matter your background, your religion, your walk of life, you should be safe and free to worship without fear in this country. With this bill, we are supporting our Jewish communities all across the country, and I am proud to give it my full support.

CONGRATULATIONS TO AMERICANS

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the American people for what you did over the course of a few months since January, when you found out that your healthcare benefits were threatened by the TrumpCare repeal-and-replace attempt.

Because you went out into the streets, because you marched, because you attended townhall meetings, and you made your feelings known about the fact that you wanted to save the Affordable Care Act, you were successful. You gave backbone to the moderate Republicans who stood up and said no to the Trump replacement.

For that, I congratulate you, and I congratulate the American people.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1695

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1695.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

CELEBRATING THE USS "OMAHA"

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to commemorate the past and future of the United States Navy, the strongest and the best Navy in the world.

On this day, March 27, President George Washington signed an "Act to Provide a Naval Armament" authorizing the construction of six frigates, which includes the USS *Constitution*, the world's oldest commissioned naval vessel afloat.

The passage of the Naval Act of 1794 was, in part, a response to threats to American merchant ships from the Barbary pirates in the Mediterranean. 223 years later, the men and women of the U.S. Navy continue to protect the goods and information we transport via ships and undersea cables to our overseas trading partners.

This includes securing the resources and services we import to fuel our industries. Paraphrasing Admiral Jonathan Greenert: the mandate of the Navy in modern times is to be in the right place, at the right time, ready and able to respond.

The 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review signed by then-Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel—may I add a Nebraskan—states that in order to support this mission, we need to "continue to build a future Fleet that is able to deliver the required presence and capabilities and address the most important warfighting scenarios."

In that light, I look forward to the commissioning of the USS *Omaha* this fall, and to congratulating the crew of the newest addition to the United States naval fleet.

The USS *Omaha*, LCS-12, is an Independence-class littoral combat ship, and the fourth ship to bear the name USS *Omaha*. It is a chain dating back to the commissioning of a sloop-of-war in 1869. The last USS *Omaha* was a nuclear attack submarine that served in the Navy from 1978 to 1995.

According to the Omaha World-Herald, a great source of intelligence, the ship is the sixth in line of Independence-class littoral combat ships with a futuristic trimaran design that sits high above the water.

Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work once compared it to a Klingon Bird-of-Prey ship in the movie "Star Trek." The ship was christened on December 19, 2015, by Susie Buffett.

The ship's Latin motto is derived from its namesake, the city of Omaha, Nebraska. It translates to "Courageously in Every Enterprise," which denotes her crew's willingness to brave any future endeavor.

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While I am very proud of the future crew of the USS *Omaha*, I am equally proud of the members of the Nebraska Navy League and their counterparts for supporting the Navy's missions, their personnel, and their families. In an effort to strengthen the connection between the USS *Omaha* and the citizens it serves, the Nebraska Navy League has committed to bringing several members of the crew to our community each year. This endeavor helps to enhance the morale of the Active Duty personnel and their families, but it also helps to inform the American public of the importance of a strong United States Navy.

The people in the Second Congressional District are proud to have a fantastic new ship bearing the name of Omaha. It honors our community and the many men and women from Omaha and the surrounding metro area who proudly serve in the United States Armed Forces.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

WHAT DO WE HAVE TO LOSE: \$54 BILLION IN DOMESTIC SPENDING

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 have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any 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, today's Special Order is going to be about the theme: What do we have to lose?

That was something that you heard during the Presidential campaign. Specifically, we want to focus on what do we have to lose: \$54 billion in domestic spending.

Earlier this month, President Trump released his budget named America First, a Budget Blueprint to Make America Great Again. After reading Trump's budget, I can't help but wonder: Is this truly a mirror of his campaign to put Americans first?

The easy answer to that is "no."

According to the Trump budget, America comes dead last. In fact, this budget proposal is all talk when it comes to helping U.S. students access education and well-paying jobs. One of the most alarming things about the budget is how it affects the education of students at minority-serving institutions.

Mr. Speaker, HBCUs, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, were first created in 1964 to educate Black Americans excluded from segregated public and private universities, and this budget will perpetuate the inequalities that currently exist for Black students.

Today, HBCUs continue to provide students—no matter their race or their economic background for that matter—the ability to receive a quality education. According to the United Negro College Fund, 70 percent of all HBCU students rely on Federal grants and workstudy programs to finance their education.

After Trump pledged to support and strengthen HBCUs during a meeting with the presidents of HBCUs in the Oval Office, the budget at hand is another unfulfilled promise. A recent letter from the president of the UNCF, United Negro College Fund, explained the complete elimination of the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, as proposed under the Trump budget. This would negatively impact more than 55,000 HBCU students.

Helping low-income students achieve higher education is very serious, and we know that these cuts would hurt. Proposed reductions would also hurt the Federal workstudy initiatives, and it would eliminate another 26,000 students the ability to pay for college expenses or to improve their employment prospects.

I knew a lot of students who worked under the college workstudy program when I was a student in college, and I can tell you just how critical that program is. For a lot of kids, that is the difference between going to college and not being able to go to college. Having that job on campus allows you to earn money, but stay on campus, affording you more time to be able to study and do other things that you need to do in order to be a successful student.

Also, according to the Center for American Progress, the Trump budget

will hit minority communities the hardest. The budget also calls for \$200 million in cuts to Federal TRIO programs, which help low-income, first-generation, and disabled students; and GEAR UP, a program that helps prepare low-income middle and high school students for college.

It shouldn't be any surprise to us that President Trump would want to gut funding to help disabled students succeed. We saw this sort of nastiness on the campaign trail, and we really do need to see how we can, again, boost these programs because they have been helping so many kids for a long time.

I can tell you of someone who utilized a Pell Grant Program. I am sure there are many Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle that had to use the Pell Grant Program. Similarly, the Trump budget keeps the Pell Grant Program, but it cuts \$3.9 billion in critical funding for many students.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the Pell Grant Program is the largest Federal grant program. The same study found that the program sends up to \$5,900 to students and families that earn less than \$40,000 a year and prioritizes funding for families earning closer to \$20,000 or less.

Again, if you are a low-income family, being able to utilize that money, particularly at that level—\$40,000 and below, \$20,000 and below—even if you were doing a little bit better than that, you know that that is not a lot of money, and that is why these Pell Grant Programs are so important.

Pell Grant continues to be an important program that helps level the playing field for African Americans and helps to minimize student loans after graduation.

A study by Brookings reported that Black students who graduated, as of October 2016, owed over \$52,000 in student loan debt, compared to White graduates who owed approximately \$28,000. By reducing funding, Trump is limiting a child's ability to achieve economic mobility and move toward the American Dream.

I am going to ask that my colleague from the great sunshine State of Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS), who is going to help lead this Special Order hour, talk a little bit about how important a lot of these programs are to her State. Her State has many great universities, including, in Tallahassee, Florida A&M University, one of our Historically Black Colleges and Universities that have produced so many great graduates from that school. Although the African-American students may not go to FAMU—but they may go to Florida State, they may go to Gainesville to the University of Florida, they may go to the University of Miami—they need this money in order to be successful.

In the gentlewoman from Florida's work as a Member of Congress and her previous work in law enforcement, the gentlewoman works closely with families, with kids who are trying to pull

themselves up and make a difference. I think that America would love to hear from the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS) just because she has seen firsthand, again, what these grants, this job training, TRIO, and these other programs mean to these students.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS).

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I also rise tonight to talk about America First, the proposed budget of the 45th President of the United States, President Donald Trump.

It has been said that a budget of a local, State, Federal Government, corporation, nonprofit organization, small business, even a personal budget, really defines one's priorities, one's values, one's vision for the future. The proposed budget gives us a look into one's vision, our President's, for the future of America.

When I think about a vision for the future of America, I personally think of a vision that exceeds our wildest expectations. This is a vision where every boy and girl, regardless of the color of their skin, their gender, their religion, sexual orientation, where they live or how much money their parents have in the bank, has an opportunity to succeed, particularly in this country that we say is the greatest country in the world, and I do believe it to be so.

There is a famous Scripture that says: Because of a lack of a vision, the people perish.

I ask the question tonight: What is the vision for America under this budget?

My colleague has so eloquently laid out that education truly is the key. It starts in education for higher learning. But what about secondary education, where every child should have an opportunity to receive quality education?

We know that the budget proposed in America First cuts very necessary important programs that particularly hit the State of Florida, for example, the Teacher Quality Partnership, and Impact Aid support payments for Federal property, and international education programs. The 21st Century Community Learning Centers supports before- and after-school programs where children are able to receive tutoring, learn about the arts and music, and receive a meal during those programs.

Florida would be particularly hurt. Those programs are designed particularly for children that come from at-risk and poverty-stricken areas.

In those before-school and after-school programs, there is a focus on reading and math. And those programs often offer literary services to families of children that participate in those programs.

So back to the gentleman from Texas' question about what do we have to lose? In Florida, the overall graduation rate is 80 percent. But for African Americans, the graduation rate is about 72 percent, and lower for African-American boys. I can tell you, it is the lowest group.

We can't afford to pull more resources from the Department of Education—a proposed budget cut of 13.5 percent, in the double digits—resources that have been dedicated to lifting up all children, but particularly children of color and children from low-income neighborhoods. In President Trump's budget, that 13.5 percent is about \$9.2 billion from education.

What is being cut?

Not only the programs that I named, but about 20 other programs: \$3.7 billion in grants for teacher training to make sure that children not only receive the best education that money can buy, but also have the best, most qualified, most prepared, most trained teachers. Programs aimed at helping to ensure vulnerable children in low-income neighborhoods are able to succeed. They, too, really deserve a fair shot.

These Federal programs were created to ensure that every child, no matter who they are, has access to education.

This budget cut completely eliminates Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants. The name alone says it all, opportunity grants, grants that could offer need-based aid to around 1.6 million low-income undergraduates every year.

What do we have to lose?

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, we have a lot to talk about tonight dealing with HBCUs, dealing with TRIO, dealing with these programs like GEAR UP, Pell Grants, jobs and job training, college workstudy.

I want to invite one of our colleagues up, one of our leaders, Representative JIM CLYBURN from the State of South Carolina. One of the demographics that often go overlooked in this debate is the plight of rural African-American students. Representative CLYBURN, not only does he understand and empathize with the plight of the urban African-American student, but he also understands again some of the struggles that the rural African-American student faces and how their ticket out of their hometown to be able to go experience something different is education. Many of these kids, Representative CLYBURN will tell you, have never had the opportunity to get far outside of their hometowns in rural America.

□ 1945

These programs give them the opportunity to do so. So I want to invite our assistant leader to come up. He is a graduate of South Carolina State University, the Bulldogs, one of our esteemed HBCUs, and again, I just appreciate his voice on this topic.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN).

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. VEASEY) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS) for conducting this Special Order this evening. I appreciate it.

Yes, I am a graduate of South Carolina State University, but I also rep-

resent the University of South Carolina here in this body. And I just want to note that—with all that is going on around us, I want to say congratulations to the men of the University of South Carolina's basketball team for getting into the Final Four, and I am looking forward to, a few moments from now, watching the women do the same.

I met, along with other members of the Congressional Black Caucus, last week with President Trump, and we had an opportunity to share with him some of the fears that we have of his budget and what it would do to Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

As both the gentleman and gentlewoman have mentioned, I represent seven of these institutions. I said to the President that there is something that most people miss about the value of these colleges and universities; and I shared with him a little experience I had last December.

While kicking off the annual Christmas festivities, I was having a conversation with a very good friend, who I have known for a long time, who is an outstanding cardiologist, recently retired from Charlotte, North Carolina, and we were talking about all the discussions that were taking place during last year's campaign about HBCUs.

Of course, I said to him that I thought that there was significant misunderstanding about the value of these institutions. In fact, I wrote an op-ed piece a few days ago, published in the Charleston, South Carolina newspapers. I talked about a State official, an elected official in my State who made the comment that those students who went to South Carolina State, like yours truly, did so because they were not qualified to go anywhere else.

Well, this gentleman, David Dowdy—I hope he doesn't mind me calling his name—David Dowdy said to me, as we talked: You know, when I left that little, rural, underfunded high school in Eastover, North Carolina, and got up to North Carolina A&T, I had to take remedial everything—simply because he went to an underfunded rural school.

In South Carolina, of course, these schools have been underfunded for generations, and the State has been fighting a lawsuit for some 24 years to keep from funding these schools properly and adequately.

He said, when he got up to North Carolina A&T, he had to take these remedial courses, but he went on to become a very successful heart doctor.

Now, I said to the President, after telling him this story: That is not an unusual case.

All of us have heard of the astronaut, Ronald McNair. Ronald McNair is also a South Carolinian. He graduated from a little high school in Lake City, South Carolina, a town most people never heard of.

Everybody talks about how successful he was as an astronaut, having lost his life in the accident, the Challenger. And when people refer to him, they al-

ways talk about him being a physicist from MIT. They never talk about the fact that, before he ever went to MIT for his master's degree, he went to North Carolina A&T for his bachelor's. It was there at North Carolina A&T where he was nurtured, and how he developed in those small classes, the remediation that he needed in order to unlock all that was within him.

So I shared with the President, and he assured me that he had no intentions of cutting funding to these Historically Black Colleges and Universities. I applaud him for that, and I thank him for that.

But I also said to him that I think it is important for us not to just maintain level funding but to make the kind of investments in these colleges and universities that are needed for them to get these young minds that have been disadvantaged, because of State action, and help turn them into productive citizens who will make significant contributions to our society.

Now, I want to talk, just a moment though, about another part of the President's budget. You know, I served on three budget committees recently. In fact, I was on Vice President Joseph Biden's bipartisan group for deficit reduction. I also served on the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction that everybody called the supercommittee.

And then I served on the budget committees that negotiated the Budget Control Act of 2011, an enactment I am not all that proud of, because we put in this thing we now call sequestration, which has wreaked havoc on military installations and military spending, as well as discretionary programs of the government.

Now, the hallmark of each successful budget agreement has been to increase defense spending by the same amount as spending for nondefense discretionary agencies. President Trump's proposed budget ignores this principle and would destroy many critical programs throughout all of the nondefense Federal agencies.

In 2016, the bipartisan budget agreement added \$25 billion in defense spending above the sequester levels. Importantly though, it paid for this increase with responsible revenue-raising provisions and also increased the non-defense side of the budget by \$25 billion as well.

For 2017, it is a similar story, where defense and nondefense are increased by \$15 billion, both paid for responsibly. President Trump proposes to go far beyond these agreements, proposing for 2018, \$54 billion in increased defense spending, and he pays for it by cutting the nondefense side of the budget by a corresponding \$54 billion next year.

Mr. Speaker, there is a responsible way to provide our military relief from sequestration. I support doing so, as do my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus. This is not the way to do it.

Much of the proposed investments will go to draconian immigration enforcement and an ineffective border wall. The President even has the audacity to propose ignoring the budget agreement for 2017, that was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Obama over 2 years ago.

What exactly does proposing \$54 billion below sequester level caps for the nondefense side of the budget mean? What effect would it have on our constituents? The President's budget decimates funding for critical infrastructure in low-income communities, I dare say, rural communities.

For example, the President proposes to eliminate \$500 million in funding for the rural water and wastewater program in the Department of Agriculture. In my congressional district alone, this agency has funded drinking water infrastructure in poor, rural communities like Turbeville, Bowman, and Brittons Neck, that had previously limited access to clean water.

The President also proposes to eliminate the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, or TIGER grants, which invest in road, rail, transit, and port projects on a competitive basis all around the country.

In South Carolina, TIGER grants have funded the I-95/301 interchange in rural Santee, Main Street revitalization in Columbia, and upgrades at the Port of Charleston to the tune of more than \$32 million. The resulting economic and community development have proved to be well worth the Federal investment.

The President's proposal would also eliminate the Legal Services Corporation and LIHEAP. That is the program for low income home energy assistance that allows homes to be weatherized, and Meals on Wheels. This can only be seen as an attack on the poor and the elderly.

These cuts would leave thousands of poor senior citizens unable to heat their homes in the winter and deny thousands more legal aid they need to seek relief from domestic violence and avoid homelessness by staying in their homes.

The notion that Meals on Wheels doesn't produce results is totally ridiculous. In my district, Senior Resources in Columbia currently serves more than 500 seniors.

Mr. Speaker, Federal funding accounts for 37 percent of their budget. Cutting those funds would callously kick 180 homebound seniors to the curb, forcing them to join the already 130 people who are on the waiting list. These are unconscionable cuts made with no regard for the most vulnerable in our society.

The Congressional Black Caucus budget will take the opposite approach. By repealing sequestration, making the Tax Code fairer to increase the level of investment in critical programs, and targeting Federal funds to communities mired in persistent poverty

through the 10-20-30 formula, the CBC's budget responsibly funds our military, while also lifting millions out of poverty.

I want to close by thanking the gentleman from Virginia, Congressman BOBBY SCOTT, my friend and classmate, for pulling that budget together, and doing so showing the kind of compassion that ought to exist in every public servant.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the assistant leader. I really appreciate his comments, and I want to thank him for standing up for these students and everyone else out there who is trying to do something to help eliminate poverty.

The gentleman's 10-20-30 plan was really hailed as something that we should all take a closer look at. It was a bipartisan approach and a look at poverty because it affected so many different people's districts. I just want to thank the gentleman for being an advocate in this area.

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Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from the great State of California (Ms. BASS).

KAREN BASS also is someone that really takes these topics seriously. She has always been someone who has delved very deeply into the budget and into domestic spending and how it impacts our communities. I just really appreciate her taking part to really share what we think is important as it relates to this budget.

Ms. BASS. I thank the gentleman, Mr. VEASEY, and also Mrs. DEMINGS for their leadership in this hour.

I know that our theme is "What Do We Have to Lose"? That is something that the President, during his campaign, asked the African-American community: What do you have to lose? Why don't you think about voting Republican this time?

So I was a part of the group that Mr. CLYBURN referred to that went and met with the President last week. Members of the Congressional Black Caucus Executive Committee met with the President. We went over to the White House to answer the question: What do we have to lose?

As my colleagues who have spoken before me mentioned, we believe that we have a lot to lose. I think that the budget is a reflection of all that we have to lose.

As my colleague, VAL DEMINGS, said, a budget is a reflection of your values. It is a reflection of where you think taxpayers' money should be spent. So, in the opportunity that I had to speak with the President, I mentioned to him that I was sure that he was aware that, in the United States, over 2 million people are incarcerated. In fact, we incarcerate more people in the United States than any other country on the planet.

What I told him that he probably wasn't aware of was that this was an issue—a bipartisan, bicameral issue—

that Members of Congress in both Houses were looking at because we recognized, over the years, that incarceration is not the solution to communities that are experiencing crime. We told him that there was a trend in Congress to actually reconsider policies that led to overincarceration. We told him that the Congressional Black Caucus was concerned about messages that we heard from him: one that is reflected in his budget; two, that was reflected in his new deal for Black America where the focus was on law and order.

We told him that we were concerned about his proposals to address problems in poor communities, and our chair, CEDRIC RICHMOND, specifically pointed out that he was concerned about the way African-American communities were consistently described as riddled by violence and as almost uninhabitable.

We told him that we thought he probably wasn't aware that 95 percent of prisoners return to communities and that maybe he was not aware that many of these inmates return to certain ZIP Codes. If you have a community in certain ZIP Codes where a number of people have been released from prison without any services, then, naturally, you are going to have a problem with recidivism. We have people coming out of prison who then find out that they are prohibited from working and that they are ineligible for public benefits, including even a driver's license.

In the State of California, we had a program in State prisons where we trained you to be a barber, but then we didn't allow you to have a license if you had been a prisoner. So we had to change State law to change that.

We told him that, if we don't find ways to reintegrate people into society, he needed to understand that that was actually a contributing factor to crime and violence in many communities.

When we went to the White House, we didn't just go to point out problems, but we also went to talk about solutions. Here is the concern when it comes to the budget. The budget that the President delivered to Congress so far is so general that we don't know whether or not some of the cuts to discretionary spending would include programs like the Second Chance Act.

The Second Chance Act is a program that provides funding to States to address and reduce recidivism. The Second Chance Act has programs that work with inmates before they are released to address the root causes of why they offended in the first place. Many people in prison—a large percentage—did not graduate high school. So services that are provided by the Second Chance Act include employment services, mental health, substance abuse, housing, education, and family reunification.

As we talked about a budget being a reflection of values, for the values to

me that will help the African-American community, we need to make sure that the Second Chance Act is fully funded. We won't know what is fully funded in the President's budget until he sends us more details in the month of May. But it is my hope that he listened to the presentations that members of the Congressional Black Caucus made when we had a meeting with him last week and that, when the budget comes out in May, we will see that the Second Chance Act is fully funded.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative BASS very much for her comments and remarks. I really appreciate the gentlewoman always taking this subject to task very seriously and to heart.

Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BUDD). The gentleman has 26 minutes remaining.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. EVANS), who has really made this, again, one of his priorities also. Philadelphia is one of those cities where many people have benefited by a lot of these domestic spending programs, including students like I talked about a little earlier. I would now like to hear from my esteemed colleague from the State of Pennsylvania, Mr. DWIGHT EVANS.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his leadership, along with my classmate, who is also a very fantastic person. So I thank both of you for your leadership in terms of the Congressional Black Caucus and exactly what that means.

My colleague from Florida said that budgets are values. Something that you may not know, I have spent 36 years in the Pennsylvania Legislature. Of those 36 years, I spent 28 years on the appropriations committee, and 20 of the 28 years as the chairman of that committee. So my colleague from Florida is absolutely correct that it is put your money where your mouth is, and that sets a tone for what you believe and what you think.

The President's proposed budget puts America's middle neighborhoods at greater risk, tilting towards decline.

What do I mean by "middle neighborhoods"?

Middle neighborhoods are the neighborhoods that are caught between growth and decline, neighborhoods that, with just a little love and a little help, you can keep those neighborhoods. Those neighborhoods are all over America. Those are communities that we should value. We should understand that affordable housing and stable communities in those neighborhoods are very important to the backbone of America.

So these American middle neighborhoods are neighborhoods we should cherish. We should value the importance of these communities. But under the proposed budget, they do not give our seniors, our children, or our working fami-

lies a chance to get ahead—major cuts, Mr. Speaker, in funds for Federal student services, such as LIHEAP, grants for afterschool programs, community development block grants, community service block grants, and others to help families and help raise them out of Pennsylvania poverty.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, I met with students from the Pennsylvania TRIO, Gear Up, and Upward Bound programs. President Trump's budget proposes cuts for millions of these programs, which would support first-time, first-generation college students through outreach to low-income and minority middle and high school students.

This is our future. This is our future. We are in the 21st century. We understand if we are to be very competitive in the world, we must leave no child behind.

It is important, Mr. Speaker, to recognize that the investments we are talking about benefit all of us. If we want a strong economy, these middle neighborhoods are essential. These middle neighborhoods are where people grow and develop. They go on to college. They do well in school, and they hold our society together.

The President's budget undermines and cuts the crucial investments we have made in our cities and our neighborhoods, neighborhoods that we all come from, neighborhoods where we all recognize the importance of these communities. We should not take this for granted because the reality is, as my colleague from Florida said, our values are where our dollars are.

I totally agree with her because she is really telling us all that you can pay now or you can pay later. It is better to pay on the front end rather than the back end. It is better to understand that these communities are communities that help America be what it is today.

The President's budget undermines and cuts critical investments. The President's budget does not give our cities the adequate resources to invest in our communities and moves our cities in the wrong direction.

I think that the President, as my colleague just said earlier, says: What do we have to lose? Well, we have a lot to lose under this proposed budget.

This budget is no new deal for Black America. As a matter of fact, this is no deal at all. We clearly understand that this means cuts in health care, education, affordable housing, and food nutritional programs.

This is no deal because we understand that we must make investments. If we are talking about moving America forward and we are talking about making it what we know it can be in terms of America, we must make this investment. But we cannot make these investments, we cannot be talking out both sides of our mouths, and we cannot, on one hand, say what do we have to lose and then, on the other hand, do nothing in the budget whatsoever. So it is clear, Mr. Speaker, that we have a missed opportunity here.

I am proud to stand as a member of the Congressional Black Caucus and join with all of my colleagues, as the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus has said, as being the conscience of the Congress. It is important to understand that we don't take that lightly. That is why we stand here today, Mr. Speaker.

We stand here to raise the voice, to stress to people that we are not going to give up, that we recognize that we all have a responsibility and an obligation in this democracy, that this is our democracy and it is something that we should never take for granted.

We have a lot to lose. We stand to lose everything that made our neighborhoods stronger block by block. So, Mr. Speaker, I stand here with all of my colleagues to carry this message to everyone that we are never going to give up—never, never, never.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate Representative EVANS' thoughtfulness and his participation on the topic.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS), who is my colleague from Los Angeles County. The gentlewoman is known as a fighter in her district not only on these domestic spending issues and not only in her district, but throughout the entire United States.

I am very happy that she is participating, and I know that she has been very vocal about those developments, dealing with the budget and dealing with other issues that affect us here in Washington, D.C. I really appreciate the gentlewoman's participating in tonight's discussion.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the time that I have been allotted here this evening, joining with my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus to answer the question that was posed to us by this President. I rise to answer President Trump's question to the Black community.

Now, all throughout his campaign, President Trump declared that Black people all across this country just live in hell and fear each day, and we may be shot on the street. He basically said that we have nothing, our education is no good, on and on and on. Then he went on to say that only he can solve the challenges African Americans face.

Unfortunately, this kind of talk is typical of this President: boasting, bragging, and making promises. This President will say anything and promise anything, of course, with no intention of living up to his promises. One should not believe anything he has to say.

As a matter of fact, the African-American community understands very well when these kinds of empty promises are made. As a matter of fact, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the presidents of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities organized, put together, a proposal, and they went to meet with the President at the White House.

□ 2015

They didn't even have an opportunity to present the proposal. They were just ushered around in a photo op, and that was all that happened, without any real conversation, without any proposals being produced. They were treated in a disrespectful way.

This, basically, is what I have decided we can expect from the President. His budget and policy priorities reveal his true intentions and what so many of us already know about this President. He really doesn't care about the issues facing the African-American community, and he doesn't care to learn about those issues or advance any meaningful legislation to provide jobs and economic opportunities for our Nation's most vulnerable communities.

If you take a look at Trump's HUD budget, you find a \$6 billion reduction. He wants to eliminate the Community Development Block Grant program, which supports our cities and various urban renewal projects. He wants to eliminate the HOME Investment Partnerships Program. This President wants to eliminate the Choice Neighborhoods program. He wants to eliminate the homeownership program and on and on and on.

Just last week, this President tried and failed to repeal the Affordable Care Act. If that unconscionable bill had passed, 14 million people would have lost insurance coverage next year, and the American people would have seen billions of dollars in Medicaid cuts.

Trump's empty promises do not end with the budget. He has also filled his Cabinet with millionaires and billionaires who don't have a clue about the challenges facing the African-American community.

Trump's Treasury Secretary was known as the "Foreclosure King," who profited off the backs of vulnerable homeowners during the 2008 recession.

Trump's Education Secretary knows nothing about public education, did not attend public schools. Her children didn't attend public schools. She was not chosen to repair public education; she was chosen to break it.

Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who lied under oath before the Senate, opposed the Violence Against Women Act. He has taken hardline positions against our efforts to reform the criminal justice system, which disproportionately incarcerates African Americans. Of course, we knew about his background and his history and what he is known for, and that is discrimination, disrespect for African Americans.

Mr. Speaker, my position against this President and his administration is clear: I oppose this President. I do not honor this President. I do not respect this President. He has disrespected the office and offended so many people across this country and around the world with his disgusting and indecent rhetoric against women, the Black community, Muslims, immigrants, and disabled Americans.

Mr. Speaker, it is not just the African-American community who will lose under this President. It is everyone who isn't a millionaire or billionaire that stand to lose under this administration. I will continue to oppose him and fight him every step of the way.

While I am talking about where he has put his priorities—and, of course, I think the budget really does reflect your priorities—he has reduced the education budget by 13 percent, or \$9 billion less than last year; a \$168 billion increase for charter schools, 50 percent above current levels.

Let's take a look at labor. It reduces the budget by 21 percent, a \$2.5 billion decrease from last year. Health and Human Services, decreased funding by \$15 billion, the lowest in 20 years.

It reduces funding for the National Institutes of Health by 19 percent. For the Environmental Protection Agency, it reduces the budget from \$8.1 billion to \$5.7 billion. Housing and Urban Development, again, reducing the budget by just about \$6 billion, or 13.2 percent.

He claims he cares about small businesses. He reduces the SBA budget by 5 percent, or \$43.2 billion less than last year. It goes on and on and on.

Homeland Security, increases the budget by only 6.8 percent, to \$44 billion, even though he claims he cares a lot about the security of this country.

What am I saying? I am simply saying that African Americans have struggled and fought, historically. Many African Americans have paid a huge price fighting for justice and equality in this country and have died for it. I don't have to call the names of Martin Luther King and all the others. We have paid a price. We have fought.

But guess what? Despite the fact that America has not always been there for us, we have always been there for America. We have fought in America's wars. We have suffered discrimination. We have suffered isolation and undermining. But we stand up for America, oftentimes when others who think they are more patriotic—who say they are more patriotic—do not.

When we fight against this President and we point out how dangerous he is for this society and for this country, we are fighting for democracy. We are fighting for America. We are saying to those who say they are patriotic but they turn a blind eye to the destruction that he is about to cause this country: You are not nearly as patriotic as we are.

We not only have fought in America's wars, have stood up for America, have been there whenever this country was threatened in any way, we say now that this country is threatened with a President who does not belong there, a President who does not understand how this government works, a President who goes down to Mar-a-Lago every weekend and plays golf. He is not huddling with Members of Congress and trying to figure out how to form a consensus. Rather, he thought he could

come in here and run roughshod over everybody. But that is how he works, that is how he acts.

He is not good for America. African Americans know this. The Black Caucus understands this. And for those members of the Black Caucus representing our leadership who went to meet with him, they have laid out to him all of this, what our care and concerns are all about. But in the final analysis, we really don't expect anything from him. My mission and my goal is to make sure that he does not remain President of the United States of America.

Mr. VEASEY. I thank Representative WATERS for her comments on this very timely matter.

Mr. Speaker, how much time do we have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 9¼ minutes remaining.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), my good friend, who is also a leader on education issues and domestic spending. I thank him very much for participating tonight.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. I thank the gentleman for his good work on the budget.

Mr. Speaker, the budget is about choices, and those choices involve arithmetic. Apparently, the Republican strategy on the budget does not recognize arithmetic. When you start with a deficit, their strategy to deal with the deficit is to increase defense spending and to pass massive tax cuts. That will not end up helping the deficit.

As we have seen with the choice in health care, they made bad choices. Whatever you think about the Affordable Care Act, their plan was demonstrably worse. Their plan would increase the number of people uninsured by 24 million, bring higher prices and worse policies, but tax cuts for millionaires.

What I couldn't understand was not what were the ups and downs for politics, but who was for that—24 million more uninsured, higher prices, and worse policies?

Democrats will work with Republicans to improve the Affordable Care Act, but we are not going halfway and saying only 12 million uninsured and slightly higher prices and slightly worse policies. If we are going to have a policy to increase the number of insured, lower prices, and provide better policies, we will work.

We can also produce a better budget. For almost an hour, we have heard the problems with the budget introduced by the President of the United States. The Congressional Black Caucus is not just about complaints. We have a budget, and it is a responsible budget.

We make choices. The choices avoid those devastating cuts that we have heard about. The Congressional Black Caucus budget is realistic. It requires \$3.9 trillion in additional revenues, but it outlines over \$10 trillion in choices that could be made to come up with

that money, possibilities like canceling the Bush tax cuts. That is \$3.9 trillion right off the bat. Over \$10 trillion in total choices.

First, with that revenue, we cancel the sequester both for nondefense and for defense. Then we make investments in the future of American families with investments in education, job-creating infrastructure, the environment, scientific research, and maintain a strong social safety net. In the end, we reduce the deficit by a cumulative amount of an over \$2 trillion reduction in the deficit.

So let's be clear, we are going to make choices with the budget, choices like we made a few years ago. People say a lot about the proposal by Senator BERNIE SANDERS and \$900 billion for free college. Could we afford that? Just think, a couple of years ago, we passed, with one vote, an extension in tax cuts of \$3.9 trillion. We could have, with the same amount of money, extended \$3 trillion in tax cuts, and with the money left over, free college, but we didn't make that choice. All \$3.9 trillion went to tax cuts. The \$900 billion could have gone to free college.

Make no mistake about it, we are making choices. This year, again, we will make choices with our budget: massive tax cuts, or we can focus on a better feature and produce a more humane and responsible budget. I would hope that this year we make the right choice.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, before I close out this Special Order hour, I do want to thank my colleague from Florida, Representative VAL DEMINGS, for participating, and I want her to just share some last words on this subject: What do we have to lose? I know she has a few more things that she wants to share with everybody.

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I spent 27 years in law enforcement, and I realized early in my career that we cannot arrest our way out of the challenges that we face, that we have to address some of the social ills that cause decay in communities in the first place if we are going to make those communities better.

In 1965, President Lyndon Johnson commissioned a group to look at crime in America. I would like to share just a short paragraph of their report. It says:

"Every effort must be made to strengthen the family, now often shattered by the grinding pressures of urban slums.

"Slum schools must be given enough resources to make them as good as schools elsewhere and to enable them to compensate for the various handicaps suffered by the slum child—to rescue him from his environment."

Mr. Speaker, I want you to know that we are still trying to rescue children that that particular child represents from their at-risk environments. If we are going to put America first, it starts with putting the American people first.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative DEMINGS for her words and inspiration, and I really appreciate her perspective, again. Now she is getting an opportunity to see this as a Member of Congress, but the 27 years that she spent in law enforcement, it gave her a bird's-eye perspective on what happens when we don't invest in education, when we don't invest in health care, when we don't invest in things that help families uplift themselves and give themselves opportunities to pull one another out of poverty. I just want to thank her again for participating in tonight's Special Order hour.

Mr. Speaker, we have a lot to talk about because we do have a lot to lose, and I thank everybody for participating.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, when President Trump spoke on the campaign trail, his message to the African American community was clear: "What do you have to lose?" Today, just 9 weeks into his presidency, we now know that in a Trump Administration, the American people stand to lose their access to robust medical care, jobs, and more than \$54 billion used to fund critically important programs and Departments through the Federal government.

President Trump's fiscal year 2018 budget proposal to Congress seeks roughly \$54 billion in dramatic cuts to social programs and domestic spending in order to accommodate an equal increase in spending through the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, and Veterans Affairs. His proposal is a poor reflection of the priorities that we hold as a nation and undermines—or eliminates entirely—many of the very programs that millions of Americans rely on the most.

For example, the President's budget proposal slashes funding for education by cutting grants for after school programs and reduces financial aid for low-income students, such as Pell Grants. The Department of Housing and Urban Development will also see a thirteen percent—or \$6.2 billion—reduction in its budget, which is reflected in the elimination of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, the HOME Investment Partnerships program, and Section 4 Community Development and Affordable Housing.

I cannot help but notice that there is a certain degree of hypocrisy reflected in the President's budget proposal when comparing to what he has touted during the campaign. For example, the Department of Transportation will suffer significant cuts to programs such as TIGER, which has been an incredibly successful discretionary grant program used to fund projects of nation significance in communities all across the country. President Trump's budget proposal also looks to eliminate funding for the Capital Investment Grant program, which the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) in Texas has utilized for many years to respond to the explosive population growth within my district and build up our transportation infrastructure. This moves our nation further away from the \$1 trillion in transportation infrastructure spending that the President has proposed during the campaign.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot support the President's budget proposal in its current form. The cuts included in his proposal are irrational and

ignore the dire needs of our people to bolster our transportation infrastructure, create jobs, and pave the way for greater economic opportunity for all Americans—not just a select few. President Trump also wants to slash taxes for the wealthy and our biggest corporations. He will pay for those tax breaks by placing the burden on lower- and middle-class Americans. Just months into his presidency, it is already crystal clear that the American people have a lot to lose under his vision for America and I am proud to join my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus to oppose these devastating cuts and the entire Trump agenda.

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. MARINO (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. SIMPSON (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today and March 28 on account of business in the district.

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTIONS SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled Joint Resolutions of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker.

H.J. Res. 69. Joint Resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Department of the Interior relating to "Non-Subsistence Take of Wildlife, and Public Participation and Closure Procedures, on National Wildlife Refuges in Alaska".

H.J. Res. 83. Joint Resolution disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to "Clarification of Employer's Continuing Obligation to Make and Maintain an Accurate Record of Each Recordable Injury and Illness".

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 29 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, March 28, 2017, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. WOODALL: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 229. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1430) to prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency from proposing, finalizing and disseminating regulations or assessments based upon science that is not transparent or reproducible