

Last year, two Navy destroyers were involved in collisions that tragically claimed the lives of 17 sailors. These ships will undergo repairs for years to come.

I saw this personally in September when I toured the USS *Fitzgerald* in a naval base in Japan. I stood in the room where seven sailors died when their ship collided with a commercial freighter, tearing a hole in the side of the ship and flooding their room where they were sleeping with water in less than 2 minutes, giving them too little time to escape. It was heart-wrenching to see, and it remains heartbreaking to think about the pain these families will endure for years to come.

Perhaps saddest of all is that these accidents were not due to an enemy attack. They were due to training lapses and poor leadership which was exacerbated by high demand for service, combined with a lack of funding for needed ships and a lack of training because of defense cuts.

Last year alone, 80 U.S. servicemembers were killed in readiness-related accidents, nearly four times the number that were killed in hostilities.

Our men and women in uniform deserve better. We owe it to them to provide them with all that they need as they stand ready to actively fight a resurgent Russia, an emergent China, an unstable North Korea, an unpredictable Iran, and widespread violent extremism.

We cannot expect our sons and daughters to volunteer for military service and thereby volunteer to be placed in harm's way without proper equipment and adequate training.

Mr. Speaker, we must end this deadly cycle of continuing resolutions. We must end sequestration and provide for the common defense. We must approve a long-term budget that provides desperately needed increases in funding for the military.

American military superiority is not a God-given right or a law of nature. It has been earned on the backs of a motivated volunteer force. It is our duty to ensure that force is well-equipped and well-trained. The current normal is unacceptable and irresponsible.

Mr. Speaker, I call on my colleagues to end this travesty and to stand with our military as they stand for freedom for us every day.

A DEVOLUTION IS TAKING PLACE

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise and stand in the well of the Congress of the United States of America to address the question of the State of the Union.

What is the State of the Union?

Mr. Speaker, the State of the Union is one of devolution. We are devolving into the normalization of inequality; inequality in a way that allows us to pass a \$1.5 trillion giveaway that will

reward the rich for being rich and punish the poor for being poor.

We are devolving into hyperpartisan political events by the hijacking of a Supreme Court Justice when Justice Gorsuch was appointed to the Supreme Court.

We are evolving and devolving into the hijacking of justice itself because we now find that there are those who believe that there is a deep-state conspiracy within the Justice Department; that somehow there is this belief that the Justice Department should be assaulted and attacked; that it should be demeaned; that it should be discredited.

We are devolving into, Mr. Speaker, the normalization of disqualifying bigotry, as evidenced by some of the statements that have come from the Presidency; statements that would normalize language such as: there are some "fine people" among those who are bigots, racists, and persons perpetrating hate in Charlottesville, as evidenced by the notion that we can allow people to say ugly things about other countries and, in a sense, develop a race-based immigration policy.

Mr. Speaker, we are devolving into a society that recognizes a rising stock market as the acid test for everything when, in fact, it is only proof that some people are doing better while many others are not.

There is a devolution taking place, and I, Mr. Speaker, contend that there is a solution to this devolution. The solution is the impeachment of an unfit President.

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

□ 1030

TONIGHT

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

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, tonight I will have the privilege of hearing the State of the Union Address that I have been waiting to hear since I first came to Congress 7 years ago.

Tonight our entire country will hear a confident message of undeniable good news for all Americans—not based on fantasy and hope, but on facts and undeniable success.

Tonight the President of the United States will come to the people's House and speak to a nation that is far better off today than we were just 1 year ago in every measurable way.

Now, this success did not come by accident. Over the past year, by working with a unified Congress, President Trump was able to begin implementing his agenda to Make America Great Again.

Let's revisit what he has done when it comes to accomplishments.

The signing of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act marked the first time our Tax Code was updated in over 31 years. It lowered tax rates for all taxpayers across the board, and it cut the corporate tax rate down from 35 percent to 21 percent which allows us to compete globally. It permanently repealed ObamaCare's individual mandate. It opened up ANWR for drilling and brand new energy exploration.

When it comes to deregulation, he signed 15 CRA bills into law in less than a year, imposed a groundbreaking rule on the Federal bureaucracy to kill two regulations for every new regulation written, and has rolled back more job-killing red tape than every President before him combined.

When it comes to the courts, by appointing conservatives like Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court and a historic number to the appellate courts, he is restoring constitutionalism and common sense to our judiciary system. These appointments will reverberate for generations to come.

Now, when it comes to the outcomes, the entire stock market is at an all-time high. Contrary to what some people will speak, this affects the pensions of all Americans. Female unemployment is at its lowest level since 2001. Black and Hispanic unemployment are at their lowest levels ever. For 13 different States, overall unemployment is at its lowest rate since we first began recording it.

New manufacturing orders are increasing at their fastest pace in 14 years. Quarterly GDP is exceeding expectations and is on track for a 3 percent annual growth rate for the first time in 13 years. Consumer confidence is at its highest level since 2000. Job market confidence is at its highest level ever, and because of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act alone, more than 3 million American workers—and counting—are receiving \$1,000 bonuses, or more, wage increases, and/or benefit increases. Now, in my own city that I live in, NextTier Bank gave over 250 of its associates a \$1,000 bonus. Those are hardly crumbs when it comes to hard-working American taxpayers.

Abroad, the Islamic State—once thought to be unstoppable—is now shattered. Military morale, recently at rock bottom, is now soaring. Our troops are currently receiving their largest pay raise in 8 years.

When it comes to liberty and conscience issues, we ended the war on religious liberty. We tore up the so-called HHS contraceptive mandate; no more nuns fighting for their survival in the Supreme Court; and we reinstated the Mexico City policy the first weekend in office.

When it comes to energy, we ended the war on coal, we stopped the EPA's so-called Clean Power Plan, we approved both the Keystone XL and Dakota pipelines, and we have plans in place to dramatically expand offshore drilling.