

In 2009, 4 million jobs were lost. In 2017, 1.7 million jobs were created.

Gross domestic product in President Obama's first year went down 2.8 percent. It was up 2.3 percent last year.

Unemployment in 2009 increased from 7.8 percent to 9.9 percent. It fell in 2017 from 4.8 percent to 4.1 percent, a 17-year low.

The Standard & Poor's stock market index was at 1,115 President Obama's first year. It recently hit 2,673.

President Trump's policies are helping more Americans get back to work, pay less in taxes, and build their retirement and savings accounts. These are the facts.

Mr. Speaker, Americans can accurately say they are better off today than they were 8 years ago, or even 1 year ago.

BUILD BRIDGES, NOT WALLS

(Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, 2017 was a year marked with division and distraction, a disservice to Americans seeking solutions to real challenges facing our Nation.

My hope is that the new year provides an opportunity to move away from divisive discourse and toward constructive dialogue and real outcomes. This year, we can take real steps to strengthen Medicare and Social Security, as well as ensuring access to quality and affordable healthcare for all Americans.

This year, we can promote job growth and success for all Americans by making smart, targeted investments in education and scientific research, as well as preparing our workforce for the 21st century.

This year, we can commit ourselves to building a foundation for a stronger America by making investments in our Nation's roads, waterways, infrastructure, and communities.

Madam Speaker, as we consider the State of the Union, this Congress has two choices: build walls or build bridges. Bridges lead to better healthcare, to better jobs, to a better economy to make America great again, and again, and again.

ECONOMIC REVIVAL

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

Mr. ROTHFUS. Madam Speaker, today is State of the Union day, and it is an opportunity for the Nation to hear from the President on the progress we have been making and the challenges that lie ahead.

One thing I am looking forward to is hearing about how the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and the regulatory reforms we have seen over the past year are causing our economy to roar back to life, creating more jobs and putting more money in people's pockets.

Fifty-five years ago, President Kennedy delivered a State of the Union that recognized the power of tax cuts that put money back into the private sector. Talking about the economy, President Kennedy said: "To achieve these greater gains, one step, above all, is essential . . . a substantial reduction and revision in Federal income taxes."

I am glad President Trump and Congress have followed President Kennedy's and President Reagan's model. The economic revival happening today is not only lifting incomes, it is what is going to generate the tax revenues that will help us meet the challenges that lie ahead. That is something for all Americans to celebrate.

REMEMBERING DARBY WORTH

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

Mr. PANETTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and remember Darby Worth, an activist, a community member of my hometown, and most importantly, she was one of the teachers at my elementary school.

Mrs. Worth, as I knew her, worked 20 years at Tularcitos Elementary School, the school where I went and my daughters go today. Now, I didn't know that at the time, but many years ago before she was a teacher, she was well versed in environmental and social activism.

By the time she did take up teaching, she had already traveled to San Francisco many times to protest the Vietnam war. Well after she retired from Tularcitos, Darby was unrelenting in her commitment to social justice, women's rights, challenging corporate power, and, yes, fighting climate change.

She had many movements that she was behind, and it is understandable considering that she felt strongly that everything is interconnected. That is why, at 90, she was already planning and fighting the county to be buried in her front yard.

Madam Speaker, I am not sure if she was laid to rest in that location, but I do know that Mrs. Worth will always be remembered not for just being a teacher to children, but because of her interconnectivity to all of us. She was somebody that we all learned from.

CELEBRATING MAPLE LEAF FARMS' 60TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Maple Leaf Farms on celebrating 60 wonderful years. This family-owned operation has been a staple in northern Indiana and the U.S. duck industry since 1958.

While 60 years of successful operations is a tremendous accomplishment, Maple Leaf Farms' expansion,

production capabilities, and newest global ventures speak volumes to the dedication and ingenuity of the Tucker family. I am proud to learn of the strong business model and outstanding leadership of the Tuckers that has led Maple Leaf Farms to handle 10 million ducks a year and supply products worldwide.

It is truly an honor to represent such passionate and committed Hoosier farmers as the Tuckers. I am grateful for the positive contributions they have made to our community.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Second District Hoosiers, I want to thank Maple Leaf Farms for strengthening Indiana's farming community, and I wish them all the best in their next 60 years.

GIVE HUMAN TRAFFICKING SURVIVORS RELIEF

(Ms. GABBARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GABBARD. Madam Speaker, too often when we think about human trafficking as a tragedy, we think about it as something that goes on in someone else's country, in some other place other than our home.

Most people are surprised to find out that thousands of men, women, and children right here in the United States are enslaved by human trafficking every year. In my home State of Hawaii, an estimated 1,500 to 2,500 victims are impacted each year with girls as young as 10 and 11 years old recruited and kidnapped from malls, beaches, and schools.

So as we work to confront and stop perpetrators of human trafficking, we also need to change the way that we treat survivors of this heinous crime. Because even after the horrors that these individuals go through of rape, physical abuse, kidnapping, and so much more, these survivors are too often charged as criminals themselves, thrown in jail, and shackled with a criminal record that follows them wherever they go.

We need to end this cycle of criminalization and give survivors an opportunity to heal and move on with their lives by passing the Trafficking Survivors Relief Act.

Madam Speaker, as Human Trafficking Awareness Month comes to a close, I urge my colleagues to join me, to pass this important legislation and empower change for those who need it the most.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS MONTH—A STORY OF HOPE

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, Tonya was 13 years old when she met Eddie. They struck up a relationship and the two moved in together in Dallas, Texas. But what seemed to be a "normal" relationship turned out not

to be. Eddie turned Tonya into a sex slave.

Eddie sold Tonya to men for money. She was the victim of sex trafficking. Night after night, Tonya was forced to be with potential suitors. With her body being used for profit and no escape in sight, Tonya had almost given up hope. But help arrived when Homeland Security Special Agent Keith Owens receive a tip and the outlaw was arrested. He was sentenced to 12 years in prison. Tonya was freed from her shackles of modern-day slavery.

This is Human Trafficking Awareness Month, Madam Speaker, and our fight for Tonya and others is not over. We must remain vigilant. Society has to rescue their victims, restore them, and put the slave masters in the jailhouse.

And that is just the way it is.

CHINA IS DESTROYING TIBETAN BUDDHISM

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, last week, Human Rights Watch reported that the Chinese Government has imposed draconian new controls on Larung Gar, the famous Tibetan Buddhist center of learning.

An official document says Communist Party cadres are taking over management, finances, security, admissions, and even the choice of textbooks. This follows last year's demolitions and expulsions.

China says it respects constitutionally protected religious beliefs. That is a lie. When the state puts officials who are required to be atheists in charge of your religious institutions, that is not religious freedom. When admission requires a firm political stand, when the state tells you what to teach and students must honor the Communist Party, that is not religious freedom.

Sadly, the White House has been silent as human rights abuses in China worsen. Enough is enough. Congress must pass the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act. If the President won't act, Congress must ensure there are consequences for China's egregious actions to control and destroy Tibetan Buddhism.

CUBA: COMMUNIST FAILURE

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, The Epoch Times this month presented an extraordinary expose by economist Daniel Lacalle that Cuba "still serves as the best example of why communism doesn't work and will never work."

Cuba was once one of Latin America's wealthiest countries when Communists seized power. But now the Cas-

tro regime—like any socialist government—is a machine of squandering subsidies.

Between 1960 and 1990, Cuba received more than \$65 billion from the Soviet Union, also hundreds of millions of dollars from international organizations. Despite this, the NationMaster ranking ranks Cuba last, 176th in the world, with an average salary of \$25.05 per month in 2014. The only way Cuba can catch up with other developing countries is by ridding itself of communism.

Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has been proven right again: "The trouble with socialism is that eventually you run out of other people's money."

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Madam Speaker, our sympathy this week goes to the people of Afghanistan in the global war who have suffered mass murders in Kabul by the Taliban, reaffirming that we must defeat terrorism overseas.

RECOGNIZING THE EXTRAORDINARY YOUTH OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

(Ms. PLASKETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PLASKETT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize some extraordinary youth from the Virgin Islands.

I want to start off by congratulating two distinguished scholars from my district, Rose Kleeger from Country Day High School, and Mansi Totwani from Antilles High School.

Of the nearly 3.6 million high school seniors graduating this year, Rose and Mansi are among the 4,500 students named as candidates for the 2018 Presidential Scholars Program.

In the world of athletics, Alabama State sophomore and St. Croix native, Nia Jack, was fifth in the women's 60-meter dash at the Fred Wilt Invitational this week. In the same meet, fellow Crucian and Purdue sophomore, Myia Dorsey, ran fourth overall in the women's 400 meters and led the winning women's 1,600-meter relay team.

At the Arkansas State University Invitational, St. Croix' Malique Smith won his men's 400-meter heat in a season's best.

Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate these scholars and athletes coming from the Virgin Islands. Despite the profound devastation of hurricanes this year which demolished our territory and the delay in funding to rebuild our islands, they are examples of the strength and resilience of Virgin Islanders to excel no matter what.

I thank them for their excellence.

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TAX CUTS BENEFITING MONTANA'S SMALL BUSINESSES AND WORKERS

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

Mr. GIANFORTE. Madam Speaker, because of the tax cuts passed by congressional Republicans and signed by President Trump, small-business owners in Montana are expanding their businesses and giving raises and bonuses to their employees.

An insurance broker in Harlem is giving a pay raise to all of his employees and hiring another staff member. A small business in Stevensville is giving pay raises to all of their employees, and a local grocery store owner in St. Ignatius is giving employees a raise, increasing the starting wage, and providing his workers with a bonus.

The leader on the other side of the aisle may deride these bonuses, raises, and investments as crumbs, but they make a real difference to the folks I represent back in Montana. I look forward to sharing more good news about how the tax cuts congressional Republicans and President Trump enacted last year are benefiting Montana.

HONORING A GREAT AMERICAN ON HIS BIRTHDAY

(Ms. CHENEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. CHENEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a great American on his birthday: my dad, Dick Cheney.

I can imagine no better role model than this good and great man. He loved his time serving in this Chamber as the gentleman from Wyoming. Throughout a career spanning decades, including during some of the most challenging times our Nation has faced, he was a steady and wise hand who always led with the courage of his convictions.

No matter the burden he carried, he has always been there for us as a listener and teacher. He taught my sister and me to love our country, to read history and learn from it, to listen more than you talk, that a man's word should be his bond, and that we owe all we have as Americans to the brave men and women in uniform who fought and died to keep us free.

Madam Speaker, the gratitude I have for my dad as an American is surpassed only by my love for him as his daughter.

Happy birthday, Dad.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JUSTICE WILLIAM COUSINS

(Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute