

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I am here this evening to honor Raed Fares, a hero who I had the opportunity to meet right here in the Capitol some months ago. He was shot and killed in Idlib, Syria, last week by two gunmen, likely al-Qaida affiliates.

Raed founded "Radio Fresh" to give Syrians a source for unbiased reporting other than that of the extremists and the Assad regime. He trained journalists and organized community services and events with the goal of empowering civil society. His work made him the target of the Assad regime, al-Nusra, and ISIS many times, but he refused to back down.

Raed was killed because of his bravery. His work mattered. His life mattered. Raed's death must remind each of us that the Syrian people are fighting for their lives. In the words of Raed: "Freedom is an idea, and an idea cannot die."

HONORING NEEDVILLE HIGH SCHOOL BLUE JAYS

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

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, 2017 was an amazing year for the Needville High School Blue Jays. The Lady Jays won the Texas State 4A championship.

They lost over one-half of their team in 2018. The naysayers said there was no way the Needville Blue Jays will play for the State title in 2018.

The naysayers never talked to Rockie, Evan, Meghan, Treasure, Samantha, Anna, Baley, Madison, Samia, Maddy, Kaitlyn, Tori, or Coach Amy Schultz.

The Lady Jays knew they would play the State finals in 2018, and they did just that. Last week, their season ended with a record of 41-9 and the Texas 4A State runner-up.

The Lady Jays were a true team. They put their heart and soul on the line for their hometown of Needville. It is a town we all love. Needville is proud of our girls.

We will see the naysayers next year at the 2019 State championships.

CONDEMN RUSSIAN NAVAL AGGRESSION

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, as co-chair of the Ukrainian Caucus, I rise to strongly condemn Russia's dangerous assault on Ukrainian ships in the Kerch Strait. Russia's blockade of Ukrainian ports should alarm the world.

As Russian dictator Vladimir Putin attempts to tighten his bloody, illegitimate grip on the Crimean peninsula and his ill will on the people of Ukraine, the free world cannot sit back and watch.

Crimea and its surrounding waters belong to the people of Ukraine. No amount of propaganda can cover Russia's egregious human rights record in Crimea, including the illegitimate detainment of Oleg Sentsov.

We stand shoulder to shoulder with the international community and our NATO allies in our unshakeable commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty and freedom. We stand in steadfast solidarity with the Ukrainian people. Russia must understand that its actions have consequences.

We must not hesitate to work with our European allies to increase sanctions on Putin's cronies to punish this continued, flagrant aggression. We demand that Russia withdraw from Crimea and Eastern Ukraine.

RECOGNIZING JOHN SCARANO

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

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize my dear friend, John Scarano, who recently retired as the executive director of the Herkimer County Chamber of Commerce after 12 years at the helm.

John, a native of Little Falls and also a twin, returned to Herkimer County after serving in the U.S. Army for 6 years. Upon his return, John spent 23 years at Mohawk Data Sciences Corporation in East Herkimer before his appointment to the chamber in 2006.

During his tenure, John has played a pivotal role in revitalization projects, which have made significant contributions to Herkimer's budding economy, including the Frankfort 5S South Business Park, a new Tractor Supply Distribution Center in Frankfurt, the new Heidelberg Bakery facility, and the emergence and support of countless new small businesses.

Along with his work at the chamber, John has served on the boards of the Herkimer County Industrial Development Agency, the Herkimer County Historical Society, and the Herkimer County HealthNet.

John is a generous, deeply caring, and honorable person, and I know he will continue to do the best for our community in retirement. John is also one of the most relentlessly fun, enthusiastic, and patriotic people I have ever known.

To my dear friend John Scarano, thank you for your many years of dedicated service to our community and our Nation. We are grateful to you, and we wish you the best in retirement.

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NAFTA 2.0

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BUDD). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow President Trump will claim victory as the United States, Canadian, and Mexican officials gather to sign a replacement for the North American Free Trade Agreement. But let us make no mistake, this is far from a finished deal.

Congress has the final say on trade. From where we stand today, what has been called NAFTA 2.0 still requires work to reach standards acceptable to the American people and American workers and companies.

How can any President claim this victory the same week General Motors announces the idling of five North American facilities, and as it cuts 15,000 living-wage jobs, including one in Lordstown, Ohio, not even counting the thousands and thousands more jobs that will be lost in the automotive parts sector in our country. What an affront to every promise President Trump has made American manufacturing towns.

Ohio's trade message to our Nation is as loud and clear as it always has been. The job outsourcing destruction due to the original NAFTA deal, which passed a quarter century ago, over my great objection on this floor, continues to reverberate across our State and Nation.

Now, we just saw at Lordstown, another, at that plant, 1,600 General Motors jobs, and upwards of 5,000 total job losses when the auto suppliers are counted at just that one facility.

Following the original NAFTA's implementation, town after town lost good jobs with good wages and benefits.

How many times must America's towns and workers bear witness to NAFTA's vast U.S. job outsourcing and wage drag? How many more?

Millions have suffered firsthand as dire predictions actualized and the false promises of NAFTA job creation failed to materialize. Instead, they personally experienced the great sucking sound of job outsourcing, just what we said here on this floor back in the early 1990s.

Whether GM's decision was at all influenced by NAFTA 2.0 is irrelevant. American trade deals have far too long allowed corporate America to run rampant over America's workers as they seek out the penny-wage laborers who can't afford to buy what they make.

I have a couple of charts here that I want to bring to the floor to describe what has been happening across this continent now for a quarter century, and what is upsetting the American people.

Millions of U.S. jobs have been obliterated year after year, as replacement workers toil and work in unsafe sweatshops and maquiladoras south of the border exposed to unimaginable toxins.

The original NAFTA was supposed to create trade surpluses for the United States. It was supposed to create job growth in the United States. And you know what has happened? Exactly the reverse.

These are the numbers just for the year of 2016. You can see how big the trade deficit is with Mexico, nearly \$70 billion and with Canada, \$8 billion. Now, that is up fourfold since back in the early nineties, before NAFTA was passed, when we already had a small trade deficit with those countries, but it has just exploded.

The original NAFTA fueled massive migration on the Mexican side from their countryside to our Nation as millions upon millions of small farmers' livelihoods were extinguished in Mexico. Mexico's white corn industry was decimated.

Why do you think people fled to the United States? If you were hungry, and you had nothing, and you lived in desperation, well, you might do the same. What a humanitarian tragedy has been occurring for over a quarter century. And yet, policymakers in the United States and Mexico close their eyes to the human tragedy.

Trade with our closest neighbors is never simply a zero-sum game. There have been lots of losers. In fact, our country's been a loser.

Yeah, there are some pockets of transportation jobs down at the border. Anybody would expect that. But overall, a net loser.

And guess what? Under the Trump administration, the red ink is growing.

In the nearly 3 decades since NAFTA's original passage, we have not even had 1 year of balanced trade accounts, which is the true measure of whether a trade agreement is successful or not.

So we look at the Trump trade figures here, going across the months, and you look at the red line. Every month the trade deficit grows, including with Mexico and Canada; not even 1 year of balanced trade accounts, and the numbers are getting worse.

NAFTA provided vivid evidence of a severely-flawed trade agreement that failed America's workers and communities as plant after plant shuts down. And you know, the sad tragedy is, at Lordstown, the third shift was gone a couple of years ago. But as the second shift left this week, they were told by the GM officials in the plant, these jobs are going to Mexico.

Beyond just the NAFTA deficit, all our global trade deficits have ballooned under this administration's erratic trade and tariff agenda. It makes no sense.

General Motors says that one of the reasons they are moving the jobs to Mexico is because of the cost of the Trump tariffs, and that they have had to pay several billion dollars more for steel that goes into making these vehicles.

Well, you know, in this wake, a modern NAFTA agreement to correct all of the injustices associated with continental trade is long overdue. I have eagerly anticipated the release of specific text in this NAFTA 2.0 and strategic agenda from the administration on how President Trump plans to bring jobs

back to America. He actually promised that in all the towns that have just gotten these pink slips. He said it in Youngstown. He told the people in Warren, Michigan, that they never had to worry if they voted for him; that they would never have a plant close down.

Well, guess what? General Motors is closing down the transmission facility in Warren, Michigan.

Thus far, both the trade deficit and the job outsourcing continue to, as the expression goes, go south. These numbers are going to get much worse for the workers and communities in our country.

And the workers in Mexico, since NAFTA's passage, guess what? Their wages are going down. What kind of a system is this?

Anything short of specifics in this redone agreement that will clearly improve job prospects for Americans will fall short of Trump's promises.

Mr. Speaker, this is too important a moment to hang America's economy on faulty assumptions. We, in Congress, not I, but some in Congress, fell for NAFTA in 1994. We can't let it happen again.

The signing of text tomorrow leaves with us a lot of work yet to complete. Let Congress do its job.

Has this administration answered the question of whether the job outsourcing bonanza that has taken hold since NAFTA's passage in 1994 has truly been addressed?

It is hard to believe that will be the case, given the current news about General Motors; and that is not the only company moving jobs out of this country.

Have strong labor standards been included in NAFTA 2.0 subject to swift and certain enforcement? No.

Will corporate interests retain the means to outsource American jobs, to take advantage of rock-bottom Mexican wages? Yeah, they will.

Will we protect the rights of Americans to know what is in the food they are feeding their families, or will trade facilitation hold priority over food safety?

Congress has to ask, will Americans have access to affordable prescription drugs made in Mexico, or will the new NAFTA further rig the system to delay access to more affordable and safe generic drugs and biosimilars?

Globally, will we work to open closed and controlled markets?

Will we equalize the negative impact of the value-added tax in our trade agreement? There is nothing in this on that.

Will tax policy stop favoring outsourcing? No, actually the Trump tax bill favored more outsourcing.

Democrats look forward to holding hearings and oversight of how these questions will truly impact all of America and America's workers and communities. We have called on this administration to work with us to reach necessary and substantive achievements.

There is a new administration taking power in Mexico itself. We need to listen and work with them.

Any new North American trade agreement must raise wages and create a level playing field across the board. The American people are not interested in staged production signing ceremonies. They want a NAFTA deal that is fixed and that will create good-paying jobs in America with benefits you can depend upon and heal the economic injustices suffered for the past 3 decades as people are exploited by institutions more powerful than themselves.

And if America is going to be the leader of the free world, she has to be the leader in free trade agreements that are fair and offer the opportunity of rising living standards for all people, not harming people, but helping people.

Trade is not just about goods, it is about people. We have to put people first. We have to put people at the top of the agenda. We have to put workers at the top of the agenda and treat them for their true worth, and not any longer allow trade deals like NAFTA to hollow them out, to hollow their communities out, and to hollow America out.

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

BIPARTISAN WORK OF THE FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight on behalf of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. Speaker, it has been my great privilege to have the responsibility to chair this committee for the last 6 years. I take no pride on behalf of myself, but I take a lot of pride in the work that has been done on this committee.

A lot of that work, Mr. Speaker, has been bipartisan. And I believe, indeed, that the Financial Services Committee is the hardest-working, most productive committee in the United States House. We have produced more bills; we have had more bills passed on the floor; we have had more bills signed into law than any other committee.

I am especially proud of the work that we have done to create more pro-growth economic policy throughout banking and finance, and the passage of S. 2155, the Economic Growth, Regulatory Relief and Consumer Protection Act, has meant so much to helping create more capital to help save our credit unions and community banks, and to really play a part in the unparalleled economic growth that we see in our Nation today. I take great pride in that work on behalf of all our members.

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I also take great pride on behalf of our Members for a piece of legislation