

Similarly, the chairman of the Committee on Oversight and Reform has indicated that his committee will examine allegations regarding how the President valued real estate, among other business decisions, long before the President was elected. He has also indicated he may call members of the President's family to testify about these and other Trump Organization dealings.

These actions are not only blatantly partisan, but they raise serious constitutional concerns.

Our system is one of limited powers and of checks and balances. The Congress is not a law enforcement agency. It is not a court of law. It is a legislative body.

Beside me are the words of Chief Justice Earl Warren, someone whom I would say most on the other side hold in high esteem:

"There is no general authority to expose the private affairs of individuals without justification in terms of the functions of the Congress. . . . Investigations conducted solely for the personal aggrandizement of the investigators or to 'punish' those investigated are indefensible."

As the Supreme Court has repeatedly affirmed, investigations conducted by this House "must be related to and be in furtherance of a legitimate task of the Congress."

The Court has particularly warned that investigations of the private affairs of individuals are off limits without a clear connection to this body's constitutional functions. Rightly so. We are a nation of laws and of liberty.

The President's political opponents tried and failed to make his tax returns and his business dealings an issue in the 2016 Presidential election. The American people settled that issue at the ballot box.

□ 1045

It is absolutely clear that the majority does not seek the President's tax returns, information about his business, or to haul his family before Congress in an effort to pass new laws or for some other legislative purpose.

These investigations are thinly veiled attempts to use the powers of this Chamber to provide ammunition for the 2020 election.

Mr. Speaker, each of us swears a duty to uphold the Constitution. Each of us has a responsibility to ensure that our actions conform within its boundaries and its principles. I urge the majority to remember that obligation and reconsider this course.

The investigatory power of this institution is absolutely critical to our function as a coequal and independent branch of government.

Excesses by the body led to an intervention by the Supreme Court in an over 40-year period when the right of Congress to compel testimony was called into question.

Again, in the 1950s, the court was forced to intervene to stop the excesses

of the House Un-American Activities Committee.

Let's be clear. These so-called investigations set a dangerous precedent. The majority wants to use Congress to investigate the past personal and business dealings of an elected official and his family. This is yet another attempt to coerce and intimidate people with whom they disagree.

This isn't legitimate. This is a witch hunt, and it threatens to undermine legislative investigations in the future.

So, again, I ask the majority to think very hard about their constitutional obligations and what these partisan attacks against the President will mean for the future of this House. It is your right to oppose the President at the ballot box, not to use the powers of this body to score political points.

There is no legitimate purpose for this Congress to investigate the President or his family before he was elected to office.

RECOGNIZING VICTORIA MEJIAS

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

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Victoria Mejias, a leader from my district in Omaha, Nebraska, who has overcome the physical impairments of multiple sclerosis, or MS, to help those in desperate need, those who need to find new homes, new jobs, and new schools in the wake of Hurricanes Maria, Sandy, and Katrina and the tornados that rampaged Pilger, Nebraska, and Joplin, Missouri.

Victoria has been involved in missionary work for many years and has always had an active interest in serving others in need. She found her second calling by assisting disaster relief efforts and facilitating the relocation of those most affected.

In 2017, Victoria found her work hitting closer to home than ever before. Victoria, who is the daughter of a Puerto Rican family, assisted in the relief efforts for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands when they were devastated by the powerful category 4 hurricane which claimed an estimated 3,057 human lives and caused \$91 billion worth of damage.

She worked fervently alongside U.S. veteran Joel Ortiz to initiate a relief project that would help relocate affected families to Omaha and the surrounding areas. With her efforts, displaced families would have a place to call their home away from home.

The result was the birth of an organization which Victoria is proud to call her own, Heartland United for Puerto Rico. This organization has assisted approximately 50 families in relocating to areas throughout Nebraska and Iowa and continues to make influential impacts in the lives of these individuals who lost nearly everything.

Unfortunately, much of Victoria's efforts have been slowed as she continues her fight against the horrible impacts

of MS. MS can be treated through disease-modifying therapies which work to reduce the frequency and severity of relapses, but they do not cure MS. In fact, there is no known cure.

Multiple sclerosis attacks the immune system's healthy cells and affects the ability of the central nervous system to control the activities of the body.

In 2006, Victoria encountered her first difficulty with this disease when she lost her balance and fell to the ground, having no feeling of support from her legs beneath her. She was formally diagnosed with MS in 2016.

The diagnosis, although challenging, gave her a sense of relief, as she finally knew her experience was real and valid.

She continues to suffer from many effects of the disease, such as broken legs and color blindness, and is no longer physically able to have the same influence she once had, but Victoria has the motivation to be a transformative leader within her community and does not let this stop her.

When you meet Victoria, she will tell you that being self-aware of your challenges is a strength, not a weakness.

What Victoria has accomplished in the lives of others is an achievement difficult for many who do not suffer from any physical limitations. Therefore, we should all draw inspiration from her example, her determination, and her achievements, all while struggling with the debilitating effects of MS.

May we all strive to be leaders in our communities, as Victoria has and will continue to be.

Victoria, we salute you and pray for your strength. We pray for your healing from this burdensome disease. Thank you for being such a great example and inspiration to all of us.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 50 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Dr. Darryl D. Roberts, 19th Street Baptist Church, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

O God, our redeemer, we give You the highest praise.

Saturate our hearts in Your love so that our will may be lost in Your perfect plan for creation.

We thank You for the Members of the people's House, who believe, in the