

Mr. Speaker, 45 years ago this summer, the Watergate scandal, which had preoccupied the nation for two years, culminated with the resignation of President Richard Nixon and touched off a period of activism and reform on Capitol Hill.

In the years that followed, Congress worked to ensure transparency and prevent the abuse of executive power—informed not only by the work of two special prosecutors, but also by the good investigative work of multiple House and Senate committees.

The Watergate investigations exposed an array of abuses of power by a craven President and his associates, including campaign finance violations, and the use of executive branch agencies to harass or undermine domestic political opponents. Consequently, an informed Congress enacted landmark legislation to curb such abuses and to close those loopholes.

In response to illegal corporate campaign contributions, Congress created the Federal Elections Commission, required disclosure, and placed limits on how much candidates could raise and spend. When Congress discovered that private information held by the IRS and other agencies had been used for political purposes, Congress passed the Privacy Act, restricting government use of Americans' private data.

The Watergate era bears more than a passing resemblance to the tumult of the past three years, and today, as in the 1970s, Congress has a responsibility to act to fortify our democracy and our institutions—in the present circumstance to counter pernicious foreign efforts to influence the U.S. political process. At the same time, and given the narrowness of the Special Counsel's mandate, it is also incumbent on Congress to continue to conduct rigorous oversight, without obstruction by the President, and pursue unexamined investigative threads to complete the fact finding work necessary to develop new laws and refine existing ones.

Even in redacted form, the Mueller report has illuminated serious gaps in laws intended to protect our nation's electoral and political process. The investigation, moreover, exposed weaknesses in the way our government tracks and responds to foreign influence efforts. Like other Committees, the House Intelligence Committee is undertaking a close review of the report to develop necessary legislative reforms to protect our nation moving forward. But, to fully assess the legislative implications and design laws that effectively counter the sophisticated threats we face, it is imperative that Congress—including our Committee—receive the full, unredacted report, as well as crucial underlying evidence.

The report also makes clear that the Special Counsel's mandate did not extend to broader foreign influence activities. The Intelligence Committee, therefore, is undertaking an investigation, and related oversight work, focused on efforts by Russia and other foreign actors to influence our political process before, during, and since the 2016 election. A core component is to understand how Russia and other foreign powers use financial levers to further their geopolitical goals, and whether, and to what extent, financial entanglements exist and may have been used to influence or compromise Americans, including President Trump, his family, and associates.

Working with the Financial Services Committee, the Intelligence Committee has re-

quested information from financial institutions—information that will be vital to fully identify the scope of this threat, the financial means and methods foreign adversaries use, and the counterintelligence vulnerabilities of U.S. officials and institutions. A comprehensive examination of this information is essential to understand the complete threat landscape and devise effective legislative changes, policy reforms, and appropriations priorities.

The Committee's ongoing investigation and oversight—alongside other committees' investigations—will inform a wide-range of legislation and appropriations decisions, including to:

Require financial transparency so that politicians can never again hide significant financial vulnerabilities from the American people; so that the American people are fully aware of any conflicts of interest that arise from financial entanglements of individuals responsible for our foreign policy; and so that foreign powers cannot use American corporations to secretly funnel donations or engage in money laundering;

Strengthen legal authorities and capabilities for our intelligence and law enforcement agencies to better track illicit financial flows, including through shell companies, real estate and other means; to better identify counterintelligence risks; and to expose interference by foreign actors;

Deter presidential abuses of power, by instituting constraints on the corrupt misuse of the presidency, such as legislation I've introduced to rein in the abuse of the pardon power;

Toughen foreign agent registration to prohibit tactics used by our adversaries' unofficial surrogates, close gaps in the Foreign Agents Registration Act, and ensure that law enforcement has the resources to investigate and prosecute bad actors;

Ensure that campaign finance laws prohibit a campaign from taking help from foreign actors and require reporting to law enforcement of nefarious outreach from foreign powers;

Regulate presidential transitions and inaugurations to prevent foreign powers from exercising undue influence, including by contributing criminal or other proceeds to inauguration committees, and by requiring that presidential transitions coordinate exchanges with foreign leaders through the Department of State;

Counter covert "active measures" campaigns by enhancing cybersecurity to combat hacking and taking steps to prevent social media companies from serving as vectors for foreign propaganda and disinformation; and

Reform the security clearances process to help prevent compromised individuals from receiving access to our nation's most sensitive secrets.

For nearly two hundred fifty years, the durability of our republic has rested on our capacity to adapt to changing times and circumstances—and to learn from our mistakes. In this effort, Congress has played the leading role and must do so here, as well. We are prepared to do the difficult work required, but we need all of the information we seek to ensure we get it right.

RECOGNIZING THE MISSION OF TUESDAY'S CHILDREN

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 an organization that works with children who have had their lives forever impacted by terrorism or traumatic loss.

Whether it was a child who lost someone in 9/11 or a child who lost a parent serving in the military, Tuesday's Children has served over 20,000 children since 2001 through trauma and grief support, youth mentoring, mental health services, youth leadership development, and so much more.

Today is its annual Take Our Children to Work Day, a program that offers the opportunity for youth to see, up close and personal, what it is like to serve in Congress.

Spending the day with me today are Spencer Hawn and Christopher Goodwin. They will be joining me at meetings and seeing what it is like behind the scenes of Capitol Hill.

The work done by Tuesday's Children and other organizations in support of the children of our fallen is critical. As a Nation, we mourn the loss of lives lost to terrorists or traumatic events, but sometimes we forget the children of those who were tragically lost.

I salute Tuesday's Children and its mission to give back to our wonderful youth.

RECOGNIZING JACQUELINE AND VICTORIA SCHNEIDER

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize two outstanding citizens from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, who are making our community extremely proud.

Jacqueline and Victoria Schneider, twin sisters from Holland, Pennsylvania, will be graduating from Neumann University in Delaware County this weekend.

Throughout their time in college, Jacqueline and Victoria have been defined by their drive, their dedication, and their work ethic. Both women are standout students and athletes, competing on the Neumann Knights softball team.

Notably, Jacqueline and Victoria are dual valedictorians for the Neumann University class of 2019. This is the first time in the 54-year history of the school that two students will be receiving the valedictorian medal, and both will have the opportunity to address their peers at graduation.

I congratulate Jacqueline, who is pursuing a career in law enforcement, and Victoria, who is pursuing a career in education, on this outstanding achievement.

I would also like to recognize their parents, Gerry and Karen Schneider, for raising such amazing children and future leaders of our community.

RECOGNIZING EDUCATOR JOSH ISAACSOHN

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, this week is Teacher Appreciation