

was honored to chair just last year, and Korean Independence Day, which we celebrate annually in August with our local community—and I know we celebrate it throughout our country—so that we can all unite in our passion for freedom and for the “One Korea” cause, something we are all united on.

Near my home in the 10th District is Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, which is home to the Korean Bell Garden, a gift to the community and to our park system from the Korean American Cultural Committee, which serves our whole community as a beautiful symbol of goodwill towards all.

I am proud to be a member of the Korea Caucus, and I appreciate that goodwill and the goodwill that is found throughout our Korean American community. I join with them today in celebrating this anniversary.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, having been the location for the State of the Union Address last night, we agree that we care deeply about this country, but there were some things that were said here from this lectern right here, where national and international leaders speak when they are invited to speak here in the House, that I felt needed some deliberation.

It is noteworthy. My late mother, English teacher that she was—if I had given this speech, the first thing she would have harassed me about was that you start the first five paragraphs—and this is the content: I have come, I know, I also, I hope, I will keep, I don’t, I want, I want.

My mother would have made big red circles around there and said: Eliminate the first person. It tells people that you care more about yourself. Get rid of that. Quit having so much first person.

Of course, she would have done the same thing toward the end of the speech when we have: I hold, I know, I intend, I can’t, I am asking, I see, I will be, I can, I travel, I see, I see, I know, I see, I see, I see, I see, I see, I see, I know, I believe, I stand.

No doubt my late mother would have taken a red pen and said: Son, if you want to give a great speech, quit talking about the first person “I” all the time. You have got to eliminate it if you want to give a great speech.

So, Mr. Speaker, since we care deeply about each other in this country, those who are in elected positions, I thought maybe, since the door is not always open to me at the White House—I know that going back to the ObamaCare days when the President said: If you have got better ideas, my door is always open.

I know my office kept trying to get me into that open door. I am sure the

President was telling the truth. I am sure his door was open. But there were so many Secret Service agents and staff members between me and that open door, I was not allowed to come present my better ideas on health care.

□ 1230

I still have them. Hopefully, we will get a chance to work those in. Some of the things, PAUL RYAN and I have been on the same page for years; some of them are a little different. TOM PRICE has had some great proposals, MIKE BURGESS. We have a lot of doctors here that have had some great ideas on how to fix it. From that experience, I know that the door is not always open, so this is the format in which I have to point these things out.

When the President said, “second, how do we make technology work for us and not against us,” what immediately comes to mind is what many Republicans have been concerned about and some of my Democrat friends have been very concerned about. Don’t seem quite as concerned under a Democratic President as they were under President Bush, but, nonetheless, still concerned that the President asked, perhaps rhetorically, how do we make technology work for us.

Mr. Speaker, I would humbly submit that the President has got technology working for the administration pretty well. You have got NSA that has been amazing in their ability to use algorithms and sort through emails. You have got the Federal Government, as we found after the Snowden revelations, after we had been told by both Bush and Obama administration officials that we are not checking people’s phone calls, we are not getting that information.

It turned out that, in the FISA court, both administrations had been seeking and getting blanket orders not consistent with the Constitution, which requires specificity. You have to specifically name what it is being searched for and specifically the reason you have for searching it. There is no specificity. They just said: We want every list of everybody’s phone call in your phone company. The judge said: Oh, sure, that is specific enough—every single phone call without any reason, just need the information. So you have got emails, you have got phone calls.

Then, of course, under ObamaCare, the Federal Government is going to get to have everybody’s medical records. It sounds like crony capitalism involved in having a deal with a private entity to gather everybody’s medical records. So you will have the Federal Government and a private company gathering everybody’s medical records.

Then we have the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau that, under the guise of trying to protect people from unscrupulous banks, you have the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau say: We want every debit and credit card record of everybody. That way we can watch for unscrupulous banking practices and banks.

Well, that is not the way the Constitution requires things be done. As a judge, if you wanted somebody’s bank records, you had to come to a judge like me in a felony case and you had to have probable cause established under oath that there is probable cause to believe a crime was committed, this person committed it, and only then would I sign an order allowing them to get someone’s bank records. Not under the CFPB. Under the guise of helping people, they are gathering people’s bank records, whether they want them to have them or not. That needs to stop.

The President said: “We have done all this while cutting our deficits by almost three-quarters.” The trouble is I remember back in 2006 when Democrats were rightfully and righteously pointing out that with a Republican President, President George W. Bush, and Republicans in control of the House and Senate, they felt it was outrageous that we were going to have a \$160 billion deficit, that we would bring in \$160 billion less than we would spend.

They were right. We should have had a balanced budget then. We were trying to get there. We were pushing for cuts trying to get there. But they convinced the American public Republicans can’t be trusted; they have got you a \$160 billion deficit. You put us in charge, and we will cut that to get a balanced budget.

Then we got a Democratic President, a Democratic House, and a Democratic Senate, and what happened? The budget that they gave us created about a \$1.6 trillion deficit. So much for the \$160 billion that we were lambasted for allowing. They 10-times that right up to \$1.6 trillion or so.

People need to understand, when the President says we have cut the deficit by almost three-quarters, when you still haven’t gotten back to that \$160 billion deficit that we were lambasted for back in 2006, you still have not done an adequate job. We wish that the President and Democrats in the Senate would work better with us so that we can get back more to the kind of budget the Democrats promised Americans back in the fall of 2006.

Then the President said: “More and more wealth and income is concentrated at the very top.” I want to applaud the President, Mr. Speaker, for stating the truth. Under his watch, more and more wealth and income has been concentrated at the top. The President has actually admitted on the record a couple years or so ago that it is true that for the first time in American history—it has never happened before under any other President—the first time in American history, under President Obama’s watch, 95 percent of all income in America has been reported went to the top 1 percent of income earners in America. Ninety-five percent of the country’s income went to the top 1 percent. It never happened before, not under a Republican, not under a Democrat, not under anybody. That has never happened before.

In fact, we feel the middle class shrinking, and it is not in a good way where they are moving up to the rich. They are moving down to the poor, and the poor are getting poorer. It is not because a free market system doesn't work. It is because the government, under this President, blew past the 73- or 74,000-page-per-year record that President Bush finally reached and now is pushing toward 80,000 new pages of regulations every year that business has to live under.

The only chance you have is to be a big investment bank that got us into trouble, that nearly brought down the country, because the regulations of this administration and the push that this administration has had against community banks that did not get us in trouble is about to bring them under. We are losing them constantly, and the big banks are getting bigger and more powerful instead of getting lower to a point where they would not bring down the country as they nearly did previously.

The President says: "The bipartisan reform of No Child Left Behind was an important start." My understanding was he was promising that he would get rid of that. I thought when he got elected, okay, look for the silver lining. He is going to get rid of No Child Left Behind. Hallelujah, that is a good thing. Let's get the control back to the States and the people as the 10th Amendment requires, because education is not an enumerated power. It is reserved to the States and people.

Before the Federal Government got involved, I know in Texas—I have seen the stats—it was nearly 75 percent of all education employees were teachers in Texas. Makes sense. Then that year President Carter started the Department of Education. Now everybody has got to have a massive number of bureaucrats at the State level and at the local level.

You have got to have people at the local school district providing all the data that is being demanded at the State capitol because it is being demanded here in Washington. So we are now about 50 percent of our employees in Texas—about—are teachers. Why 70 to 75 percent down to 50? Because we have a Federal Department of Education. The emphasis is on being bureaucrats, not on education, and we need to get back to that. I sure wish that had been a promise the President had kept.

There are numerous promises and statements made. I am just highlighting some here, Mr. Speaker. But when the President says, "Nearly 18 million people have gained coverage so far," I am not sure where that number is coming from. It may come from the same source that the President used to say: "Surveys show our standing around the world is higher than when I was elected to this office."

In both cases, I haven't been able to find any basis whatsoever for either of those statements and would welcome

hard, factual evidence, not something they create and make up—it is easy to make things up—but an actual survey. Because I have seen surveys that show that, even though this President was raised as a child in a Muslim country back in Indonesia—he thought that that would get him more respect in Muslim countries—the surveys I have seen show he has less respect in Muslim countries than President Bush did, and that was bad enough. But at least the countries had more respect for President George W. Bush. They knew he was serious and meant business.

Unfortunately, Muslim countries actually believe that they could take—say, just hypothetically, Mr. Speaker—they could take 10 of the U.S. Navy sailors, just take them into custody, and this administration would do nothing, nothing to retaliate or respond. As President Reagan made clear and history showed, you get peace through strength. If you don't get peace through strength, then the only way you get peace is total subjugation to a tyrant.

The President said: "America is about giving everybody willing to work a chance, a hand up." Yet this is the very President that, with executive orders, changed—this administration at least—and violated the existing welfare reform laws because it was a requirement. If you could work, you had to work.

I was thrilled to see a graph that a professor at Harvard had at a seminar up there at Harvard back in 2005. He showed that for 30 years of the welfare system, '65 or '66 to '95 or '96, that single moms' income, when adjusted for inflation, was just flat-lined. Single moms' income was flat-lined. No increase over 30 years and spending trillions of dollars, they were no better off.

Yet, after the welfare reform, after the Republican revolution under Speaker Newt Gingrich, welfare reform required working, if people could. They had a graph that showed that, for the first time since we started having welfare, from '96 through 2005 or through 2004, single moms' income had a sharp increase over that period and was still headed up.

I am not sure if it was still headed up when this President took that requirement away, which no doubt put them back on a flat line again, making them worse off. I am sure it is not intentional that he would make single moms worse off; but when you have the data to show what happens, it is very unfortunate he put single moms back on a path to low income that never increases after adjusted for inflation.

The President said: "I think there are outdated regulations that need to be changed and there is red tape that needs to be cut. But, after years now of record corporate profits"—that is a problem.

Outdated regulations—I am asking rhetorically, Mr. Speaker. Is that the reason that he has set records with nearly 80,000 pages of new regulations

where you have got the founders of some of the biggest businesses in the country saying: With all these regulations pouring out of Washington every year, I could never found the company that I have today. I could never get started today because of these massive, bloated regulations?

□ 1245

Here again, he takes a shot at big banks or Big Oil.

It is interesting, Mr. Speaker, if you look back at the President's proposal on his American Jobs Act—my American Jobs Act that I filed before his was a lot better, it would have stimulated the economy better—he said he was going to punish Big Oil.

But if you look at the deductions he was eliminating, they were basically deductions that only the smaller, independent oil producers could take, which kept them in business, and that Exxon—the big companies—didn't even take the deductions. They were not eligible to take those that the President was going to eliminate.

Therefore, it was going to put out of business the independent oil and gas producers, which would be a boon to the Big Oil that the President said he didn't like.

He has talked about and railed against the big banks and the fat cats on Wall Street, but it is as if there is a wink and a nod there: I am going to let you make more money than you have ever made in your lives while the rest of those in the country make less money than they have ever made—because, under this President's policies and regulations, that is what happened.

He says that immigrants aren't the reason that wages haven't gone up enough. I hope that we will have a chance to show him the accurate data that show, yes, that is the biggest reason that wages haven't gone up. For all of the jobs that have been created, it looks like the number indicates it is the same number of immigrants that have taken jobs during that time.

The President said that he plans to lift up the many businesses. Mr. Speaker, that is the problem. This President thinks he is the one who lifts businesses or puts them down. It is true that he can destroy businesses, as he has done, but the fact that anyone thinks the government is the one that lifts businesses is at the heart of the problem with this administration, one of many.

The President says that, over the past 7 years, we have nurtured that spirit. He is talking about discoveries in DNA. Yet, with the 70,000 to 80,000 pages of new regulations every year, there is not much spirit there to nurture.

He said that we have protected an open Internet, but he failed to mention that the government took over the Internet. The FCC had said that they were not going to take it over. Then he gave a speech, saying that we were

going to take it over. The next thing you know, they have taken it over.

He says that he is putting JOE in charge of mission control. He is talking about curing cancer. I love the idea that we are going to cure cancer. That would be fantastic. A lot of loved ones I have lost have died of cancer.

Then I heard he was going to put JOE in charge. Then I remembered, Mr. Speaker, wasn't it he that was going to stamp out all waste, fraud, and abuse in the Federal Government, so he was going to put JOE in charge, and we knew it could happen? It seems like he says he is going to put JOE in charge when he may not really be serious about doing anything or having any results. So we will see.

In any event, there are a lot of problems that he failed to address and the fact that he was being mocked by Iran as he was speaking about the higher respect that other countries have. Go back to President Reagan. The radical Islamists had so much more respect for President Reagan. They didn't like him, but they had respect and fear.

Proverbs said: "Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." There is a component of fear within respect. They had no fear of Carter, but they had so much fear and respect for Reagan that they released our hostages the day he was sworn in. I am hoping and praying that we get a leader elected who takes office a year from now who has that kind of respect.

He says that, when it comes to every important international issue, people of the world do not look to Beijing or to Moscow to lead—they call us.

I wish the President got more briefings or was able to attend more or got better information if he is not getting this, but we have had a real problem under his Presidency. People have been shocked, including some here in this body—I was not really shocked—when Egypt and some of our Muslim ally nations have done airstrikes.

The big news was they didn't consult Washington, and people in the administration were upset: Why didn't they check with us? I have met with those people. They said: We can't tell this administration, because they will leak it to our enemies. We can't trust them.

For heaven's sake, this administration has declassified information on nuclear weapons, trying to embarrass and harass Israel. They have taken steps to try to prevent Israel from defending themselves.

Is it any wonder that Egyptian President el-Sisi—whom I have tremendous respect for—and other leaders, including Iran and other leaders in the Middle East, when they have got a problem, they don't talk to Washington except for the largest supporter of terrorism, Iran?

Iran knows they can push President Obama around and his administration, John Kerry. They can push them around, and they do. They can take our sailors and not have any consequences. But when they have got a real problem,

they go to Moscow, because they know Putin is a man who means business. I don't think he can be trusted. I think he is one of those with whom anything should be verified and that he should be carefully watched.

Some people in this administration think Putin is an anathema and a mystery. They can't figure him out. He is one of the most transparent leaders in the world today. Those of us who know Russian history know you can read him like a book. You can anticipate what he is going to do. He is very transparent.

The President says that, as we focus on destroying ISIL, we don't have a plan. We don't have strategic orders for our military to take out ISIL, but, somehow, he is focused on them. In having been all over north Iraq myself and in having met with Iraqi leaders, especially Kurdish leaders—because they are the military leaders we can trust—I know what they say.

In having just heard another report in September again, we have U.S. military planes flying. They see trucks that are loaded with weapons and supplies for ISIL. We know they are going to ISIL as those are about the only people using some of these roads, with the big trucks.

One of our A-10 pilots said his rules of engagement allowed him to neither crater the road and stop the supplies to ISIL and stop the weapons going to ISIL, nor did he have the authority to take out one of the trucks unless one of the trucks fired at him, and only then could they fire at that truck only. ISIL knows that, so they don't fire at A-10s or at any of our helicopters or aircraft. That is why most of the planes that go out with ordnance come back with most of their ordnance. It is because of this President's rules of engagement.

How else can you explain that, after 7¼ years under Commander in Chief and President George W. Bush, we lost right around 500 precious American military lives in Afghanistan; and then, basically, when we were told the war was over, for 7 years now under Commander in Chief Obama, we have lost three to four times that many people and the peace?

When I talk to people privately—you won't get this in a public meeting but in private meetings with our military—they indicate that it is our rules of engagement: We have to be worried that, if we defend ourselves and live, we will go to Leavenworth for 20 years; so a lot of us would rather die as somewhat of a hero than go home and go to Leavenworth for defending ourselves.

So we have lost three to four times as many under President Obama—in 3 months less time when the war was supposedly over—than we lost during the actual war in Afghanistan. The President says that our foreign policy must be focused on the threat from ISIL and al Qaeda. I agree it must be, but, unfortunately, it isn't at this time.

I will just finish with this, Mr. Speaker. He points out that we also can't try to take over and rebuild every country that falls into crisis. That is not leadership. That is a recipe for a quagmire, spilling American blood and treasure. Ultimately, it weakens us. It is the lesson of Vietnam and of Iraq that we should have learned by now.

Mr. Speaker, SAM JOHNSON—after 7 years in the Hanoi Hilton as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam—was beaten and tortured. If you remember the scenario, Nixon had promised in 1972 to get us out of Vietnam. He calls for the Paris peace negotiations. They start. North Vietnam makes this show about storming out. So Nixon ordered the carpet bombing of Hanoi and North Vietnam for 2 weeks. After 2 weeks of bombing, North Vietnam rushed back to the negotiating table and said: Let's get this done. And there was a peace deal.

As SAM JOHNSON and others were being taken to the bus to be taken to the military plane to leave North Vietnam, he said one of the meanest officers or higher officials there at the prison was laughing and said: You stupid Americans, if you had just bombed us for 1 more week, we would have had to surrender unconditionally.

Mr. Speaker, the lesson of Vietnam is this: If you are going to send American military men and women into harm's way, give them everything they need to win. Let them win, and then bring them home.

That is the lesson of Vietnam that this administration and many others have not learned. That is why, instead of 500 military heroes losing their lives in 7 years in Afghanistan, we have had three to four times that many lose their lives under President Obama. It is because this lesson of Vietnam has not been learned. Give our military what they need to win, and give them rules of engagement and orders to win, and then bring them home.

I hope and pray somebody gets that message in this administration so that we have no more needless loss of life in foreign countries by the heroic, patriotic men and women of our military.

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

□ 1300

PROVIDING FOR AN ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I send to the desk a privileged concurrent resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 107

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That when the House adjourns on any legislative day from Wednesday, January 13, 2016, through Tuesday, January 19, 2016, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned