

Despite booming economic growth as a result of the American Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, nearly 7 million jobs in America remain unfilled.

Mr. Speaker, I can't tell you how many employers from my district have struggled to find workers with the technical competencies to compete for in-demand, good-paying jobs.

So when it comes to workforce development, we need innovative ideas and partnerships between businesses and institutions of higher education. That is why I introduced the Virtual Apprenticeship Tax Credit Act of 2019, which offers a tax credit to employers who invest in the funding of virtual apprenticeship programs. It is my hope this will open more doors for students from all backgrounds.

When it comes to learning and workforce development, there shouldn't be a one-size-fits-all approach. Put simply, there needs to be more virtual apprenticeship opportunities for our students.

□ 1415

INCLUDE PFAS PROVISIONS IN NDAA

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

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support hundreds of communities across America, both rural and urban, that are being forced to endure PFAS contamination.

Every week, we learn more and more about the toxicity and ever-widening scope of this man-made crisis.

Not one but two PFAS sites have been discovered in my own district, the 13th Congressional District, first seeping from the sewers in Melvindale and then at the construction site of the Gordie Howe International Bridge in Detroit.

As a representative of people living in those areas, and from the State with the most PFAS sites in the country, it is my moral obligation to stand before you all today and say time is now for Congress to act. Include provisions to clean up contaminated sites, to stop PFAS from polluting our drinking water in the future, and to protect our servicemembers and first responders in the final NDAA that is on its way.

We have waited long enough to help families whose drinking water is at risk, who have been exposed to these toxic chemicals, and whose future is very much threatened.

INCENTIVIZE INNOVATION TO LOWER HEALTHCARE COSTS

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

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, there is absolutely no doubt that Americans pay too much for healthcare. Seventy percent of Americans agree that low-

ering prescription drug costs should be a major priority for the legislature.

During August, I participated in a number of healthcare-related roundtables with medical professionals across Pennsylvania's 12th Congressional District. Those healthcare professionals identified a number of ways to help lower prescription drug costs, including patent reform that would help get generics to market quickly and the need to incentivize innovation as a means to find more cures.

As such, I am disturbed that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have introduced a pricing bill that is merely for political talking points and, if enacted, would put this country on the road toward socialized medicine. Rather than incentivizing innovation and patent reform, Democrats have introduced a bill that would increase taxes and stifle innovation while raising drug prices, leading to fewer cures.

The American people have demanded action on lowering healthcare costs. But, Mr. Speaker, socialized medicine is not the answer. It is time to work together on real solutions in the free market to lower prescription drug costs and find cures for all Americans.

CONGRATULATING DIAMONDBACK TRUCK COVERS

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate DiamondBack Truck Covers, a truck bed cover company in Philipsburg, Pennsylvania. DiamondBack was recently awarded the Small Business Administration's Pennsylvania Small Business of the Year Award.

I had the pleasure of traveling back to Philipsburg to present DiamondBack founders Ethan Wendle and Matthew Chverchko with a commendation for this award. Ethan and Matt were also recognized as the SBA Persons of the Year for Pennsylvania.

Ethan and Matt met at Pennsylvania State University. What started out as an engineering class project has turned into a flourishing business.

I am particularly proud that Ethan and Matt chose to plant roots in Philipsburg. This sort of commitment to our local communities is breathing new life into small town USA. It is companies like DiamondBack that are helping small towns bounce back.

The decision to manufacture, market, sell, and ship from Philipsburg is an investment in Pennsylvania's future, in local communities and businesses, and in the people who call the Commonwealth home.

SUPPORT CLEAN ENERGY WEEK

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

Mr. CURTIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Clean Energy Week, an opportunity to celebrate bipartisan support for a wide variety of clean energy sources strengthening America's national security while also preserving our environment for future generations.

Environmental stewardship doesn't have to mean making economic sacrifices. Clean energy solutions and jobs are the future for the United States, with clean energy powering more homes and businesses than ever before.

The environment is, and should be, a bipartisan issue. That is why, this week, I am proud, with my friend Congressman LOWENTHAL from California, to offer a resolution in support of congressionally supporting the designation of Clean Energy Week.

I am proud that our effort has already gathered dozens of our colleagues, bipartisan, on both sides of the aisle. This goes to show that we can work across the aisle to be better stewards of this Earth. I plan to continue pursuit of these positive bipartisan solutions in the future.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 24, 2019.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on September 24, 2019, at 11:33 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 1340.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 4285.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 3 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 20 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1501

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CUELLAR) at 3 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair