But the fact of the matter is, if the left is about to pass a piece of legislation at the end of this week that looks like it is likely to add another 24.4 percent to the debt, does anyone see the level of immorality in wiping out economic growth and the opportunity?

And we had a couple of years there where it was working. The fact of the matter is 2018, 2019 were Goldilocks, and it was done because we invested in the things that create opportunity and growth, instead of the model right now, where the left is going to invest in things that functionally slow economic growth down; make individuals dependent on the Federal Government; disincentivize participating in the economy?

And if any of you have ever read any of your textbooks from what the world looked like in the 70s, where the last time the left did something very similar to this, the societal breakdowns, the inflation, the misery. Once again, we are about to see the financing of misery instead of investing in the things that actually would create opportunity and growth. We are better than this.

I know it would take someone on the Democrats' side. They would have to stand up to their base and explain basic economics. But there is a path that works. And if you give a darn about the poor, the working poor, the middle class, ultimately, the data says, at the end of the decade if the left passes their Build Back Better social entitlement spending bill, they are going to be poorer. That is what we are about to do to this country, and this place should be ashamed.

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

□ 1800

MOST EXPENSIVE THANKSGIVING IN HISTORY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah (Mr. OWENS) for 30 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Madam Speaker, I am proud to be here today with the Utah House delegation to say a few words ahead of the Thanksgiving season to those we are so fortunate to represent here in Washington. We all agree that it is a blessing, as a team, to represent the great State of Utah.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. STEWART), my friend from Utah's Second District.

Mr. STEWART. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. OWENS, my friend, for organizing this event and for his interest in something that I think every American shares.

I have a young family. I have six kids. Many of them are just young couples. They are starting their careers; they are starting their families; and they are starting to make their way in the world and their mark on life.

If you are a young family, you know what it is like to go to the grocery store and to pay more every week than you paid the week before. You know what it is like to fill up your pickup and have it cost more every week than you paid the week before.

The reason you are driving a pickup is because you are a working American. You are not driving a big pickup around the city. You are driving a big pickup because that is what you use to work, whether you work on farming and ranching, like I did when I was young, or whether you are working construction, or whether you are working and going down to the docks. Those are the folks who are paying the price.

If you are wealthy, if you are affluent, if you don't go shopping but have someone who shops for you, if you don't fill up your vehicle yourself because you have someone who fills up the vehicle for you and then picks you up, you may not realize what a painful thing this is for Americans. But the vast majority of Americans do their own shopping. The vast majority of Americans struggle paycheck to paycheck. The vast majority of Americans know what a painful experience we find ourselves in now.

After only 10 months of President Biden, Americans are facing the worst inflation they have seen in 31 years. Democrats keep saying these prices are only temporary.

We are told that all the time. We have been told that by the Secretary of the Treasury. We have been told that by the Chairman of the Fed. We have been told that by the President. And they continue to say that.

But the truth is that $4 trillion in spending, when he says it is zero dollars that it will cost, the American people aren't stupid, and they know that is not true. They know inflation when they see it.

The consequences of this President's tax and spend agenda hits Americans, as I have already said, in their everyday lives. It hits Americans when the price of heating jumps from $574 to $746, which is what the Energy Information Administration predicts it will cost the average house this winter.

It is a tough choice when you have some people who say: Hey, we would like to have it warm. We would like for our little children to be comfortable. But we want to be able to buy the food that we want for them, other than just macaroni and cheese.

Some people are left with that decision.

It hits Americans at their Thanksgiving table. As we have said over and over again, this will be the most expensive Thanksgiving in American history, when frozen turkeys cost an average of 22 percent more than they did just last year.

What does the President do to alleviate some of this financial strain and the pressure that so many American families are feeling? Unfortunately, he does the same thing again and the same thing more, the very same policies that put us in the hole.

Here is the reality. There is no political spin for any Democrat. Americans will not be reassured by empty promises from those who don't see inflation coming in the first place, and President Biden cannot wish away this cost-of-living crisis, no matter how much he would like to do that.

From day one in office, President Biden's mission was clear. He wants the American people to rely on the government from cradle to grave.

To sell his agenda, he is telling Americans that more taxing, more spending, and more mandating will solve the financial problems. But this is just economic nonsense; it is an economic fairy tale; and this one has a scary ending, the kind that only George Orwell could imagine.

But because it is Thanksgiving, we can be thankful that we know how to solve these problems. If we didn't know how to solve them, it would be much more worrying, much more stressful. But the truth is, we know how to solve them. Congress simply needs to start expanding that opportunity, not shrinking it with mandate after mandate. Congress needs to start empowering the people, not expanding bureaucracy with tax after tax. Individual liberty must always triumph over government dependence.

If President Biden cannot accept that reality, we can expect more of what we have seen and felt over the last 10 months. If he can't understand that people, not the government, are the key to our success, American culture, American businesses, and American families will reap the results.

I sincerely hope that he will. I sincerely hope the President will look at the pain the American people are feeling and will recognize the responsibility he has not to make it worse, not to keep doing the same thing and just do it harder and faster, not to do the same thing and just excuse it away, but to try to do something different. Until then, I am afraid we will see much of the same.

I think I speak not only for Republicans on this, but many independents and many Democrats feel the same way. We hear from them when we go back home as well.

I thank Mr. OWENS for organizing this on this incredibly important subject. It is an honor to be with him.

Mr. OWENS. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CURTIS), my friend from Utah's Third District.

Mr. CURTIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to join my voice with my Utah colleagues, vocalizing our great concern about the runaway inflation impacting Americans across the country.

I remember the inflation of the 1970s. When I bought my first home, we assumed a loan at 12 percent interest and thought that that was a bargain at the time. I remember what it is like to lose 15 percent of the value of a savings account in just 1 year.

I saw firsthand the devastation to our senior citizens and those on a fixed income with runaway inflation.

Here we are, 40 years later, pretending that trillions of dollars of wasted government spending is okay and that it won't impact inflation.

Madam Speaker, in the simplest terms, inflation is financially handcuffing the American people and their families, which is further evidenced by the fact that the Consumer Price Index is now showing the highest level in over 30 years. That is not okay.

The White House tells us not to worry about inflation; it is all under control. I think Utahns know better. They see the gas prices, and they see the difference they pay at the grocery stores.

Utahns, specifically, have seen their gas prices rise by over 70 percent this last year. What is the response from Washington, D.C.? We can fix this. All we need to do is spend trillions of dollars more.

Seriously? Employers can't find employees to do the work, and the President touts his $1.2 trillion infrastructure bill as job-creating.

We also know that inflation is an unlegislated tax on hardworking Americans, most notably some of our most vulnerable communities, like low-income communities and rural communities with less access to goods and services.

But instead of focusing on finding ways to address critical supply chain shortages, to lower our energy costs through policies designed to generate more independence on energy, and to address the growing behavioral healthcare crisis, we are doing just the opposite. We shut down U.S. pipelines and then ask our enemies to produce more dirty oil.

Here are the facts: 40 percent of all the money printed in the history of this country was printed in the last 20 months. Forty percent of all the money printed in the history of this country was printed in the last 20 months.

Congress has already authorized, just this year alone, $3 trillion of additional spending in addition to our normal spending, and we are about to spend another $2 trillion.

It is hard to get your arms around what is a trillion dollars. Let me put this in perspective. This $5 trillion of spending is approximately $25,000 for every man, woman, and child in the United States. It gets worse. Thirty years from now, unless we pay that money back—and I don't think anybody believes we will have paid it back—that is now three-quarters of a million dollars for every man, woman, and child just in extra spending this year. That is not okay.

It is simply time to stop the bleeding and time to earnestly focus on bipartisan solutions that will address the growing needs of the American people.

We literally cannot afford to play partisan politics at the expense of our constituents and, more importantly, our children and grandchildren and our future generations.

Mr. OWENS. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MOORE), my friend from Utah's First District.

Mr. MOORE of Utah. Madam Speaker, it is very much an honor to share the podium with my colleagues from Utah. Utah is a very special, very unique place.

At this time of Thanksgiving, I would like to focus on what Utah really is. We often get lauded as having the lowest unemployment in the country and the strongest economy in the country, or as the fastest growing State in the country. What Utah is, is the most philanthropic State in the country. It shares more volunteer hours and dollars than any other State. That is the type of stuff that our delegation and Members of Congress, the community that we serve, are really proud of. We reflect on that often, particularly during this time of year.

We are more than a week away from Thanksgiving Day. Like Utahns across the State, my family—and I have three little boys, a fourth boy on the way, and an amazing wife who deals with a lot during this crazy time of my time in Washington. We look forward to this annual opportunity to come together, enjoy each other's company, and give thanks for all of our many blessings.

Turkey and stuffing are staples, but each Thanksgiving Day looks a little different from the last. That is okay. Unfortunately, this year's Thanksgiving is going to be much more difficult than others.

Americans are bracing for this year's turkey tax, which we expect to be the most expensive in modern history as inflation rates hit their highest level in decades.

My colleagues from Utah can talk about this a little bit better than I can because they are a little bit older than I am, but they talk about how this hasn't been this high in the last 40 years. That is how old I am.

I don't want to experience this type of inflation. I haven't had to yet, and I am very concerned about what we are going to have to experience.

That was not a cut at their age.

According to the Department of Labor, the Consumer Price Index for October was 6.2 percent, the highest in over three decades. This high rate means that, compared to last year, home heating will be 50 percent more expensive, a gallon of gas will be 61 percent more expensive, and the cost of groceries will be 5.4 percent more expensive. Beef is 20 percent higher; pork is 14 percent higher; and the cost of used cars is 26 percent higher.

This is data. This is directly related to policy decisions here in Washington.

As Utahns get ready to celebrate Thanksgiving and find reprieve from this challenging past year-and-a-half, inflation is threatening to stifle this entire time of year.

In fact, real wages have decreased in 7 of President Biden's first 9 months in office. As President Biden rushes to spend trillions more, as he is doing now, to spend trillions more as of this week, economic pressure will only continue to drive everyday costs up and incomes down.

The Wall Street Journal editorial board said: ''The current burst of inflation isn't an accident. . . . This is the result of reckless policy.'' This is simply incompetence.

CNN noted President Biden's $1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan fueled inflation by sparking demand that it could not keep pace with.

Even The Washington Post editorial board—I did not expect to ever be using sort of liberal media outlets to defend some of my points when I came to the House floor. But The Washington Post says that you cannot ignore that the American Rescue Plan bears some of this blame.

□ 1815

We cannot simply spend more. We have to stop President Biden's tax-and-spend monstrosity.

All of this comes as the administration botched a military exit from Afghanistan, created a sustained crisis at the border, and has failed to address a looming debt crisis.

With this as the backdrop, Thanksgiving may feel uniquely challenging. Yet, through the most difficult times in our Nation's history, Thanksgiving Day has been a celebration when communities come together to give thanks for life's great blessings.

Following the Battle of Gettysburg in October of 1863, President Lincoln proclaimed Thanksgiving to be a national holiday to ''heal the wounds of the Nation.''

As our Nation experiences great challenges, I can't think of a better holiday to observe this coming week.

My colleagues and I in the Utah delegation are working every day to carve a more prosperous path forward for our State and communities. There is hope on the horizon.

Earlier this month, Democrats and Republicans in this House came together to pass the Fiscal State of the Nation Resolution, which I cosponsored. If agreed to in the Senate, this resolution will mandate the U.S. Comptroller General conduct an annual joint session before the members of the House and Senate Budget Committees to provide a report on the fiscal health of our Nation.

This is a huge, important time to have done something like that after what we have seen over the last year. This expertise would provide our leaders with the information they need to correct our course and back away from our patterns of destructive spending.

Back home, I have also convened a debt and deficit task force, which has provided me an opportunity to work with local leaders to begin crafting innovative solutions to our Nation's debt crisis.

My colleagues from Utah and I genuinely hope to help those in our home

State find more blessings in the days, months, and years ahead. As we work toward those brighter days, let us reflect and be grateful for the good moments we have had this year.

Though our year has been filled with difficulty, it has also been filled with, in the words of Lincoln, ''the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies.''

Today, I am back in Washington with my colleagues to continue the important work we do on behalf of Utahns. I look forward to next week when I will join my family and the community in Utah in celebrating this important holiday.

Mr. OWENS. Madam Speaker, before I get started, I just want to say what an honor it is to serve with my friends from Utah. They are remarkable men.

As the holiday season approaches and families across our great Nation gather for these special moments, I am reminded of what brings us all together as Americans: Not our creed, race, or ZIP Code, but the gratitude for one another that lifts us higher and brings out the best in each of us.

I am the father of 6 children and 15 grandchildren. My pride doesn't come from my years on the football field or decades in the corporate world. It comes from the joy of watching them grow up and start families of their own. I am so deeply thankful for them and the entire Owens family.

To my fellow Utahns: I am thankful to call Utah's 4th District my home. It is the honor of a lifetime to represent our State. I am constantly inspired by the resiliency of our communities.

We have faced a couple of very difficult years. The COVID–19 pandemic kept us from our friends, families, and loved ones. Disruptions from work, school, and worship made everyday life very different. There are empty seats at the table this year. We pray for comfort and healing for those families as they navigate this time of grief.

With the current economic crisis at home, rising prices at the gas station, grocery store, and everywhere in between, more and more Utah families are worried about losing a job, keeping the doors of their small business open, paying their mortgage, and making ends meet.

Even during the toughest of times, I know the spirit of Utahns. I have seen how families across our State have helped each other through dark times toward better and brighter days.

I am wishing all Utahns good health, especially the men and women who have put on the uniform to serve in our great State, across the country, and abroad. They make the world and our country a safer place.

Especially during the holidays, I think Norman Rockwell's Four Freedoms are very appropriate: The Freedom of Speech, the Freedom to Worship, the Freedom From Want, and the Freedom From Fear. This is the American way. This is the American Dream. As Americans, we hold these freedoms incredibly dear and commit to protect them for future generations.

It is within our DNA to confront our crises and weather rough storms to leave our country a little bit better than we found it for our children and our children's children.

This season of thanksgiving, I hope that we can continue to support one another and unite in our shared gratitude. Despite our daily struggles, we have so much to be thankful for. I pray that Utahns across our beautiful State will continue to be blessed this holiday season.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the senior member of our delegation, CHRIS STEWART.

Mr. STEWART. Madam Speaker, what an honor it is to be here with my friends, people that I have tremendous respect for, colleagues, people who love their country and want to serve their country.

Several of them have said something that I think is worth emphasizing, and that is, for example, when Mr. CURTIS talks about 40 percent of the money that was printed in the history of this country was printed in the last several months, I am not sure that that is easy to convey to people how important that is.

We talk about a million dollars or a billion dollars or now a trillion dollars, and I am not sure we have an understanding, again, what those numbers even mean. I think a lot of times people think of a trillion dollars, well, it sounds like a lot of money. Is that like double a billion or what is a trillion?

I think I found a really good way to illustrate it and for us to visualize what it means when we are printing this kind of money.

Let me start with this: A million seconds is 11 days. A billion seconds is 31 years. A trillion seconds is 31,000 years. Think about that. 11 days to 31 years to 31,000 years. The people watching at home can't see this enormous Chamber we are in but imagine that I stretched a string from this wall to this wall, and let's say that over here is zero, and then I ask them to go touch 11 days, they would go touch and they would be nearly touching the wall. But then if I said touch 31 years, if this one over here is 31,000 years, they would still nearly be touching the wall, and all the rest of that distance is a trillion. I think that gives us a sense and gives us a way to visualize when we talk about spending trillions of dollars, it is magnitudes more than billions. It is an unimaginable number, like Mr. CURTIS said, the percentage of that that has been created in the last few months.

Since COVID hit, we spent about $2 trillion on the COVID 1 relief package; we spent about the same, $1.9 trillion, on the second COVID relief package. This President suggested a budget that takes us from about $4.8 trillion a year to $6.3 trillion. We just spent $1.2 trillion on infrastructure. This government has spent, taken together, more than $11 trillion in a matter of months. That should scare the life out of every American.

People say, Well, you are kicking the can of debt down the road to our kids or grandkids. That is nonsense. We will never get to our grandkids if we spend trillions of dollars in a matter of months. We will never get to our kids if we spend $11 trillion in 18 months.

This problem will correct itself. It will correct itself in a painful way and in not a matter of generations, a matter of years, if we don't try to fix it now.

If you think inflation is because of bottlenecks and supply chains, that was part of it. But the vast majority of this is explained by one thing: The Federal Government spending trillions of dollars. And the American people pay the very unfortunate, the very painful price.

Once again, I thank Mr. OWENS for the honor to be with him tonight.

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

BUILD BACK BETTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, I would like to use this time to speak for a half hour on a variety of issues, primarily the Build Back Better bill.

But first, I would like to address today National Apprenticeship Week. Apprenticeships are a very good way to begin your working career. Rather than working your way into debt as you go to school, you are making money while you go to school, and there is no better preparation for a job than doing the job itself.

Be it in construction, be it in manufacturing, be it in healthcare, there is a strong need in America for skills, and apprenticeship is a way to get those skills and ensure that you hit the ground running and get a good-paying job immediately.

I strongly encourage all Americans, particularly young Americans, who are looking for a job to look at apprenticeship and encourage administrators of secondary schools to present apprenticeships as options for young people.

Now I would like to address the Build Back Better bill. A lot has been written and talked about the Build Back Better bill from this very microphone, and a lot has been focused on the additional taxes that will be needed to pay for it and the overall level of spending resulting in more inflation.

All that is true, but I think the most dangerous thing about the bill is what the money is being spent for. I am going to address five areas in general tonight for the American public to remember.

Right now, I think the biggest problem in America deals with illegal immigration. The numbers are well known. In July, a year ago, 8,000 people came into this country. This July it was 105,000 people. This October we hit