

Unfortunately, newly released data from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office reveals America's financial condition has taken a sharp turn for the worse.

According to the CBO, the first quarter fiscal year 2016 deficit deteriorated by \$36 billion compared to 2015's first quarter deficit. If extrapolated to a full year, America's FY 2016 deficit would be \$583 billion. That is \$144 billion worse than in fiscal year 2015.

Out-of-control spending was the problem, not taxes. During the first quarter, tax revenues were up 4 percent, but spending was up even more, at 7 percent.

Now, for the first time since I have been in Congress, Republican compromises and surrenders to Obama and Democrats have made America's deficits worse, not better.

This Congress broke open our kids' piggy banks, stole money we cannot pay back, and used it to pay for a trillion-dollar omnibus spending bill that adds tens of billions of dollars to 2016's deficit. I am proud I voted against the financially irresponsible omnibus.

Mr. Speaker, America's Comptroller General and the CBO repeatedly warn that America's financial path is "unsustainable," meaning America faces a debilitating insolvency and bankruptcy unless we get our financial house in order.

Further, the CBO warns that, absent correction, America's debt service costs will increase by \$600 billion per year within a decade, roughly what America spends on national defense, which begs the question: Where will the money come from for an additional annual \$600 billion debt service payment?

America's total debt approached \$14 trillion when I was elected to Congress in 2010. We have blown through the \$19 trillion mark. Now the CBO projects America will blow through the \$29 trillion debt mark in a decade.

For emphasis, Washington is engaged in the worst generational theft in American history. Washington steals from our children and grandchildren with a callous devil-may-care attitude so that we can today live high on the hog, even though it forces our children into hardship and poverty.

Economic principles don't care if you are a family, a business, or a country. If you borrow more money than you can pay back, you go bankrupt. Time is running out. Washington must balance the budget before America's debt burden spirals out of control, before it is too late to prevent the debilitating insolvency and bankruptcy that awaits us.

Mr. Speaker, Americans are rightfully angry at Washington elected officials who care more about special interest campaign contributions than American voters or America's future.

Will the American people channel their anger in the 2016 elections and elect Washington officials who both understand the threat posed by deficits

and debt and have the backbone to fix it? The answer to that question determines whether America continues as a great nation and world power or declines into the dustbin of history.

Mr. Speaker, I can't speak for anyone else, but as for me, Mo Brooks from Alabama's Fifth Congressional District, I fight for financial responsibility and prosperity and against an American bankruptcy and economic depression.

EMERGENCY REQUEST FOR \$1.8 BILLION TO FIGHT ZIKA VIRUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. GABBARD) for 5 minutes.

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to strongly urge my colleagues to support the President's emergency request of \$1.8 billion to fight the spread of the Zika virus, a dangerous, mosquito-borne illness that has surfaced in my home State of Hawaii and in at least 12 other States across the country.

The symptoms and effects of the Zika virus, which have prompted an international public health emergency from the World Health Organization, are not dissimilar to another mosquito-borne disease, Dengue fever.

Dengue fever is spread through the very same *Aedes aegypti* mosquito as carries the Zika virus, as well as other mosquito variations. Like the Zika virus, Dengue fever symptoms include fevers, rashes, joint and muscle pains, severe headaches, and other painful symptoms.

The CDC has reported the harmful symptoms and effects of both Zika and Dengue and the ability of both of these diseases to spread very rapidly through mosquitos present in many regions of the United States, including in my home district.

So far, there have been around 50 cases of Zika virus confirmed in the United States. But in the past 16 weeks, there have been 252 known cases of Dengue fever on Hawaii Island alone.

Now, Mayor Billy Kenoi, Hawaii County's mayor, on Monday announced a state of emergency for the county to deploy more resources to battle this Dengue fever outbreak.

I have asked our Governor to declare a state of emergency in response to this outbreak so that the people of Hawaii can receive every resource available to protect themselves, to eradicate this mosquito and its breeding grounds, and stop the spread of Dengue fever, which has quickly become the largest outbreak in the State of Hawaii since the 1940s.

The CDC has activated its emergency operations center to level 1 status. Now, to put this level 1 status in context, the CDC has only raised the emergency operations center to level 1 three times in the past: during the Ebola outbreak in 2014, during the H1N1 pandemic in 2009, and after Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

The President's leadership and emergency request on this urgent issue is warranted and necessary to respond aggressively to the Zika virus early on. He is treating this with the seriousness it deserves, recognizing this global public health threat, the impacts, and long-lasting effects of which still are not fully known.

At the end of last year, Congress came together and passed a bipartisan omnibus spending bill that increased funding for public health preparedness and response by more than \$52 million than the previous fiscal year, but this additional emergency funding request is necessary now in communities like mine on Hawaii Island and in different parts of the country to combat disease-transmitting mosquito viruses like Zika and Dengue fever.

It is imperative that Congress, Federal agencies, local governments, and private sector partners partner together to take action now to deal with the outbreaks we already have and prevent something far worse from occurring.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to push this critical public health funding forward.

PFC JOSEPH P. DWYER VETERANS PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, this week I introduced legislation in the House to expand the PFC Joseph P. Dwyer Veterans Peer Support Program to the national level.

PFC Joseph Dwyer was from Mount Sinai, New York, located in my home district of Suffolk County.

PFC Dwyer served in Iraq and received nationwide recognition for a photograph that went viral, showing him cradling a wounded Iraqi boy while his unit was fighting its way up to the capital city of Baghdad.

Sadly, after returning home and struggling with PTSD, PFC Dwyer died in 2008 and left behind a young widow, Matina, and a 2-year-old daughter, Meagan.

In 2012, while serving in the New York State Senate, I created the Dwyer Program as part of the 2012-2013 State budget. Originally in four counties, including Suffolk, this program has since expanded to over a dozen counties throughout New York.

The Dwyer Program is a peer-to-peer support program for veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury. The program provides a safe, confidential, and educational platform where all veterans are welcome to build vet-to-vet relationships, supporting each other's transition from service to post-service life.

During the first year alone, we were able to conduct 148 group sessions, serving 450 veterans just within Suffolk. Since 2013, the program has

helped over 1,500 veterans in New York State battling PTSD and TBI.

With the success that we have had in New York, I know that, if we make this program national, we will ensure that every veteran across America will eventually have access to a peer-to-peer support group.

With the VA reporting that an estimated 22 veterans a day commit suicide, this national effort is long overdue. We must ensure that all veterans across America receive the proper care they need and deserve.

I will be working hard to spread awareness of my bill, gather cosponsors and the support of veteran groups and mental health organizations from all across the country so that we can pass this bill as soon as possible.

WE MUST ACT NOW ON THE ZIKA VIRUS

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, shifting gears, on a completely separate topic, I also rise today to discuss the mosquito-borne Zika virus, which has spread at rapid rates across South America, Central America, and the Caribbean, infecting individuals in more than 25 countries.

Zika has caused widespread alarm across the global community after Brazil reported a rise in the reported cases of microcephaly, a disease that leads tragically to a baby being born with an unusually small head and brain damage.

What is so concerning about the Zika virus is how easily it can spread. The virus is spread not only through a mosquito bite, but also by contact with infected blood or sexual contact.

Furthermore, there is currently no vaccine to prevent or any medicine to treat the virus. All these factors have led the World Health Organization to declare the Zika virus a public health emergency.

Confirmed cases of the Zika virus have been popping up across the U.S., including at least three confirmed cases in my home district of Suffolk County, Long Island.

With the recent outbreaks and the number of Zika cases among travelers visiting or returning to the United States, it is only a matter of time before this becomes a widespread epidemic right here at home. This is why we must act now.

I recently introduced legislation, the Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016, H.R. 4314, which passed the House Committee on Foreign Affairs with bipartisan support.

One key aspect of this legislation is that the bill would put in place a monitoring system that would screen for infectious diseases abroad to contain and prevent any potential outbreaks.

The bill also helps quarantine the virus, authorizing the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide equipment and supplies to mitigate the risk or threat of infectious diseases such as Zika.

This is a measure that is long overdue to protect not only our homeland from terrorism, but also to ensure that

we are prepared to combat the spread of any infectious diseases. With this bill's passage out of committee, it is clear that my colleagues in Congress share my view.

I will continue to push for full passage of my Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act in the House and urge my colleagues to bring this bipartisan bill to the House floor for a vote.

COMBATING BDS ACT OF 2016

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, in recent years, the boycott, divestment, and sanctions movement, more commonly known as the BDS movement, has been employed as a hateful weapon to delegitimize the State of Israel and all those who stand with her.

The BDS movement has neither brought Israelis and Palestinians closer to peace nor advanced the laudable goal of improving dialogue between the supporters of both sides. Instead, it has served as a means to demagogue Israel and inflame tensions in communities and college campuses around our Nation.

Rather than sit back and react to the BDS movement's aggressive efforts to foment hatred for Israel, it is time to take charge and simply say: "Enough." It is time to go on offense against the BDS movement's ongoing economic warfare targeting Israel.

That is why I am proud to announce the Combating BDS Act of 2016, bipartisan legislation that I am introducing with the gentleman from California (Mr. VARGAS), a courageous leader in the anti-BDS movement.

The Combating BDS Act of 2016 affirms on the Federal level the authority of State and local governments to divest public funds or entities that engage in commerce or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activity targeting Israel.

Here is why this idea is so important. Similar to previous local efforts to divest from companies doing business with Iran, we are now seeing a growing movement in State and local governments throughout the Nation to enact measures to divest public funds from entities participating in anti-Israel BDS.

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The Combating BDS Act of 2016 strengthens these efforts by affirming the legal authority of State and local governments to act on divestment without running afoul of any potential Federal limitations.

This important legislation empowers community leaders and individuals who seek to counter the hateful targeting and delegitimization against Israel, and it sends an unquestionable message about where the United States Congress stands on BDS.

This is not about left versus right. This is about right versus wrong. It

must remain bipartisan. As the author of the Combating BDS Act of 2016, I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to advance this powerful and important legislation.

IRAN'S HOSTILITY MUST BE COMBATED

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

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the Islamic Republic of Iran—its past and its future.

February 11 is just an ordinary day for Americans, but in Iran, tomorrow is anything but ordinary. Military parades and massive state-sponsored celebrations fill the streets of Tehran and cities across the Islamic Republic. In just a few hours, it will be Islamic Revolution's Victory Day in Iran. The regime celebrates 37 years since the violent coup that brought the Ayatollah Khomeini to power and transferred Iran into a fundamentalist Islamic theocracy and the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism.

It is a dark period of history, Mr. Speaker. Thousands of innocent people were killed as the revolutionaries consolidated power. The U.S. Embassy was overrun and more than 50 Americans were held hostage for 444 days.

The United States has seen six Presidents since 1979, reflecting a broad range of leadership styles and governing philosophies. The Islamic Republic has been led by two Supreme Leaders, both zealots fanatically committed to the revolutionary ideas they espouse being celebrated on the streets of Tehran on this day. Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with the same Iran today as we were in 1979.

The only day being celebrated by some Americans at the moment is implementation day, as President Obama's dangerous nuclear deal has now come and gone. The world is much more dangerous because of it.

Iran, the leading patron of global terrorism, just received a \$100 billion check. The mullahs continue to foment violence and chaos across the Middle East, and their nuclear structure remains intact. The Obama administration has long argued that we would only be giving them \$50 billion, but even they have conceded that it is closer to \$100 billion or more.

We were also told that Iran would moderate its behavior as a result of this capitulation. Just in the past few weeks, Iran captured and humiliated American sailors, illegally launched ballistic missiles, fired rockets within 1,500 yards of U.S. ships, and flew a drone over a U.S. aircraft carrier. The list goes on and on.

Iranian Special Forces continue to assist al-Assad in his slaughter of innocents in Syria. Over 200,000 have been killed so far. Iranian-backed militias are likely responsible for kidnapping three American contractors in Iraq.