

A third letter addressed to me states:

Dear Congressman LaMalfa: I cannot thank you enough for the work you and your staff have done—

a big credit to my staff who worked very hard on this—

for the veterans in the northern California area. One particular case should have been decided with the evidence on hand last year. I read the examination today and found that the exams have been in the system, and there has been no action on that claim for what the system states is waiting for the examinations. The information is there, and the rating should be completed based on the evidence on hand. Please keep advocating for the veterans. I cannot thank you enough. I am a veteran myself who served honorably for over 9 years and was not provided the benefits from the VA per the law until I—the veteran who is now an Oakland employee—started working for the DVA myself and found out everything I was not informed on.

□ 1345

I left the U.S. Marine Corps, after serving honorably as a military police K-9 officer and member of the SWAT team. I worked hard and, as a result of my disabilities, required several surgeries and, recently, due to the hostile work environment at work, have become progressively worse.

I have tried to report this to management, but they did not like hearing the truth and started to make my life at work miserable 2 years ago. The news is starting to pick up on what I have tried, myself, to report regarding unethical conduct in the VA. Prior to the news picking up on the real problems at the VA, I have been reporting this information to the Senate and Congress Members in the Bay Area's district.

I have reported this to the VA Office of Inspector General on two different occasions. I have reported this to the GAO. I have reported problems at the Oakland VA to the Federal Labor Relations Office of the General Counsel for 2 years, with no assistance.

I have three EEO claims, with one more in the works, that have not been processed by the VA ethically or morally, according to the applicable laws, up to and including the OEDCA in Washington, D.C.

I am begging you to please open a formal investigation into the unethical conduct of the VA Oakland regional office.

The unethical conduct I know of is the fact that the Oakland VA management has not been held accountable for the misconduct or several felony violations that has been recently reported by me.

Since coming out as a whistleblower, I have had many employees discretely discuss some extremely disturbing information with me regarding what is actually going on in the VA and why the management is trying to stop me at all costs.

The unethical conduct goes far beyond my employment difficulties at the VA Oakland regional office. I have come to find out that the Oakland regional office is not only lying to Congress about their numbers, but the Oakland office is hiding claims that were received in 1999.

I have seen these claims in the office as late as May 20, 2014. These claims should be in the claims files if there is not action because the veteran has died in the process, not still sitting around the office for over 15 years.

There are a number of claims that are over a year old. There are many more that have been "lost in transit" to the scan sites, often in some other State. The VA is ethically challenged, but this is unacceptable, to lose a veteran's claim and not tell them or try to

make the situation right, just ignore them and hope they go away or to not process a claim properly for over 15 years.

This is a real letter from a real Oakland VA employee. It continues:

The claims have been sitting for over a year, after having been screened last by a group of VSRs and no action taken because they were sitting in someone's office, then in some storage closet by the director's office on the 17th floor of the Oakland Federal building.

Again, I have made multiple statements to many agencies of the U.S. Government in hopes that the illegal and unprofessional conduct from the management would stop, but the parties who I have reported to this, with ample amounts of evidence provided, have explained that the corruption cannot be stopped without some sort of ethical investigation conducted.

Please initiate some type of ethical investigation by an agency that is not going to try to cover up what they find, rather report the truth and do the right thing.

I have been a law enforcement officer in the U.S. Marine Corps, and I know that what is going on at the Oakland regional office with me and other veterans. It is wrong per the law, not my opinion.

Please, Congressman LaMalfa, assist us in whatever you can do. The veterans deserve better.

Semper Fi, USMC Disabled.

This is what it looks like. There are unfinished files sitting in the hallways, previously found in a broom closet.

Lastly, in a letter from yet another person who stepped forward when they finally saw somebody fighting back at different levels, our Veterans' Committee and other offices around the country, they see the shame being brought upon our veterans and, with that, our country.

This letter says:

There are huge amounts of these claims that are quite old, but because they are reclassified, are not worked expeditiously. Lots of these claims go back several years, but they are being worked as if they are only 2 or 3 years old because they are in a different group, and that is not considered a priority.

A lot of these claims, the 930 series, are review claims created because they found something wrong that we did. Usually, it is not logging in evidence in time before the claim is closed.

I personally logged in evidence on May 16, 2014, that was received by our regional office and date-stamped August 1, 2013. The claim had been closed months before, but because this evidence had not been logged in, it had also not been considered in the decision, which was a denial of benefits. Things like this happen every day.

Now, we open a review claim that will not get worked for months and, sometimes, a year or more. We have veterans that are terminal and asking for aid and attendants, and you would think that these claims, along with the older date of claims of the homeless, would be worked first, but a lot of the times, they are not.

If the regional office can do several easy claims, like hearing loss, tinnitus, then they will do that because then more claims are taken off the books, even though these may not be the veterans with the most need.

So, there, you see manipulation of statistics, manipulation of timing, making the numbers look better, and not making the veterans feel better.

I hope that image is one that will stay with you, all who have seen this or will see this all across our country. Much more needs to be done, not just pretty words, not just press conferences, not we will look into it or that we will throw money at it.

Congress does stand prepared to ensure that there is adequate funding to do it right, but we also expect that the dollars that taxpayers send to the government are used wisely and efficiently and not for bonuses for people that are acting not just ineptly, but, I believe, corruptly.

It is time to stop rewarding this bad behavior with more accountability. Americans have seen these stories. These horror stories are demanding a fix for the veterans health care system and their benefits. We must also demand an end to the phony claims, phony numbers, decades of waiting. It isn't just ineptness or miscues or errors. Someone is very deliberate and, I think, worthy of prosecution as fraud.

I think those VA employees who have been bold enough to step forward and let us know about what is going on in the backrooms behind the scenes. They are good employees who just want to see veterans served all across the country, so we want to hear more of these stories from anybody who might be watching or see this all across the country.

Contact your own Congressman, contact us, contact whoever will listen and seek remedies that mean something as we celebrate our fallen veterans this weekend. It isn't just about barbecues and skiing and picnics. Let's remember and honor these people.

The system is broken, but it doesn't have to be if we are willing to demand accountability and demand it immediately. That is what I am about, what my office will be about, my staff, but also many of my colleagues that either serve on the Veterans' Affairs Committee or don't.

We will continue to spotlight this and make sure that the stories are heard all across the country, and those who are doing this to our veterans, these criminal acts, ultimately will be held responsible.

So I thank the whistleblowers, those VA employees who do care. We know there are many, many of you and thank you for your effort. God bless our veterans who have suffered and are still waiting and know that you have allies in this place who will see this through and get you the service you deserve.

God bless you all. God bless America.

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

ADDRESSING SENATORS' COMMENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. VALADAO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) for 30 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and privilege to address you here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives, and I come to the floor this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, to address you and bring up the topic of the dialogue that has been—I will say flowing forth on the floor of the United States Senate over the last few weeks.

As I listened to that dialogue and listened to the way they have taken Saul Alinsky's "Rules for Radicals" and decided that they are going to implement them and deploy them on the floor of the United States Senate, it occurs to me that when, out of the mouths of people like Senator SCHUMER and Senator REID and Senator DURBIN come these allegations—and sometimes allegations that name and target Members of the House of Representatives, it occurs to me that, when I came to this Congress, Mr. Speaker, in 2003, there was a rule that existed here that prevented a Member of the House of Representatives from naming a United States Senator here on the floor.

It was kind of a shield of protectionism, so that the Senators could not be directly criticized in the dialogue that we have here on the floor.

My good friend and then-Member of Congress, Tom Feeney from Florida, read through the rules, as a good, honest lawyer, newly elected to the United States Congress would, and he saw that rule and wondered: Why can't we utter the name of a United States Senator on the floor of the House of Representatives?

He could come up with no reason why we shouldn't be able to do that, and so he brought an amendment to the rules that struck that prohibition, and thereafter, thanks to then-Congressman Tom Feeney of Orlando, the rule is gone. It was amended, and that is a good thing because, now, I can actually name the people who are attacking me on the floor of the United States Senate, and let you know, Mr. Speaker, what is going on in that other body, that body that constantly calls for bipartisan work and bipartisan cooperation.

This is what I get from Senator CHUCK SCHUMER, New York, May 1, 2014, on the floor of the United States Senate. He decided he would target me and blame me for the things that he believes are failures of the entire House of Representatives.

Here are some of the quotes that CHUCK SCHUMER uttered on that day of May 1 from the floor of the United States Senate. He called me "an extreme outlier on the issue of immigration reform."

I would direct CHUCK SCHUMER to the Republican Party platform. You will find there language in the Republican Party platform that supports the position I have long held on immigration, and that position that I hold is this: We need to respect the rule of law. We need to secure our borders. We need to have an immigration policy that is designed

to enhance the economic, the social, and the cultural well-being of the United States of America.

It can't be for the Democratic Party of the United States of America because they are so closely aligned—in fact, they have enveloped the entire Progressive Party. The Progressive Party comes to this floor on a regular basis and gives speeches and presents their position.

Their position, at one time, could be found on the Democratic Socialists of America Web site, dsausa.org. There, socialism is celebrated. As Progressives celebrate socialism, they are wrapped up inside the Democratic Party.

We don't adhere to that on my side. We adhere to the rule of law and the Constitution, a secure border, a sovereign United States of America, and a policy for immigration that is designed to enhance the economic, social, and cultural well-being of the United States of America.

We have enough common sense, Mr. Speaker, to know that our country is limited in size and scope. It is a large country, but we cannot be the relief valve for all of the poverty in the world.

There are 7 billion people on the planet, and if they all have good sense, they would all want to live here. We need some of them in those countries to rebuild those countries and establish American principles, so that they can enjoy the prosperity that we enjoy, reconstructed around first principles, in the other countries of the world.

□ 1400

We need to lead the world. We don't need to necessarily bring all the world here to feed the world here in the United States. And so, an extreme outlier, not so. CHUCK SCHUMER represents the extreme outliers, and they are socialists, Marxists, progressives, liberal Democrats. I am sure that one of those labels will be one that he has already embraced, Mr. Speaker.

Second quote, Senator CHUCK SCHUMER of me, STEVE KING:

The rhetoric of Steve King is beyond the pale. I am certain that the majority of Republicans in the House have their stomachs churn when they see Steve King spew that kind of rhetoric.

That is not exactly collegial dialogue, Mr. Speaker, to see that kind of thing. What I wonder is why would CHUCK SCHUMER think that he would know when the stomachs of Republicans might churn. I think they might churn when they hear him say those things. Although, rest easy, Mr. Speaker, mine doesn't.

I take this all with good humor because I understand that it is a tactic. It is an Alinsky tactic, and it is designed to bring out a goal. It is not necessarily to raise me up to the point where he assigns me with the full sense of responsibility and authority to determine immigration policy here in the House of Representatives. Oh, I wish it

were so, Mr. Speaker. I don't believe it is so. Yes, there is some influence there. History will decide how much—not me, not CHUCK SCHUMER.

Here is his goal: I believe that Senator SCHUMER has concluded that he could taunt the leadership and the House of Representatives, and that includes our Speaker of the House, into bringing amnesty legislation to the floor of the House because, if it does and if it should pass, the Senate would conform with any amnesty legislation because they are controlled by Democrats.

I have long known and long been restrained by people in my own party, Mr. Speaker, from laying out the argument as to why almost every Democrat I know wants open borders and amnesty and a never-ending supply of illegal aliens in the United States of America.

It is a pretty easy formula to figure out, especially if you sit here for 10 or a dozen years engaged in hearings and debate on a weekly basis, you begin to hear the thread of their conversation and you begin to understand the real truth behind their motives. It works out to be this:

Of course there are a large number of illegal immigrants in the United States. We have been using the number 11 million since we stopped using the number 12 million, but they didn't stop coming into America. I don't quite understand why we would think that there are fewer illegal aliens in America today than there were 10 years ago. I believe there are more.

If they come across the border at the rates that the witnesses from the Border Patrol and other witnesses in the hearings have been testifying, they will say that they will stop perhaps 25 percent that try. When I go down to the border and ask them, they will say, well, 10 percent has to come first. It is probably not 10. Some will say, with a little smirk, 3 percent is maybe what we stop.

If I take the 25 percent, 25 percent effectiveness on our border and you look at those whom they do interdict on the border and you do the calculation, that turns out to be a number that is equivalent to 11,000 a night—on average, 11,000 a night coming across our southern border. That would be at some of the peak levels that we have, Mr. Speaker. I would think it is more objective for us to dial that number back down to somewhere in the neighborhood of about half of that. So half of 11,000, 5,500 a night is pretty close to the last reliable information that I found on how many are coming across our border illegally.

Well, so I asked this question: What was the size of Santa Anna's army? About that, about 5,500 or 6,000. So it gives you a sense, the size of Santa Anna's army coming across our southern border every night, on average. I don't say day and night. Most of it is at night. I have sat down on the border at night multiple times. I have traveled

the border and done multiple trips down there to monitor what is going on on our southern border. It has gotten a little better in Arizona, and it has gotten worse in Texas.

We don't have control of this border, but that doesn't trouble most Democrats, because they recognize that the millions of people that are coming into this country illegally are counted in the census. And so, if you would go to a district in California like MAXINE WATERS' district, she only needs about 40,000 to 50,000 votes in her district to get reelected to the United States Congress. If you go to my district, it is well over 120,000 votes for me to be reelected to the United States Congress. The difference in that is two things. One is I have a very, very high percentage of real American citizens that do vote in my district; she has a lower percentage. And I have a higher turnout of people who are responsible enough to vote; she has a lower percentage.

Illegal aliens are counted in the census all over America, and when new district lines are drawn, those district lines treat people the same as citizens. The Constitution doesn't say count the citizens and then reapportion; it says count the people.

And so Democrats are happy enough to see the country filling up with people that they get to count when they do a district, because they get a Democrat district that is another vote here in the House of Representatives, Mr. Speaker. They want to turn this country into a single-party country.

When you think of what happened in California, they are trying to bring about the same kind of transition in Texas. If they can turn Texas from a red State into a blue State, there will never be another conservative elected to a national office in this country again. They know that. That is why they have thousands of their operatives working in Texas, trying to turn Texas over into a blue State.

They know that illegal immigration is an essential key. Back in 2007 or so when they bussed in tens of thousands of demonstrators, many of them self-professed illegal aliens in America, many of them wearing identical T-shirts that were issued to them apparently on the bus, then-alive Senator Teddy Kennedy stepped out to the west lawn of the Capitol and stepped up to the microphone and, through an interpreter, said to that group of people, who was interpreting to them in Spanish, he said:

Some say, report to be deported; I say, report to become an American citizen.

That was the Democrats' clarion call, the call out to illegal aliens in America to migrate toward the Democrat Party, to those that are outside of America to come into America and migrate towards the Democrat Party. They operate in those neighborhoods doing voter registration drives and signups and organizations, a lot of it funded by Federal dollars that matriculates down

into their organizations. They do know what they are doing. They have built a cultural edifice around much of the minority community in America, and much of it has been because, Mr. Speaker, they have been telling them lies. They have been telling them lies about the political opponents of the leftists that are engaged in those neighborhoods; and we have seen this flow, Mr. Speaker, as far as the White House.

The divisions that have been driven between Americans, divisions driven down the line of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, prosperity, those wedges have been driven in a calculated way for the political gain of the people that sit over on this side of this Chamber. I have seen too much of it to believe that I could be off by 1 degree in the statement that I have made, Mr. Speaker.

I am continuing onward, Senator SCHUMER of myself:

Steve King, a far right, way out of the mainstream outlier doesn't just spew hatred; he calls the shots.

Hmm, I don't think that he could point to any hatred that I have spoken to and identified as spewing. Calling the shots? No, I hear the wisdom of the Republican Conference. I have to hear what they say and what they think and where they anchor their thoughts. We have coalesced on this, Mr. Speaker: whatever we might do to change immigration law, we can't trust the President of the United States to enforce anything he doesn't like. It doesn't just have to be immigration law; it can be anything.

The President of the United States picks and chooses the laws that he will enforce. He essentially tells us: I am not going to enforce this series of laws because I don't like them, and I am not going to enforce these series of laws because I don't like them. It is not just immigration; although, that was some of the first examples and some of the most egregious examples, Mr. Speaker.

And we saw them come through as the Morton memos, and I will circle back to that in a moment. We saw the President, by executive edict, not always in executive order, sometimes a third-tier notice on a Web site of the United States Treasury, sometimes a verbal statement that he makes before a press conference in the Rose Garden at noon on a Friday. The President of the United States will step up and say, for example, when he was speaking to the churches who objected to their religious freedom being taken from them, their conscience protection that was to be assured to them, written into the ObamaCare law, after they took that religious freedom, conscience protection away from our people of faith, and in particular the Catholic churches that filed multiple lawsuits, and other religious organizations did the same, the President was taking 2 weeks of heat and criticism as the faith communities rose up, and he decided to put an end to that. So he held a press con-

ference at the White House at noon on a Friday, and with the Presidential seal in front of the podium, he stood there and said: I am going to make an accommodation to the religious organizations in America, and now I am going to require the insurance companies to provide these things for free.

Well, these things were contraceptives, abortifacients, and sterilizations. Contraceptives, Mr. Speaker, we understand what they are. Abortifacients are pills that bring about the abortion of a little, innocent, unborn baby. Sterilizations are those things that might come with tubal ligations or vasectomies. Those were the things that were in ObamaCare that are particularly egregious to the principles of the Catholic church.

And so the President decided he would make an accommodation written in the rules, by the way—not the bill, but in the rules. The President said: I am going to make an accommodation to the religious organizations, and now I am going to require the insurance companies to provide these things for free. He repeated himself. He said: Provide these things for free. For free.

I thought, hmm, how is it that the President can step up and give a press conference and change a law or change a rule that has been published by Kathleen Sebelius' Health and Human Services? How does the President have the authority to simply speak and make those changes? Surely there must be a rule that is amended. Surely there must be a bill that has been introduced that has a lot of responsible cosponsors, that has a prospect of being passed. Maybe he has got an agreement with our Speaker and majority leader here and HARRY REID over in the Senate.

So we went back and scoured the rule, Mr. Speaker. The rule didn't change, not one i dotted differently, not one t crossed differently. There was no change in any written document, the written document that required the religious organizations to provide contraceptives, abortifacients, and sterilizations.

The President said now the insurance companies have to do this for free. Not one word changed in print anywhere. The insurance companies stepped up to that verbal directive from the President of the United States. That should be appalling to any American citizen that took an eighth grade civics course to understand that the President doesn't write the laws. The President doesn't have the authority to change them. Congress has granted to the executive branch the authority to write rules, an Administrative Procedure Act that directs how those rules that are proposed by the executive branch are published for open public hearing. There is a process they must go through.

The President is not the king. The President doesn't get to issue edicts verbally from the podium and have the force and effect of law to change that

policy without any print being changed anywhere in a rule or in the Federal Register or in the Federal Code. That is what he did with that particular case, Mr. Speaker. I use that as an example to tell you how far this President has overreached from his constitutional authority.

So the President has first imposed contraceptives, abortifacients, and sterilizations on our religious organizations, then lifted the imposition verbally by telling the insurance companies: Now you are going to have to do this for free. What did they do? They complied. They listened to the President's press conference and decided, okay, we are going to do what he tells us. They didn't go back and check the text—well, maybe the text of the press conference, maybe the text of his speech, but there was no rule. There was no law.

The President also suspended welfare-to-work. The temporary assistance to needy families was written that required welfare-to-work. It was written so that then Bill Clinton couldn't circumvent it. It was written tightly and with the idea that a President would stretch it. What happens? This President simply suspended welfare-to-work under TANF.

What else happened? How about President Bush's No Child Left Behind on education?

□ 1415

President Obama has now issued so many waivers that No Child Left Behind no longer exists. These were acts of the United States Congress nullified by executive acts of the President of the United States.

We will accept it if the court over across the street will nullify a law that is passed by the Congress and signed by the President, if they rule it unconstitutional. Most of the time we accept that. Sometimes we reject their judgment because we take an oath to the Constitution too, Mr. Speaker.

But we should be appalled at the constitutional violations of the President of the United States, who has continually overreached on immigration, on education, on welfare-to-work, on ObamaCare itself: the bill with his name and his signature. There are more than 30 changes that the President has brought about on that. Some of them are clearly unconstitutional. Most of them are difficult to litigate to a successful conclusion.

Who calls the shots here? Well, I make recommendations like anybody else does. Each Member follows their own conscience. It is nice to get the assignment—Senator SCHUMER, he says: They listen to me. Well, yes, and we listen to each other.

Here is another quote from Senator SCHUMER. He said that I am winning:

Steve King has three wins, the rest of the Republican Party and the rest of America is winless. Good for him, terrible for us. King is in the driver's seat of immigration reform and as long as he sits there, things will continue to be stuck in a rut.

Stuck in a rut, in the driver's seat, the rest of America is winless. No, the rest of America is winning each day that we can protect the rule of law, each day that we have something left that we can use to secure our borders, each day that we can deploy some type of law enforcement at the local government, State government, and the Federal Government too, out on the streets of America, that at least slows down this influx of illegal immigration that we have.

America is not winless when that happens. America would be wiped out from a perspective of the rule of law and the future and the destiny for our country if we allowed people like CHUCK SCHUMER, HARRY REID, and DICK DURBIN to set the policy for immigration. If they did that, the rule of law, at least with regard to immigration, would be destroyed, be gone. We couldn't reconstruct it again in our lifetime. Not just our lifetime, Mr. Speaker, but the lifetime of this Republic.

I would ask this question, Mr. Speaker: Has anybody read the Senate Gang of Eight immigration bill? I have. I have read through that entire bill, and I come to this conclusion. They have sent to us from the United States Senate a bill on immigration. It is expansive. It covers all kinds of things. But it is this: it is instantaneous amnesty for almost everybody that is in America illegally, instantaneous amnesty. It is prospective amnesty to the extent that it does not address how we might address people who get into America after the bill might be enacted. So the prospects are that it would be the next wave of those who would be, according to their description, living in the shadows.

So if we are not going to enforce the law in the future or if we are going to pass a Senate version of the bill—and we are not, but the Senate version of the bill, if it becomes law, doesn't do anything to bring about enforcement for those who would violate our immigration laws in the future, nothing. It may do something on the border. A \$40 billion Corker amendment blows the budget substantially without a guarantee that it is going to be functional. But is instantaneous amnesty for those that are here. It is prospective amnesty for those who would come here. And, Mr. Speaker, it is retroactive amnesty. And that means it goes back to those who have been deported in the past and says: We really didn't mean it. Why don't you apply to come back to America, you all come back now, you hear, because we really can't have deported you in the past and let people stay in America under the same conditions that we deported you in the past. That is the Senate version of the bill. It is ludicrous from a commonsense heart of the heartland middle America viewpoint, where we respect and love the rule of law.

So Mr. SCHUMER, Senator SCHUMER, went on: He called for my expulsion

from the Republican Party. I am pretty sure they are not going to listen to CHUCK SCHUMER on that. He says:

They can show some courage and say that the Steve Kings in the world can say whatever they want, but they have no place in a modern Republican Party.

Imagine a leftist activist, deploying Alinsky tactics on the floor of the United States Senate, who would tell the Republican Party that they should expel me, who in a lot of ways has stood with the entire platform consistently for a long time. I would have to go change the platform first. It would be easier just to become a Democrat. However, their ranks are not swelling as fast as ours are. Commonsense is prevailing, and we are seeing Republican majorities in the States, a likely Republican majority expanded here in the House of Representatives, and a real good shot at a Republican majority in the United States Senate. What does that say about who is calling the shots in America? It is not CHUCK SCHUMER, it is not HARRY REID, it is not DICK DURBIN.

So he continues. Two weeks later—he hadn't had enough—two weeks later he comes to the floor of the Senate again and goes through a series of some of the same things, which I will skip down through a little bit more quickly:

Far-right extremists, such as Congressman Steve King.

Another:

What has the House actually done on immigration these past 2 years?

This is CHUCK SCHUMER:

Nothing. Look it up. This is what Steve King wants, he wants the House to do nothing. He is winning and America is losing.

Well, no, the House has done something. In the appropriations bill last year, June 6, 2013, Department of Homeland Security Appropriations bill, I brought an amendment, an amendment that shut off all funding to implement or enforce the President's unconstitutional actions and exert constitutional actions that had to do with DACA, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, and for prosecutorial discretion known as the Morton Memos.

The President's action is unconstitutional. He has no prosecutorial discretion to identify classes or groups of people and then exempt them from the law. Prosecutorial discretion must be on an individual basis; it cannot be on a group. They violated that. They know it. I read their material and debated with them and initiated a lawsuit. We are somewhat sidetracked right now on that. It is the nature of the thing.

My amendment passed this Congress 224 to 201. That is not nothing. That is restoring the rule of law and the Constitution immigration policy after it has been violated by the President of the United States. We sent that out of the House of Representatives, Mr. Speaker. We set it on HARRY REID's desk, and there it likely went into his

drawer and he took no action on it. So it is not that the House isn't doing anything, it is that the Senate did something really illogical: the Gang of Eight's bill for instantaneous, perpetual, and retroactive amnesty.

And then we have the number three-ranking Democrat in the Senate trying to taunt the Speaker of the House into doing something equally as foolish: bring amnesty to the floor of the House. This place would blow up and the American people would arrive here in short order because they love the rule of law. Not only natural born Americans, not only naturalized Americans, green card holders that come here to achieve the American Dream. That means from any country they came from and every country they came from, those who came here to love America and respect and appreciate the American Dream.

But what is happening is it is being eroded by destruction of the rule of law for political motivation on the part of people like Barack Obama, HARRY REID, CHUCK SCHUMER, and DICK DURBIN.

There is another quote here by CHUCK SCHUMER that says:

Enough is enough. We will not let our party be hijacked by extremists whose xenophobia causes them to prefer maintaining a broken system over achieving a tough, fair, and practical long-term solution.

Xenophobia. I had to look that up when we came to this Congress. We don't use that in the streets where I come from, but I have known its definition for a long time: being afraid of something that you don't know. Well, I don't often get accused of being afraid of anything, so when I am I pay a little bit of attention to that.

I would say this. CHUCK SCHUMER is not like me. I am not afraid of him so it is not xenophobia. HARRY REID is not like me. I am not afraid of HARRY REID, so that is not xenophobia. DICK DURBIN is not like me. I am not afraid of him. That is not xenophobia. What xenophobia are they talking about, Mr. Speaker, is my question?

So if we are going to have some kind of a challenge of rhetoric bouncing back and forth between the House and the Senate, let's do it face to face, let's do it eye to eye. Let's have that duel, not like Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton—I would be the one standing on the high ground on that—but let's do it like real men do it today, not dueling pistols at 50 paces, let's do this with microphones within arm's reach, Mr. Speaker. Maybe we could get to the bottom of this and we could determine who exactly had the xenophobia.

I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind Members that while debate may include policy criticisms of the President and Members of the Senate, it is not in order to engage in personalities toward those parties.

STOP THE FRANK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) for 30 minutes.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the time this afternoon.

I am sorry you are not going to get the benefit of the posters I brought down here with me because I am talking about a topic that is not one we bring up a lot in this Chamber. It is the use of the congressional frank.

I will wager that when you were elected to Congress, the only thing you knew about the frank is that perhaps you cursed it from time to time when it showed up in your mailbox. I brought a copy down here because I am sure there are going to be staff and folks back in the office who hadn't seen one before, folks walking around the office building today.

But the frank, the congressional frank—why they call it the frank I do not know—is that signature that you and I put up in the top right-hand corner of our envelopes so that we can send mail.

I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, if you have gone to town hall meetings where this hasn't come up, I would be interested to know. Because on that list of congressional perks—and you know the ones I am talking about, ones like you get free health care for life, which of course is not true, ones like if you serve one term in Congress you get a free pension for life, also not true—but among those perks is the free mail perk, the congressional frank. It drives me crazy, Mr. Speaker, it drives my constituents crazy, and we have the power to fix it here in this Chamber. I want to stop the frank.

Now, folks might say if you want to stop the frank, why not just stop using the frank. Fair enough. It is because the law requires us to use it. I am going get to that later, Mr. Speaker, because I will bet you have not seen that code section before.

Here is an article from Bloomberg, Mr. Speaker, lest you think this is something that you and I just hear at town hall meetings. This is something that is out, and you see it in newspaper after newspaper after newspaper. A headline—this is two summers ago, Bloomberg: "Lawmakers Intent on Dictating How the U.S. Postal Service Cuts Billions From Its Spending Are Among Those Helping Themselves to a Favorite Congressional Perk: Free Mail."

I want to be clear: there is no free mail, there is no free mail in the United States Congress today. This frank that I am talking about, Mr. Speaker, every time you sign your name to the top of a letter you are paying the full freight on that letter. You are absolutely going to pay for it when it hits the Postal Service. Sometimes it is on the honor system that you are reporting it, sometimes the mail house here at the Capitol is counting it. There is no free mail.

But even a group as reputable as Bloomberg believes that there is. I

know with certainty, because I hear it from my folks back home, our constituents believe that there is. In this time where trust is the commodity that is in the tightest supply in this town, we must do those things to restore trust with men and women back home. We must end this favorite of congressional perks.

Now, this is Bloomberg 2012, Mr. Speaker. I don't want you to think this is something that we have just started talking about. You can't see it from where you sit. But I also brought The New York Times from March of 1875. That is right. March of 1875, The New York Times is chronicling a vote that was taken right here in the U.S. House of Representatives. Well, not right here in this building on this floor. It was taken through those doors and into the next Chamber. But it says this. It says:

By a vote of 113 to 65, the House concurred in the Senate amendment of the postal appropriations bill to restore the franking privilege.

Now, the franking privilege, this signing of your name on a letter, it came from England, and it came in the early days of the Postal Service, where maybe you had an important governmental responsibility, maybe you needed to communicate with folks on the other side of the country and there was no local post office close by. You could be living out on the frontier, you could be far away, you just might not have had a coin in your pocket. So it allowed in the name of government efficiency for Members of Congress to sign their name at the top of a letter and drop that into the postal stream.

□ 1430

I promise you there is not a man or a woman who serves in Congress today who does not know where his local post office is. There is not a man or woman who serves in Congress today who struggles to get over to the grocery store where there are stamps for sale.

We do not need to be able to sign our names at the top of an envelope today to get it done, but in 1875, after Congress had abolished the frank, in the name of abolishing congressional perks, the Senate passed a bill to bring it back into being. The House concurred.

The New York Times says this:

So far as our observation goes, there has never been any demand for the restoration of the franking nuisance, except on the part of Congressmen.

I want you to think about this. Where does this sense that Congress gets free mail privileges come from, Mr. Speaker? It comes from the fact that, once upon a time, Congress actually got free mail privileges.

Again, the Postal Service was in its infancy, and in order to conduct the people's business, the franking privilege was adopted from what folks had seen at play in England, but in 1875, Congress was still trying to grapple with the distrust that the franking privilege created amongst its constituencies.