

become such common practice that it now requires a supermajority in the Senate to pass virtually every piece of legislation, no matter how mundane. The filibuster has begun to erode the integrity of our democratic process.

My colleague, Senator TOM HARKIN from Iowa, who has been a leader on this issue since 1995, recently announced he will introduce legislation to change the filibuster rule, and I am offering a resolution urging the Senate to do the same.

The filibuster was not intended by the framers of the Constitution, and it is certainly not good for the country when we try to solve the difficult problems that face us today. The time has come for the Senate to change its rules.

#### CONGRATULATING THE CUBAN-AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize the Cuban-American Bar Association for its success and contributions to our south Florida community.

For nearly 40 years, the Cuban-American Bar Association has served the public interest by increasing awareness of the study of jurisprudence, fostering respect for the law, and increasing diversity in the judiciary and the legal community.

Given the tragic example of Castro's lawless regime, the members of the Cuban-American Bar Association are keenly aware of the importance of the rule of law and have dedicated their professional careers to its implementation and preservation.

This Saturday, the Cuban-American Bar Association will celebrate its installation of a new executive board. Incoming President Manuel Garcia-Linares and president-elect for 2011 Victoria Mendez will build upon the example of leadership left by outgoing President Roland Sanchez-Medina, Jr. Their dedication and professionalism are not only testaments to their characters but also to the Cuban-American community and to Hispanics in general.

I would also like to congratulate the incoming 2010 Board of Directors:

Nelson Bellido, Raul Chacon, Vivian De Las Cuevas-Diaz, Isabel Diaz, Sandra M. Ferrera, Monica Gordo, Anna Marie Hernandez, Javier Lopez, Ricardo M. Martinez-Cid, Nicole Mestre, Jennifer Perez, and Monica Segura.

#### CREDIT CARD COMPANIES SHOULD SUSPEND FEES ON CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

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

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, as the world watches the crisis, the tragedy in Haiti, many people are coming forth

with charitable contributions to help different organizations that are sponsoring efforts, and it is commendable and wonderful. But what was discovered is that the credit card companies are charging their customary 3 percent fee on those credit card contributions. That is wrong. And the credit card companies, I believe, saw it was wrong, and they put that off for 60 days on contributions given to certain groups.

What I am looking into introducing is legislation, and-or through a letter of request to the administration, suspending credit card fees, except those for processing, on contributions to 501(c)(3) charities.

When people make contributions to charities, and contributions are down now because of the recession, the full amount should be going to that 501(c)(3). Complete charitable contributions should be permitted, and the credit card companies should work with us, at least if it is a disaster like Katrina, like what we have experienced in Haiti or with the tsunamis or with tornados in our Nation.

#### NEW ORLEANS SAINTS' HISTORIC SEASON

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

Mr. CAO. Madam Speaker, the New Orleans Saints' historic season continued this past Saturday with a 45-14 playoff victory. Next week, they will compete for the NFC championship title, and they will win.

Their success has benefited our city and inspired our district, so I have provided my constituents with a chance to honor them.

Today's statement is from Tripp Roy of New Orleans, Louisiana. Tripp writes:

"The Saints' positive impact on our city is immeasurable. They have done more for New Orleans than any other professional sports franchise has done for any other American city.

"Aside from the short-term joy the team's success has brought to New Orleans, the Saints' record has put the city back on the map, displaying to the Nation that we are back for the long term.

"The endless media coverage, non-stop showcasing of the region's unique culture, and undeniable camaraderie created among the New Orleans 'Who Dat' nation are all the results of the Saints' incredible season.

"This is just the rallying cry the city needed. New Orleans is better than ever, thanks in large part to the Saints."

#### HAITIAN ORPHANS

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I am overwhelmed as I have seen the outpouring of support for the

Haitian people and also the concern of this Congress. I would ask that we move forward on one particular interest and concern, and that is the orphans of Haiti.

Already before the earthquake there were 1.5 million orphans. Now, we have seen hundreds of thousands of children who are now without parents.

Over the weekend, I was able to secure and be able to send two plane loads of doctors and nurses and supplies. Thank you, Texas. In that they were operating on a number of individuals, particularly children, 150 surgeries, 600 patients, it is important that we are able to airlift the most badly injured of children and others, particularly children, out of Haiti.

I will be introducing legislation and working with the administration to establish refugee status so these children can be airlifted in an organized manner to have surgery; otherwise, they will die. It is important for us to join together, both sides of the aisle, to find constructive ways to expedite caring for those who are now dying. Our children are our priority. As Chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, that will be my focus, to save the children of Haiti.

#### WAR WITH AL QAEDA

(Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Madam Speaker, there are a lot of issues that are before this Congress, very, very serious issues. But on Christmas Day, we were reminded of one that we do not always think about, and that is the fact that we are still the subject of those who would use terror to take away our liberty.

I would hope that, as the President has found it appropriate to use the word "war" and talk about the war with al Qaeda, that we would understand that it is more than words, it is actions; that we need to treat those who would attempt to kill us in this way as what they are, unlawful enemy combatants, not common criminals. We should not turn them over to our criminal justice system. We should allow them to be interrogated by the military.

Madam Speaker, those who say that they are attacking us because of Guantanamo do not understand history, both long-term and short-term. They are not attacking us because of Guantanamo. They are attacking us because of the Statue of Liberty.

#### CONGRATULATING OAK GROVE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Oak Grove Presbyterian Church of Bloomington, Minnesota, for receiving the

2009 Omar Bonderud Human Rights Award.

Named for the first chairperson of the Bloomington Human Rights Commission, the award is given to individuals and organizations that have made a significant contribution to improving the rights of people in their community.

The selfless works of Oak Grove Presbyterian Church include tutoring for the economically disadvantaged, as well as improving dialogue and understanding across different religions and cultures.

In a letter to the Human Rights Commission, Oak Grove was described as "an outstanding community organization with a long history of working with community partners to improve the lives of the diverse residents of Bloomington."

This award shows the dedication of Oak Grove to the pursuit of justice and freedom, rights that we can all aspire to protect. I am honored to congratulate them today.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

#### INVESTING IN SMART SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, President Obama is certainly doing the right thing when it comes to the humanitarian crisis in Haiti. He's responded quickly, he's responded effectively, and he's pledged that the United States will do all that we can do to alleviate the suffering of the Haitian people and to help them rebuild their lives. President Obama has shown that America stands for hope, decency, and human rights, which is, of course, the kind of moral leadership that the President of the United States must always show. But while the administration is getting it right in Haiti, we still have a lot of work to do in Afghanistan, where the President plans to ask Congress for \$33 billion in emergency funding to pay for the escalation of the war there.

Madam Speaker, we do need to appropriate more funds for Afghanistan, but not for more troops, because there is no military solution to the problem there. Sending more troops makes us look like occupiers, which will surely help the Taliban recruit more violent extremists, who will attack their own Afghani neighbors and the United States. So instead of investing in the military in Afghanistan, we need to invest in SMART security, which means investing in economic development, health, infrastructure, humanitarian aid, better law enforcement and gov-

ernance. SMART security also includes helping the Afghan people to build schools so girls and women can be offered an education as well as the boys.

Madam Speaker, General McChrystal, our commander in Afghanistan, recently said that the Taliban looks for young people with no education when they are looking for new recruits. That's why I believe that investing in books, not bombs, is the way to stop violent extremism in Afghanistan and actually in every other part of the world as well. We also need to invest in our own economy and our own people right here at home, because we can't keep our country safe unless we have a strong economy, well educated, and with everybody having jobs that they can afford to support their families on.

So that's why we must invest in jobs. We must invest in housing. We must invest in child care and health care. And we must especially be concerned about those facing their own humanitarian crisis in our communities.

So just consider some of these facts, Madam Speaker: one in every 50 Americans is living in a household where food stamps are the only source of income. The effective unemployment rate today is really over 17 percent. And middle class families are now earning less than they did a decade ago, adjusted for inflation.

The economic disaster right here in our own country is unprecedented in American history. Unfortunately, the Congress will soon be presented with a record Pentagon budget, however, for the next fiscal year. I would suggest that instead of increasing the Pentagon budget, we should reduce it by cutting out funds for useless Cold War weapons, which would slash the defense budget by 25 percent. Isn't that amazing? We could slash the defense budget by 25 percent if we would just stop building useless Cold War weapons. We can make those dollars available to invest right here at home to put SMART security to work in Afghanistan as well.

Madam Speaker, the best way to keep our country safe is to stick to our fundamental American values of peace and compassion for the people of the world. We must put these values to work in Haiti, in Afghanistan, and right here at home. I urge all of us and our President to do just that.

#### DON'T LET THEM FLY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, an al Qaeda jihadist committed an act of war over the skies of Detroit on Christmas Day. Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, working with al Qaeda in Yemen, sewed explosives into his underwear. He tried to blow up the plane over Detroit, but the detonator failed and the terrorist was captured by pas-

sengers. Counting on faulty detonators is not a sound national security policy. We should be stopping terrorists from boarding planes in the first place.

The underwear bomber got on the plane with a valid United States visa. Even though he was on a terrorist watch list, he boarded a plane for the U.S. anyway. After the 9/11 attacks, the State Department was ordered to open visa security units at all of our embassies. Eight years later, only 14 of the 220 American embassies have visa security units. Why is that?

The underwear bomber got his U.S. visa in London. He got to keep his visa even though his father told our embassy in Nigeria that his son was a dangerous radical. American embassies in London and Nigeria don't have a visa security unit. And when the bomber's own father told us he was dangerous, the information was ignored by our State Department.

The underwear bomber paid cash for a ticket, had no luggage, and he was on that watch list. The United States State Department was warned by the bomber's father that he was a threat. He had even previously been denied entry into the United Kingdom because he applied for a visa to go to a college that doesn't exist in the United Kingdom. But U.S. authorities let him fly the friendly skies anyway. He should not have been allowed on that airplane. The American people have the right to know why our Nation allowed this person to enter the United States with a visa, knowing all of these facts.

After the failed attack, Abdulmutallab bragged about 20 more terrorists preparing to attack the United States. He said they were also training in Yemen. According to Slade Gorton, a member of the 9/11 Commission, He was singing like a canary, then we charged him in Federal court, he got a lawyer, and he quit talking. Instead of turning the terrorist over to the military authorities for interrogation, or even letting him just keep on talking, the administration treated this individual like a 2-bit car thief. They told him he had the right to remain silent, and then they got this jihadist a lawyer on the public dime and he quit talking.

Under the new "try the terrorists in Federal court" policy, America has lost the ability to get vital information about al Qaeda. America is probably less safe as a result. The bomber could and should have been tried in a military court. There are legal allowances for enemies like the underwear bomber. And as an enemy combatant, he should have been held and interrogated by military officials under existing law.

In Federal court now they're even talking about offering this terrorist a plea deal to get some information that he was willing to offer earlier with no deal. Now we are making a deal with the Devil. So the terrorists can avoid justice and get leniency by making a backroom agreement with authorities.