

I co-authored with my friend, the late Tom Lantos. President Bush signed this bill into law and Congress has reauthorized these import restrictions every year since. The legislation bans imports from Burma and the issuance of visas to those officials affiliated with the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), the military junta that rules Burma and brutally represses its people. This law also bans U.S. financial transactions that involve individuals or entities connected with the SPDC.

The sanctions are critically important to keeping the pressure on the Burmese junta. The government continues to have one of the worst human rights record in the world and routinely violates the rights of Burmese citizens, including the systematic use of rape as a weapon of war, extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detention, torture and child labor. Moreover, the Burmese regime has more child soldiers than any other country and has destroyed more than 3,700 ethnic villages, displaced approximately 2,000,000 people, more than 600,000 of which are internally displaced, and has taken nearly 2,000 political prisoners.

We must continue to stand with the Burmese people and expose the despicable and reprehensible actions of the SPDC. Sanctions are critical to putting pressure on the junta. In 2008, the Tom Lantos Block Burmese JADE Act (P.L. 110-286) was signed into law, which bans the importation of Burmese gems into the United States and freezes the assets of Burmese political and military leaders. While these steps are significant, others must follow ours and the EU's lead. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) must impose multilateral sanctions against Burma's military regime including a complete arms embargo.

While I applaud the confirmation of Derek Mitchell as Special Coordinator for Burma, there are additional provisions of the Tom Lantos Block Burmese JADE Act that have yet to be implemented. I urge the Obama Administration to call for a UN Commission of Inquiry on Burma to investigate war crimes and crimes against humanity. This Commission is necessary to prevent further killings and to encourage a meaningful political dialogue.

I urge adoption of the resolution.

Mr. BOUSTANY. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution, H.J. Res. 66, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the joint resolution, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

A LITTLE LOCAL FLAVOR

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

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, two things come from a town called Kiln, Mississippi: a famous NFL quarterback and Lazy Magnolia Beer. We know Brett's story, but let me tell you about Lazy Magnolia.

One Christmas, Leslie Henderson bought her husband, Mark, a home brew kit. The two engineers started brewing beer and eventually turned their hobby into a business.

We can fix our faltering economy by giving small business owners more responsibility. H.R. 1236, the Small Brew Act, does that, allowing a much needed tax cut to our small brewers. By lowering the tax on the beer they produce, these companies will have more revenue to invest in maintaining and hiring employees. This legislation therefore promises to create over 4,000 jobs.

On that Christmas a few years ago, Lazy Magnolia Beer had no employees. Today it provides jobs to about 20 people in Hancock County. That, my friends, is an American success story.

CONGRATULATING NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS COUNCIL FOR HUMANITIES ON ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, 20 years ago, one of the most significant and enduring community groups in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands was formed, the Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities. Since its founding, the council has become a well-respected, community-based organization committed to fostering awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the humanities in the Northern Mariana Islands through its support of educational programs that relate the humanities to the indigenous cultures and the intellectual needs and interests of the people of the Commonwealth. The Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities has enhanced the lives of our residents as individuals and enhanced our community as a whole.

The council's board of directors is and has always been extraordinarily passionate and successful in setting and achieving goals that benefit our diverse and remote community. The council's achievements belie our modest population and resources.

Please join me congratulating the Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities on its 20th anniversary of serving the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands community.

Twenty years ago this past April, one of the most significant and enduring community groups in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands was formed: the Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities.

My island community is a melting pot of cultures, an amalgam of languages, the possessor of a 3,500-year-long and colorful history, and the newest participant in this great experiment called democracy in America. The National Endowment for the Humanities founding principle is that knowledge of the humanities—the ideas, people, and events that make up the record of human thought and experience—is both personally rewarding to Ameri-

cans as individuals and critical to our common civic life as a nation. I suspect that nowhere is this sentiment as relevant as it is in the Northern Mariana Islands.

In the two decades since its founding, the NMI Council for the Humanities has become a well-respected community-based organization committed to fostering awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the humanities in the Northern Mariana Islands through its support of educational programs that relate the humanities to the indigenous cultures and the intellectual needs and interests of the people of the Commonwealth. The Council also sponsors programs that explore, document, and recognize the many contributions to our community made by the non-indigenous residents of the Northern Marianas. In furtherance of these programs, collaborative relationships have been established with a variety of local, regional, national, and international organizations and individuals.

The Council accomplishes its mission through financial support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, with which it is affiliated, as well as from the local government, businesses, and individuals throughout our islands. The Council has also been designated an "educational institution" in the Commonwealth, enabling financial donors to take advantage of a local educational tax credit program.

The Council's 13-member board of directors is, and always has been, extraordinarily passionate and successful in setting and achieving goals that benefit our diverse and remote community. Its achievements over the past 20 years belie our modest population and resources. In fact, one former board member is a recipient of the National Humanities Medal—which is awarded to no more than 12 recipients each year whose work has deepened the Nation's understanding of the humanities, broadened our citizens' engagement with the humanities, or helped preserve and expand Americans' access to important resources in the humanities.

Some current programs undertaken by the Council include: the nationally-acclaimed Motherhead/Fatheread program that encourages literacy skills among parents and children; a teachers institute that provides primary-school instructors with a thorough overview of local history; a weekly radio show that provides wide-ranging humanities-based programming; a Micronesian authors initiative that publishes the work of local authors; a community lecture series on humanities topics of interest; a multiyear project to revise the Chamorro-English dictionary; an initiative to promote geotourism in the CNMI; a digital database of primary source documents and images to facilitate the study of local history; and diversified classroom programs that introduce students to the humanities at an early age, including a poetry competition, a junior high school mock trial competition, an annual Covenant Day debate, and curricula that explore multiculturalism in the Commonwealth.

Support of grassroots humanities projects in our community is also a primary focus of the Council. During the past 20 years, over 150 individual grants totaling approximately \$900,000 have been awarded to community groups through the Council's community grants program.

At a time in our nation's history when we encounter oftentimes fierce polemics and uncivil discourse, humanities councils serve an

important role. The Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities has, for the past 20 years, enhanced the lives of our residents as individuals and enhanced our community as a whole. I have faith it will continue to do so far beyond the next 20 years. It promotes teaching and learning of the humanities in our schools, facilitates research and original scholarship, provides opportunities for lifelong learning, preserves and provides access to cultural and educational resources, and strengthens the institutional base of the humanities in the Northern Marianas.

Please join me in congratulating the past and present directors, staff, and supporters of the Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities on its twentieth anniversary of serving the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands community.

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ISSUES FACING AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. ELLMERS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. ELLMERS. Mr. Speaker, today we have a wonderful group of women who are going to come together and discuss the issues at hand right now in Washington and across America as we all are so concerned with what is happening to our economy.

Some of you out there are up late at night wondering how you are going to be paying that mortgage, wondering how the car payment is going to be made and which payments you'll make this month and which payments you may have to put off for another time. We're all doing it. We might as well all admit it. And it's time to come together for solutions and answers.

We, as GOP women in Congress, know how important these issues are. We are the women that are taking care of our children. We're taking care of our households. We're taking care of our parents and their health care needs, and we're watching out for our neighbors to make sure that they're okay.

And we continue on this path. We simply cannot run on this path of unsustainable spending and financial uncertainty. We need jobs back in this country. There are those who have jobs and are worried if they're going to be able to keep them. And yet there are others who have lost their jobs and wonder if they'll be able to find another job. We understand this. We understand that it's affecting all of our households, and we're going to come together and discuss these very important issues.

Before we get started, I'm just going to pass along to you one of the greatest quotes that I think hits home to all of us from Ronald Reagan: "All great change in America begins at the dinner table." How true is that.

Now, in many of our households, we don't all eat dinner together anymore

like we used to. When I was growing up, dinnertime was a specified time and we all came together. And if you didn't get to the table, you didn't eat. Today we're all on different schedules, but that dinner table still remains. And we still sit there and we discuss these issues with our spouses.

My husband is a doctor. Brent is a surgeon. He practices in Dunn, North Carolina. We have a son, Ben, who's 16. I'm worried about his future. I'm worried about my husband's practice because he is suffering, realizing that the volume of patients he once was seeing has decreased. That's out of fear, and that's out of the health care system that we have created now.

So as we move forward, I am going to be introducing to you some of the greatest women that I have had the honor of getting to know here in D.C. I have many friends back home, but these ladies are my family here, and I'm going to start off with my esteemed colleague from North Carolina, Ms. SUE MYRICK. She has been a mentor to me but mostly a friend.

I thank you, SUE, for coming today and sharing your thoughts.

Mrs. MYRICK. Well, it's my honor to be here. And I thank you for yielding me the time.

As you said, we have a lot of colleagues here, and most of us share the same ideas relative to what we're about. You mentioned and are talking there about the dinner table and women being financial planners. We do the budget. We're the ones that take care of our families, as you said. We're the health care providers, all of that.

You mentioned your husband's in business, but I, also, am a former small business owner. And when I look at what's happening today, there are so many businesses—I think there are, like, 400 new businesses every day that are started by women in this country. And when I talk to business owners at home, they say to me: I am really concerned about the fact that I could expand my business, but I'm afraid to because of the uncertainty that's out there. I don't know what policies are coming down. I don't know what kind of health care costs I'm going to have. I don't know what tax policies and what, if I hire somebody, it's going to cost me to retain that employee. I don't want to go out and hire them and train them and then have to turn right around and, you know, maybe let them go because I can't afford to keep them.

So the policies that we're working on—and all of the women in Congress on our side of the aisle that really care about these issues—are to make sure that we put policies in place that help and promote those small businesses to exist because they hire most of the people in the country. Most of the jobs are provided by small business. And it's really important.

I also, from another standpoint, used to be the mayor of Charlotte. Unfortunately, the first and only female mayor. I wish somebody else would run

on the female side, but that's beside the point.

What I wanted to say is that we had to operate with a balanced budget, very simple. And you can do it. We've been talking this week and actually passed a bill yesterday of cut, cap, and balance. I mean, what a novel idea. It's the way all of us live all the time. It's how we do our business. And there's no reason the Federal Government, like the 49 States that balance their budgets, can't be living under a balanced budget.

Yes, it's tough. We have to make some hard decisions. But the bottom line in all of that is we can do it. And if we have the resolve and the American people want us to do it, there's no such thing as government money. It's all the taxpayers who send their money up here to Washington. That's what we're spending. And we've been spending too much of it.

So I'm encouraged by the fact that we really did have a vote on that bill yesterday that says we're going to live within our means, we're going to do what you do every day, and that we, as women, can have a voice in that and we'll continue to have a voice in that.

And I thank you so much for putting this together so that we have a chance to express that to the American people.

Mrs. ELLMERS. Thank you so much.

I yield now to Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER from Washington. Thank you so much for coming today. She is one of my fellow freshmen, and we have gotten to be good friends.

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Thank you so much. It's a pleasure to be here.

This is one of the most monumental times we face as a Nation. We are right now making decisions that are not just going to impact those of us here today but our children and our children's children.

I am so proud to be a part of this body that passed a bipartisan solution to our budgeting problems just yesterday. We passed, like the gentle lady spoke about, a balanced budget amendment.

I know there's a lot of controversy happening right now, and it's frustrating to watch people posture here in Washington, D.C. Folks back home are sending me emails, and they're calling me, saying, Can you just get some solutions done, Washington? And you know my what my response is? I completely agree.

It is frustrating to watch partisan bickering taking place. And I kind of smile to myself and I think, Just put more women in charge because we're going to fight for solutions. And that's what we are here doing today, promoting the solutions that we were able to pass on the floor just yesterday, solutions that require this House, this body, not to spend more money than it has coming in.

You know, it shouldn't be a radical concept. It shouldn't be controversial in the least. Every mother watching