

This is a good-government bill. If the legislation is passed, it would allow federal, state and local government to work together. Good citizens, who pay their taxes, will appreciate that the federal government and the state government are assisting localities to help local government collect from the delinquents. Each citizen should share in paying his fair share of taxes.

H.R. 2667, THE AUTHORITY FOR MANDATE DELAY ACT AND H.R. 2668, THE FAIRNESS FOR AMERICAN FAMILIES ACT JULY 17, 2013

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 17, 2013

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to both H.R. 2667, the Authority for Mandate Delay Act, and H.R. 2668, the Fairness for American Families Act. Here we are once again taking another cheap shot at the Affordable Care Act (ACA), rather than working to continue providing its benefits to the American people. Both pieces of legislation are political stunts which will not help Americans get access to quality, affordable health care.

There is no need for passage of H.R. 2667 since the President has already acted to delay by one year the employer responsibility requirements under ACA. Given the fact that this type of change has long been sought by my friends on the other side of the aisle and their allies, you would think they would be praising the President for taking this action. Instead, they have done nothing but used this as another opportunity to score cheap political points, which is very telling.

Although I wish the employer responsibility provision would be implemented on time, the fact of the matter is that this delay will have very little practical impact. Over ninety six percent of large employers already offer health coverage to their employees. It is important that we take our time in getting these new reporting requirements right, which is exactly what the President is doing. Since the President has already acted in this manner, H.R. 2667 is duplicative and unnecessary.

H.R. 2668 also should be rejected by this body. The individual mandate is the cornerstone of the ACA, and the Supreme Court has affirmed its constitutionality. Simply put, delaying the implementation of the individual mandate is just a back door attempt to undermine the entire law. The Affordable Care Act has already brought many benefits to the American people. Thanks to the law, 206,000 people in my district have access to preventative services without a co-pay, and 8,500 young adults have health insurance through their parents' plan. Adopting this bill today would jeopardize this progress we have made in recent years.

Today we received news that health insurance premiums will fall by an average of 50 percent in New York once their exchanges are up and running in 2014. The individual mandate is a key reason for this. For years, New York had a prohibition on discriminating against individuals with a pre-existing condition. However, the state did not require all individuals to purchase insurance, which caused rates to skyrocket. The individual mandate,

combined with the new health insurance marketplaces, are in large part responsible for this precipitous decline in insurance rates in New York. We should ensure that these results are replicated in my home state of Michigan and across the rest of the country. Repealing the individual mandate will increase Americans' health care costs, not decrease them.

I hope we can come together and work in a bipartisan manner to improve our health care system and provide real benefits to the American people. Until that day comes, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting against these two pieces of legislation, as they are nothing more than political stunts which do nothing to address the problems we face as a nation.

TRIBUTE TO BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA

HON. KYRSTEN SINEMA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 17, 2013

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing the Blue Star Mothers of America, a national organization of military mothers devoted to supporting our nation's armed forces. Representatives LAMALFA, SWALWELL, and ROBY have joined me in introducing a resolution naming the month of August as "Blue Star Mothers of America Month."

I am proud to say that the East Valley Blue Star Mothers, a local chapter of the organization, meets in my district. They have dedicated themselves to supporting soldiers overseas, wounded warriors, families of fallen soldiers, as well as all veterans, homeless or thriving. They organize visits to VA hospitals, participate in Veteran's and Memorial Day events, and send care packages to homesick troops protecting our freedom abroad.

Founded in 1941, Blue Star Mothers of America boast 11,000 members brought together by their sons' and daughters' service. Chapters flourish in 42 states, and in all corners of my own state, Arizona. Blue Star Mothers are unsung heroes of the ongoing fight to preserve our country's safety and liberty.

The Blue Star Mothers are a truly patriotic organization and deserve our body's commendation. I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing the Blue Star Mothers of America for their service to their communities, to our country, and to all of us individually.

THE ADMINISTRATION MUST NOT SIDELINE HORRIFIC HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN NORTH KOREA

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 17, 2013

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today the House Republican Conference and House Foreign Affairs Committee welcomed roughly 400 Korean American community leaders from across the country to Capitol Hill for the first-ever Korean American Meetup. Participants had the

opportunity to meet with key congressional leaders to discuss legislative and policy priorities for the community.

Given my own interactions over the years with the vibrant Korean American community in my district, I think it is safe to say that the abysmal human rights situation in North Korea will feature prominently among these policy priorities.

Sadly, given the amount of time and focus that the Obama Administration has dedicated to shining a bright light on this dark corner of the globe you would never know that up to 200,000 people languish in a sophisticated and horrific prison camp system in North Korea reminiscent of the most brutal regimes throughout history.

On May 21 Christianity Today featured an interview with former Washington Post reporter Blaine Harden, author of "Escape from Camp 14." Harden's book features the story of Shin Dong-hyuk, the only known prisoner who was actually born in one of regime's notorious camps and escaped alive.

Mr. Shin's personal story is remarkable. He grew up knowing nothing of life outside the camp. He turned in his mother and brother—which led to their eventual execution—based on the promise of a meal of rice. In fact it was the pursuit of food that led him to attempt a harrowing escape.

Harden spoke of the camps as analogous to "Stalin's Gulag." He continued, "The camps were set up under Kim Il-sung, an acolyte of Stalin, as a mirror of the Soviet Gulag. What is different in the North Korean case is that they seem to be crueler and have lasted twice as long."

Indeed, the longevity of these camps is striking as is the fact that some South Korean POWs are still trapped in North Korea 60 years after the armistice. The Washington Post ran a story last weekend, which I submit for the RECORD, on this rarely discussed human rights tragedy.

We have known for some time about the true nature of the cruel and inhuman system of labor camps maintained by the regime. In fact satellite images confirmed their existence more than a decade ago. And yet somehow, almost inexplicably, these horrific camps have failed to inspire collective outrage on the part of the West, and have been sidelined to the point of irrelevance in successive U.S. administrations' dealings with North Korea, including the Obama Administration.

The U.S. Committee for Human Rights in North Korea published a report 10 years ago called *The Hidden Gulag: Exposing North Korea's Prison Camps*. It contained a full description of the camps, the worst of which are called kwan-li-so, which is translated as "political penal-labor colonies," and where, according to the Committee's report, scores of thousands of political prisoners—along with up to three generations of their family members—are banished without any judicial process and imprisoned, typically for lifetime sentences of slave labor.

The report also contained prisoners' testimonies and satellite photographs of the camps, whose very existence continues to be denied by the North Korean government, which is why the committee described the gulags as "hidden."

Defector testimony, like that of Mr. Shin, satellite images and in-depth reporting have left no doubt about the camps' existence and

the horrors of life there. What remains to be seen is how the U.S. will respond.

What has this administration done about this abomination?

What has this administration done about a regime that sustains and perpetuates this evil?

In March, after sustained pressure from human rights organizations, the United Nations Human Rights Council agreed to set up a commission of inquiry to examine systematic "crimes against humanity" in North Korea. The commission is slated to begin its work this month and could represent a sliver of hope for the long suffering people of North Korea.

However, it is striking that just one month after the decision to pursue a commission of inquiry, President Obama met with UN General Secretary Ban Ki-moon, and despite the fact that North Korea featured prominently on the agenda, their lengthy public remarks after meeting did not include a single mention of the human rights atrocities in North Korea instead focusing exclusively on the nuclear issue and diffusing tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

Because North Korea possesses nuclear weapons and regularly threatens to use them as well as share nuclear weapons technology with other rogue states like Iran, the international community, the U.S. included, has tended to ignore or seriously downplay the horrendous human rights abuses in North Korea in the interest of trying to negotiate an end to its nuclear program.

But next to nothing has been achieved by these negotiations over the years. In fact, recent months have been marked by a series of provocations by the North Korean government. Meanwhile, America—the world's leading democracy which has historically championed fundamental freedoms—has been shamefully silent about grave human rights abuses and atrocities.

On a host of levels this approach is deeply flawed and I do not believe it will yield the desired results on either the nuclear front or the human rights front. The possession of nuclear weapons is simply too important to the North Korean regime, if only to deflect attention from its cruel and oppressive system of camps and the famine that it has brought upon its people at an estimated cost of anywhere from one to three million lives. Any future talks with the North Koreans, be it the six-party process, which stalled in 2008, or some other forum, must include human rights on the agenda. For years, nuclear talks alone have produced next to nothing.

A new North Korea framework is long overdue. Ignoring or downplaying the human rights situation for one more day is unconscionable.

Ronald Reagan negotiated with the Soviet Union to reduce nuclear weapons throughout the 1980s, but that did not stop him from speaking about human rights, calling upon the Soviets to tear down the Berlin Wall, and predicting that communism would end up on the ash heap of history. His outspoken support for human rights had an effect, accelerating the demise of communism and, in the process, making it easier to resolve nuclear and security issues, since the main cause of Soviet aggressiveness was the communist system it was intended to defend and extend. Further it reminded those living behind the Iron Curtain that America was a friend, not an enemy, despite Soviet propaganda to the contrary.

We should be doing the same thing with North Korea today.

My friend Carl Gershman, president of the National Endowment for Democracy, has

pointed out that the North Korean totalitarian system is undergoing an inexorable process of erosion, marked by a sharply reduced ability to impose a complete information blockade on its population.

He notes that what makes the North Korean system especially vulnerable is the existence just across the southern border of a free, successful and affluent South Korean society. For decades now the regime in Pyongyang has told its population that the people of South Korea live in hell while they live in a communist paradise. He's concluded that as the population learns that the truth is exactly the opposite, they will become increasingly restive, resentful, and rebellious.

With these fissures in the information blockade comes an opportunity.

In the words of the tireless North Korean human rights activist and champion Suzanne Scholte, "There is so much that we can do to help the North Korean people. First, because they can hear us: our government must make our human rights concerns the most important policy regarding North Korea, so that North Koreans know the truth; that we are not the yankee imperialist wolves trying to destroy them, but the United States and other countries have spent billions of dollars trying to feed them and save them from starvation."

Additionally, the Obama Administration ought to be pursuing a policy which places a high priority on working with other countries in the region to champion the rights of North Korean refugees. China is among the biggest obstacles. Its current policy of repatriating North Korean refugees violates China's international treaty obligations. A grim fate awaits those who are returned to North Korea.

According to Human Rights Watch, "Beijing categorically labels North Koreans in China 'illegal' economic migrants and routinely repatriates them, despite its obligation to offer protection to refugees under customary international law and the Refugee Convention of 1951 and its 1967 protocol, to which China is a state party. Former North Korean security officials who have defected told Human Rights Watch that North Koreans handed back by China face interrogation, torture, and referral to political prisoner or forced labor camps. In a high profile case, China forced back at least 30 North Koreans in February and March 2012, defying a formal request from South Korean President Lee Myung-Bak to desist from doing so, and despite protests in front of the Chinese Embassy in Seoul."

When was the last time this issue was raised with the Chinese government?

Did it even garner a cursory mention during the recent U.S.-China Economic and Strategic Dialogue?

Is there any sense that China will have to pay a price for disregarding its international obligations?

The human rights travesty in North Korea is perhaps most acute when we consider the vulnerable children of that nation. There are those living under the regime and those referred to as "stateless orphans," having been born out of relationships between North Korean women defectors, many of whom are trafficked once they escape to China, and Chinese men. According to a September 2012 Radio Free Asia story, "Aid workers estimate that there are some 2,000 'defector orphans' in China . . ."

Last September, the House passed the North Korean Child Welfare Act of 2012, which I cosponsored. It was signed into law by

the president in January. The legislation directs the State Department to "advocate for the best interests" of North Korean children and to when possible, facilitate immediate protection for those living outside North Korea through family reunification or, "if appropriate and eligible in individual cases, domestic or international adoption."

This legislation enjoyed broad bipartisan support in the Congress. What steps has the State Department taken to fulfill its obligation in this regard?

Ultimately, this administration needs to look forward. It needs vision, creativity and boldness.

The North Korean regime will not be there forever to oppress its people.

Writing in the Wall Street Journal on the eve of South Korean President Park Geun-hye's first summit with US President Barack Obama, Nicholas Eberstadt suggested that, "A robust international human-rights campaign in support of the world's most hideously abused subject population would restrict the regime's international freedom of maneuver, just as the anti-apartheid campaign did against South Africa in the 1980s. A serious public-communications effort—propaganda, if you like—aimed at encouraging any glimmers of decline in the cohesion of Pyongyang's elite could also constrain the leadership."

Such imagination has been utterly lacking in the Obama administration.

Fortunately, we take some solace in knowing that just like the regimes in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union that preceded it, this evil empire, too, will fall.

In the meantime we must champion the rights of the people who wither under its oppression.

I'll close with the words of columnist and author, Anne Applebaum in the hope that they inspire the administration's approach to North Korea moving forward. She writes in the introduction of *The Hidden Gulag*, "This is not to say that words can make a dictatorship collapse overnight. But words can certainly make a dictatorship collapse over time, as experience during the last two decades has shown. Totalitarian regimes are built on lies and can be damaged, even destroyed, when those lies are exposed."

[From the Washington Post, July 13, 2013]
SOME SOUTH KOREAN POWS STILL TRAPPED IN THE NORTH, 60 YEARS AFTER ARMISTICE
(By Chico Harlan)

SEOUL.—Sixty years ago this month, a 21-year-old South Korean soldier named Lee Jae-won wrote a letter to his mother. He was somewhere in the middle of the peninsula, he wrote, and bullets were coming down like "raindrops." He said he was scared.

The next letter to arrive came days later from the South Korean military. It described a firefight in Paju, near the modern-day border between the North and South, and said Lee had been killed there in battle. His body had not been recovered.

"We never doubted his death," said Lee's younger brother, Lee Jae-seong. "It was the chaos of war, and you couldn't expect to recover a body."

But Lee was not dead. Rather, he had been captured by Chinese Communists and handed to the North Koreans, who detained him as a lifetime prisoner, part of a secretive program that continues 60 years after the end of the

Korean War, according to South Korean officials and escapees from the North.

Tens of thousands of South Korean POWs were held captive in the North under the program, penned in remote areas and kept incommunicado in one of the most scarring legacies of the three-year war. South Korean officials say that about 500 of those POWs—now in their 80s and 90s—might still be alive, still waiting to return home. In part because they're so old, South Korea says it's a government priority, though a difficult one, to get them out.

Almost nothing was known about the lives of these prisoners until 20 years ago, when a few elderly soldiers escaped, sneaking from the northern tip of North Korea into China and making their way back to South Korea. A few dozen more followed, and they described years of forced labor in coal mines. They said they were encouraged to marry North Korean wives, a means of assimilation. But under the North's family-run police state, they were designated as members of the "hostile" social class—denied education and Workers' Party membership, and sent to gulags for even minor slip-ups, such as talking favorably about the quality of South Korean rice.

When the war ended with a July 27, 1953, armistice agreement that divided the peninsula along the 38th parallel, about 80,000 South Korean soldiers were unaccounted for. A few, like Lee Jae-won, were presumed dead. Most were thought to be POWs. The two Koreas, as part of the armistice, agreed to swap those prisoners, but the North returned only 8,300.

The others became part of an intractable Cold War standoff, and the few POWs who have escaped say both Koreas are to blame. The South pressed the North about the POWs for several years after the war, but the issue faded from public consciousness—until the first successful escape of a POW, in 1994. The North, meanwhile, has said that anybody living in the country is there voluntarily.

South Korea took up the POW issue with greater force six years ago, as it became clear that a lengthy charm offensive—known as the Sunshine Policy—wasn't leading the North to change its economic or humanitarian policies. During a 2000 summit with Kim Jong Il, South Korean President Kim Dae-jung didn't even bring up the issue. But by 2007, the South was talking about the POWs in defense talks. And by 2008, under conservative President Lee Myung-bak, South Korea offered aid to win the prisoners' release.

But with relations between the two governments badly frayed, the countries haven't discussed the issue since military-to-military talks in February 2011.

"Time is chasing us," said Lee Sang-chul, a one-star general at the South Korean Ministry of National Defense who is in charge of the POW issue.

But without North Korea's cooperation, Lee said, the South has little recourse to retrieve its soldiers. Lee said that, realistically, the POWs have only one way to return home: They have to escape.

HOPES THAT WITHERED

So far, about 80 have.

They gather for annual dinners in the South, and some meet for regular card games. They've been given overdue medals and overdue apologies. They've testified about the POWs they know who are still in the North. They've shaken hands with the president. They've received major compensation payments—about \$10,000 per month, over five years.

The returnees have encountered all varieties of surprise, both bitter and grand, as a half-dozen of them described in recent inter-

views. One escapee, Lee Won-sam, was married just before the war and reunited with his wife 55 years later. But many left families in the North only to find alienation in the South. The POWs, like others in the North, were told for decades that the South was impoverished and decrepit—and their arrival in the South revealed the extent of that deception while also dropping them into incomprehensible prosperity. A handful lost money in frauds, South Korean officials say.

"I thought South Korea had lots of beggars under the bridge and everybody lived in shacks," said Lee Gyu-il, 80, who escaped in 2008.

Many escapees say that after the war, they were initially hopeful that the South would secure their return. That hope withered in 1956, when the North assembled the prisoners and told them about Cabinet Order 143, which turned them into North Korean citizens—albeit those of the lowest rank. They were told to be thankful that they had been welcomed into a virtuous society.

"Sadly, there was no real change in our daily lives," Yoo Young-bok, who escaped in 2000, wrote in his memoir, which has been translated into English. "We went right on toiling" in the mines.

'HE LIVED A FALSE LIFE'

Those who have escaped acknowledge their luck. It wasn't easy for them to flee. Some had to travel for days through the North and then dart across a river forming the border with China—at an age when some had trouble running. Brokers helped guide them but also charged them more than the going rate for defectors, knowing that the escapees would receive large payments after settling in the South.

They know a few who are still stranded in the North. Most of the former prisoners have died from mining accidents, disease, execution, famine and old age.

In Lee Jae-won's case, it was liver cancer. It was 1994, and he was 63. After being captured by the Chinese and handed to the North, he had worked for four decades in a mine at the northernmost point of the peninsula, near the Russian border. He'd married a woman with one eye—a fellow member of the hostile class—and had four children, all of whom were ridiculed by teachers and classmates for their family background.

But only as Lee's health deteriorated in his final months did he tell his children, for the first time, the details of his earlier life. He gave one son, Lee Ju-won, the names of family members in the South, as well as an address: the home in which he was raised.

"So after I buried him, I decided to go there," Lee Ju-won said.

It took him 15 years to defect. Two days after Lee Ju-won was given his South Korean citizenship, he traveled to his family's home town, Boeun. His relatives still owned the original property, though the home had been demolished and rebuilt.

During that visit, Lee Ju-won learned that his family had celebrated his father's birthday every year and always set aside a rice ball for him at the New Year's feast. He also discovered his father's letter from Paju, written weeks before the armistice, which a relative had saved.

Lee Ju-won learned that his father, before the war, had been rebellious and talkative—characteristics he stifled in the North, though he passed them on to his son.

"It turns out my dad was a lot like me, though he didn't show it," Lee Ju-won said. "He was admired in North Korea, because he worked hard and didn't do anything wrong. But he lived a false life. He knew one slip of the tongue could harm our whole family. So he never talked about South Korea."

Yoonjung Seo contributed to this report.

HONORING UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS COLONEL ADRIAN W. BURKE

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 17, 2013

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor United States Marine Corps' Colonel Adrian W. Burke, who retired today after many years of decorated service.

Col. Burke is a native of Deer Park, Texas. He earned his commission in the United States Marine Corps as a Distinguished Naval Graduate from Texas A&M University where he earned a Bachelor of Business Administration degree majoring in Marketing in 1984.

Col. Burke has served as a Logistics Officer and a North Africa, Middle East and Central Asia Regional Specialist. He has commanded at the platoon, company, battalion and regimental levels, leading troops into combat during nine campaigns. Furthermore, he commanded a reinforced logistics company that supported Regimental Combat Team One during Operation Desert Shield and Task Force Papa Bear during the invasion of Kuwait in Operation Desert Storm. He commanded a reinforced logistics battalion during the initial invasion of Iraq in support of the 1st Marine Division. Col. Burke returned with his battalion for a second OIF deployment to support Regimental Combat Team 7 during the expansion of combat operations into the western Al Aribar province of Iraq.

Col. Burke holds three Master's degrees. In 1992, he earned a Master of Business Administration degree with an emphasis in International Business from National University, San Diego, CA, where he was a Leadership Scholarship recipient. In 1999, he earned a Master of Arts degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College, Newport, RI; he was recognized with three research and writing commendations. In 2006, he earned a Master of Science degree in National Resource Strategy with a concentration in Supply Chain Management from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Washington, DC; he was recognized as a Distinguished Academic Graduate and received a research and writing award for logistics excellence.

Col. Burke is a CTL, Certified in Transportation and Logistics by the American Society of Transportation and Logistics. He is a certified graduate of the Georgia Tech Professional Program in Supply Chain and Logistics. He is a graduate of the Marine Corps' School of Advanced Warfighting, a masters-level program that refines decision-making skills in complex environments. Col. Burke is also an Honor Graduate of the Marine Corps' Amphibious Warfare School.

The United States Marine Corps' Colonel Adrian W. Burke assumed command of the San Joaquin region Defense Logistics Agency Defense Distribution Center in July, 2010. His previous assignment was acting as the Director of Logistics for U.S. Forces Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom.

Col. Burke's personal decorations include: the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, two Bronze Star Medals, three Meritorious Service Medals, two Navy Commendation Medals, two Navy Achievement