

Consider the shining example of Cold War advocacy by the American Jewish community which championed the plight of Soviet Jewry with remarkable effect.

Could such passion be galvanized once again?

I'll close with the inspiring words of one of America's greatest presidents, Abraham Lincoln.

Speaking to a nation torn apart by bloody civil war, he still saw the importance of giving thanks, and in 1863 set apart the last Thursday of November for such a celebration declaring:

"We are prone to forget the Source from which [the blessings of fruitful years and healthful skies] come. . . . No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God. . . ."

While each of us may hail from varied backgrounds and beliefs, we know as Americans that religious freedom is our birthright—a gracious gift of the Most High God not to be denied by any man or government.

As we gather today and later next week with family and friends let us pause for a moment and give thanks for our first freedom while not forgetting those for whom this gracious gift is denied.

HONORING JOHN D. SLATER, SR. FOR HIS COURAGEOUS SERVICE IN WORLD WAR II

HON. BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding World War II service of Private John D. Slater, Sr.

Mr. Slater was born in 1919, just a year after the close of the First World War. He grew up in a country ravaged by the Great Depression and marked by segregation and Jim Crow. Mr. Slater lived in some of the deepest parts of the South, picking cotton as early as five years old.

When war broke out in Europe and reached our doorstep in the Pacific, Mr. Slater was drafted into the Army to serve and protect our country. He served in the 43rd Quartermaster Company and the 2nd Army.

Mr. Slater's company crossed the Rhine River on temporary bridges during heavy shelling, facing fierce opposition at every turn. By war's end, Mr. Slater had served in France, Belgium and Holland.

At one point, Mr. Slater was separated from his company behind enemy lines for three months before being found 1,000 miles from their destination point. In 1946, he was honorably discharged after four years in the Army.

Today, at 94 years old, Mr. Slater is one of only three remaining African Americans who fought in the Battle of the Bulge. During this, the last-gasp effort of the German army, the allied forces bent, but held and won the day—and the war. Mr. Slater was not only a witness to a defining moment in the world's history, he helped shape it.

After the war, Mr. Slater blazed his own trail, working for roughly 30 years with American Motors, starting in 1949, and opening Slater's Barbecue in Waukegan, Illinois, in the district I represent, in 1957. On weekends, for 40 years, he would cook his famous foot-longs and ribs, serving a gracious and eager community.

Mr. Slater has been a devoted husband and father and a pillar of the community for decades. Mr. Speaker, it is my great honor to recognize John D. Slater, Sr. for his service to our country and his impact in the community.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. BLAIR MAHONEY

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues Mr. GERLACH and Mr. PITTS to recognize Mr. Blair Mahoney for his distinguished leadership as Executive Director of the Chester County Conference & Visitors Bureau (CVB), and to congratulate him on his retirement.

For the past five years, Mr. Mahoney has helped make Chester County a destination for visitors from across the Commonwealth and the nation. He instituted strong leadership, sound fiscal planning, a historic office renovation and relocation, and an award-winning branding campaign. Through these efforts, Mr. Mahoney helped communicate Chester County's cultural, natural, and historic treasures to many and draw new visitors and economic development to our region.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize Blair Mahoney for his excellent service to the Chester County community and wish him well in his retirement. He takes with him the gratitude and respect of his staff, Board of Directors, peers and the people of Chester County.

SHARING STORIES IN SUPPORT OF COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

HON. JOE GARCIA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, the following are stories of individuals affected by our nation's broken immigration system:

Story 1: I came to this country in 1980 with the desire that all immigrants have—to seek better opportunities. I worked very hard to make my way in this country. I had the opportunity to apply for residency, thanks to the amnesty by President Ronald Reagan and the laws of this country. I presented the evidence required by the immigration process and my request was approved, giving me the temporary residence and my social security number.

After two years, I had to change from temporary residence to permanent residence, so I just had to request the change of status at any immigration office. I even was able to travel to Ecuador, and Immigration stamped my passport. Then, because my process was done in New Jersey but I had moved to Miami for personal reasons, in 1990 I went to the Immigration office in Miami. Since then, I have been subjected to negligence by Immigration. Instead of giving me the permanent residence, they just put a sticker to validate my temporary residence for one year more. That happened again the following year, and the third consecutive year after that. Then, they didn't want to give me the residency, because they said that LULAC cases in

Miami had been fraudulent, to which I responded that actually my case had been in New Jersey. They said that I had to bring my case from New Jersey to Miami, which took three more years. After that, I started wondering what was wrong with my case. They always responded to me with endless excuses: a fire took place at an immigration office and a lot of information was damaged, paperwork became too backed up when they had to put all the information of all cases in a computer system, elections were taking place, I needed to complete and return another form and get fingerprinted. I completed and returned the form, then I was fingerprinted and had to wait more. I trusted the agents of this country and the laws, so I waited and waited. They asked me to fill out another form and so on and on. I sent three forms and fingerprints but nothing happened.

Then the attacks on September 11, 2001, happened, which made things worse. There was no news at all. An executive order by President George Bush was released, ordering that immigration documents should be given to people who got Reagan's reform. I presented it and nothing happened. I called two or three times every month asking about my case and nothing happened. I was told that the process took up to six months, but I already had spent two years waiting and nothing. In 2005, I found out about a brain tumor through my medical exams. I received surgery and after that I couldn't work so I lived in a critical economic situation. I lost everything I had. That same year, there was another executive order request to resolve immigration cases because of the many complaints from victims of the immigration service. I sent documentation by mail to the correct address and on time, and they rejected it three times. I found an honest lawyer that took the case (pro bono, because of my financial situation), and from there I had legal representation. We sent copies of the pages with the LULAC law, and we always got negative responses, so we filed appeals but received again negative responses. They asked me for proofs that were impossible to find after 23 years, but nevertheless I was able to find some. All of this just to make me lose the hope of solving my case.

In the last response not only did they deny my case, but also they took away my temporary residence. I demand my permanent residency and a path to citizenship without more delay, because I have tried for over 24 years with my residency, in the name of God, Jehovah, and the signed and executed laws of this country. Don't allow injustice to win in this country. You are politicians first for this country.

Story 2: Alex came here when he was very young. He's from Honduras. Honduras is a very poor country. His family is very poor, but he speaks fairly fluent English. He came here to get a better life. There's no work in Honduras and very high crime. He came here when he was probably 17 or 18 years old. He hitched rides on trains, travelling on boxcars with only the clothes he had and no money. So, he basically crossed three countries, I believe Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico. When he got to this country, of course he came here illegally, but he ended up in Virginia and he then went to Knoxville, Tennessee. During the time he was in Virginia and Tennessee, he was greatly exploited by people who had him working for them. He was all alone. He had no relatives and did not know anyone here in the United States. He met a girl, who was maybe four or five years older than him. She already had one child by a man from Honduras. She and Alex hooked up together

and she got pregnant by Alex. They came down here to Pensacola after Hurricane Ivan, that's when I met Alex. By that time, he had married the girl. They had her child, and two children that they had together.

Alex was a great worker. I met him, actually, through a neighbor who he had worked for. So, we became friends. For a while there, I was in a wheelchair and Alex took care of me. He's just an incredible person. He just seems to have been born knowing what to do with children. He was a great father. He was great with older people and with people who have disabilities. He loved animals; he was constantly rescuing animals.

He came home one day, and when he got out of his car to walk into his house a police officer or sheriff's deputy, I'm not sure which, approached him and asked him for his ID and driver's license. He did not have a driver's license. He did have a previous traffic violation that he had not paid, again it was probably for driving without a license, so he was arrested. When he was taken to the Escambia County Jail, within a week, the ICE came through the jail making a sweep, looking for undocumented people, and they found Alex. From that time, Alex never got out of jail. He served a sentence, a short sentence for the traffic violation. He was subsequently sent to prison or a holding area in Texas where they incarcerate undocumented people. In the mean time, he had had another baby before he got arrested, so now they had three children and the little baby was only about, maybe, four months old at that time. As a result of Alex not being around to help financially take care of the children, his wife had a nervous breakdown and could not take care of the children and so she turned them in to foster care. The foster care mother, who got the children, I believe, got them with the full intent of adopting them because she knew these children from their nursery school. Alex has not seen his children since, and this has been about two and a half years ago. But, what he did do is he tried every way he could to get his children back; to get his children allowed to go to Honduras with him. He wrote numerous letters to his children. He sent those letters to me and I would send them to an attorney who was supposedly representing him in a dependency case. It became obvious to me that the foster mother was not letting the children read the letters that Alex wrote to them. He also was not allowed to call the children. She did not want him talking to his children, so he was not allowed to talk to them on the phone, they were not allowed to see his letters, he was not allowed to have any communication with his children. He eventually got deported. He continued trying to get his lawyer here to help him communicate with the children and to get a home study done there in Honduras in order for him to get his children back.

What I'm going to read are some letters to give you an example of the types of letters he wrote his children. After he was deported, he came back to the United States again. He came back on a train, hiking trains, riding on boxcars, going through three countries, no money, just the clothes on his back. He crossed the border and was apprehended by the border guards within minutes, so again he was in jail. But he came back only for one reason, and that was to get his children. I believe that was his only hope of getting his children back, was coming back to the United States.

It says, in beautiful writing, stylized writing, it says, "I love you," it says, "with all my heart. You are in my mind. I'm trying to be with all of you. But it's only me and God. I hope these people here let me stay with you because I really want and love you all. I hope you all like this. Kisses, hugs, love, your papa." I can't read anymore.

So, that's all I'm going to read, Alex.

Alex: Yeah, I know and I've been thinking about them and this thing, you know. But, there's nothing I can do, so maybe I'll see them one day.

Well, I don't know what we can do, but we certainly are going to let people know what happened to you, okay?

Alex: Yeah And, hopefully, we can do something with your book, and at least, maybe one day, when they're older, I believe they will find you and this book. They will know how much you love them and that you fought for them and what you went through to get them back.

Story 3: My story begins in 1998 when my mom and my three sisters decided to come, well, my mom decided that we all would come to the United States as a result of my little sister being sick. We did not have the money to cure her. She needed surgery and stuff. I was in high school and had no money for college, even though education was one of the things that made my mom determined that we come to America. So then I came to Mexico with my mom and my three sisters. In 1998 we crossed through Arizona and arrived in Florida about two weeks later. When I got here, the obvious thing was for me to study. My goal was always only to collect enough money to pay my university in Mexico. Once we got here we found work, but I had an accident about three months after I got here and then for a while, like a year and a half, I had to go and live in Colorado with my brother because I could not work. I had an accident at work and I never got compensation or anything. I have hands that do not work very well, mostly my fingers, because I had to have a transplant in my hands because I lost part of my bones and tendons in the accident. There are many who are injured on the job and are entitled to be served, to receive therapies and receive a salary. But at the time I was a child, I was 18 if I remember correctly, and I had not filed an application. It was just one of those jobs where you say you go, then the company denied that I had registered, but I said, "If I was taken from there, the fire department took me out of work," but I did not have insurance, I did not have a social worker to help me, I had no one. I had to pay all expenses. I did not know the language or the laws. I came across a social worker when I was in the hospital and they told me that if I tried to do something with the company all that would happen was that I would be deported. What remained was a deep depression after the accident because I could not work and was in therapy for over a year. But I still had the dream of wanting to study. Then I had to learn to deal with my condition, not being stuck at this point. Since my accident, I could not carry heavy things when I was at work, but I still had to work. I try to do everything with one hand because I cannot put much weight on the other hand. Right now I live with someone and I have two small children, one age six and one four, and I live with my sister. All my immediate family is in the United States. My mom passed away about twelve or thirteen years ago and is buried here in Florida. I say deport me if I'm not going to have even the right to visit the grave of my mother. This is not politics, these are human lives. Maybe I do not speak perfect English, or write perfect English, but my life is in this country. If I were deported to Mexico I will be foreign in that country, because I already have been living here for many years. I have no family there, it's like I will be tossed into a city I do not know. My sister took care of her residence when my brother-in-law married her. I have a U.S. citizen sister who was born in this country, and my other sister, Andrea, was still a minor when my mother died. Of all my siblings, I

am the only one who does not have legal status. I have an application but that supposedly takes many years and I have gotten no response. This is not politics; we are human beings of flesh and blood. For many it is very easy to say why we came here illegally, they don't see the need to leave our home countries. They do not know what it is to have someone get sick and not have to medicine. They do not know what it is to go three days without eating. This is not politics, these are human lives.

Story 4: I came to the United States 13 years ago. I am undocumented, I have two kids, one who was born here. I'm with my husband. We fled from Nicaragua because even though the Sandinista government was in power, there was still a threat from the mobs, and our lives were in danger. It's for that reason that we decided to come to this country. We asked for political asylum, for which we were denied, because according to the United States, Nicaragua has a democracy, which is not true. Everything is limited by the Sandinista government. I say yes to citizenship and yes to immigration reform, because I feel a part of this great nation, because I pay my taxes, because my daughters have adopted this lifestyle, because my country doesn't have economic priorities, it doesn't enjoy democracy as it should be. For those reasons I would like immigration reform. I say yes to citizenship so I have the ability to buy my house, so I can keep studying, so that I don't have to be nervous to keep driving without a license, so that I don't have to keep having to fear if my husband will come back or if it will be the last day that we see him. I ask the legislators to give us the opportunity for a new path to citizenship.

Story 5: I've been living here for 23 years. I came from Mexico and I've worked very hard in this country. I left ahead of my family in Mexico. Here too. I'm tired of living in the shadows. I have a son who is an American citizen, and I thought that when he turned 21 we could ask immediately, but that not the case because we came here illegally. I say yes to citizenship, for everyone like me that has worked hard, that pays their taxes and that haven't asked the government for anything. I say yes to give us an opportunity to move forward.

Story 6: I have 23 years here, and I like that Rep. Dennis Ross is making laws here that bring people hired from Mexico to here. That doesn't benefit me because I've been here for 23 years and I want to help people who are here, not the ones that are going to come. I say yes to reform for the 11 million undocumented people that are here. I'm going through a problem with immigration. I have for kids who are citizens here, I have my house, I pay taxes. Unfortunately, if there's no solution by May 7th, I'll be deported. I ask Denis Ross to support me with a green card or papers so that I won't be deported, because I want to see my family united, I don't want to be separated from my kids so they're not left on their own.

Story 7: I'm Cuban and I come from the Apopka Farmer's Association. My goal in participating in the caravan because I am also an immigrant, even though it's legal, but I'm an immigrant, my main goal is to support people who are illegal and are fighting for immigration reform. I understand that they have come here for work, to give to this country, and when I think of all of them that have come to contribute to the society of the United States, they deserve the

right to be a legal citizen.

Story 8: I'm saying yes to citizenship. I'm a social worker. As a social worker at Hialeah hospital, I came in contact with a victim of domestic violence. The woman, I spoke to her, listened to her, built trust with her and I was able to connect her to a women's shelter. She was, during our conversation, she was very scared of having contact with the police because she was undocumented, and it was, you know, I worked with her and at the end I was able to connect her to the women's shelter. Her abuser was, he was a citizen, a Cuban-American or a Cuban citizen, and he would manipulate her because of her immigration status.

Story 9: Hello, I am saying yes to citizenship and yes to immigration reform for illegal immigrants here in the United States. I am a United States citizen and my parents are illegal immigrants. They've been in this country for about 23 years, 24 years, and usually, I was born in Oregon, and usually at the age of 21 I believed I would be able to grant them a path to citizenship. When I turned 20, I started investigating and talking with lawyers to see how they would be able to get that accomplished and it turns out that it wasn't that easy, wasn't that simple and I wasn't able to get them a path to be a resident, to go ahead with this process to become a US citizen. It didn't work. I'm just, I've been time and time again, for every lawyer, kind of lawyers, immigration lawyers, everything, to marches of, to say yes to immigration reform and I just feel like right now is the right time to just keep pushing forward and I say yes to all the families and everyone. We the immigrants, most immigrants, everyone's an immigrant in the United States, and it's just hurtful that those immigrants make up part of this economy and help with the economic growth and to keep taking these parents away from their children and keep separating families, it's not the way this country was built and I'm just calling to say that I'm saying yes to immigration reform and yes for a pathway to citizenship for all illegal immigrants.

RECOGNIZING THE WHIPPLE WARRIORS

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Whipple Warriors, a group founded by Ronda Bogani Ayala of West Palm Beach, Florida. This organization is dedicated to helping people with pancreatic cancer who qualify for a procedure known as "Whipple" surgery.

Pancreatic cancer is a heart-breaking disease with a very low life expectancy. About 3 out of 4 patients die within the first year of diagnosis. Whipple surgery can help increase the life expectancy of those diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, though only about 15 percent of patients qualify for this dangerous and complicated procedure.

In January 2010, Ms. Ayala received the devastating diagnosis of pancreatic cancer. However, she was a candidate for the Whipple surgery. After her procedure she found very few resources for support and guidance. She decided to create an organization called the Whipple Warriors in 2011.

The Whipple Warriors provide support to patients in many countries, allowing patients to

discuss their experiences and share ways to cope with the cancer. Additionally, Whipple Warriors members participate in research to study the long-term effects on the body. They provide much-needed resources to the growing community of survivors around the world.

In honor of Ronda and her organization's tireless work for the pancreatic cancer community, I am pleased to recognize the Whipple Warriors and wish them continued success in this important endeavor.

RECOGNIZING THE U.S.-MOROCCAN ECONOMIC AND SECURITY PART- NERSHIP

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, this week I had the pleasure of attending a business meeting with a high level delegation from Morocco during His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco's visit to Washington. During this meeting, we discussed U.S.-Morocco trade and I am glad that FedEx, a major provider of high value-added logistics, transportation and other business services that is headquartered in my district, was also able to take part in this constructive meeting. As Morocco was the first country with whom the U.S. signed a treaty of commerce and friendship, I commend this week's meeting as symbolic of our long and trusted relationship.

The business delegation meeting was hosted by our former colleague, Toby Moffet, and the Mayer Brown law firm. The Moroccan delegation included: Mr. Abdessalam Ahizoune, CEO of Maroc Telecom; Mr. Mohamed El Kettani, CEO of Attijariwafa Bank; Mr. Karim Hajji, CEO of the Casablanca Stock Exchange; and Mr. Said Ibrahim, CEO of the Moroccan Finance Board. In addition to FedEx, which is present in 55 African countries and growing, American companies represented at the meeting were JP Morgan Chase, BNY Mellon, Citi, Bank of America, Chevron and the Global Cold Chain Storage Alliance. We heard from Mr. Said Ibrahim, who also serves as the head of the Casablanca Finance City project, on how the city of Casablanca is positioning itself as a location for U.S. multinational companies to consider for their African headquarters. This would significantly increase economic opportunities in the region and expand markets for U.S. companies.

In addition to our strong business ties, the U.S. and Morocco share similar democratic values and common foreign policy goals in North Africa and the Middle East. In August 2011, I spearheaded a letter to His Majesty King Mohammed VI recognizing Morocco's constitutional reforms that included protections for the rights of vulnerable groups and a national plan to promote human rights. His Majesty King Mohammed VI also established the Economic and Social Council to ensure that all Moroccans are afforded opportunities for economic independence. Since that time, His Majesty King Mohammed VI has shown great leadership in his dedication to his people and support for broader democratic reforms and decentralization of decision-making to the local level. Morocco has also lent its support to

emerging democracies across the African continent as well as long-overdue peace agreements between Israelis and the Palestinians. It is indeed refreshing to see the enormously constructive role Morocco continues to play not only in its region but across the continent and beyond.

As we welcome His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco and his delegation to Washington, let us remember that Morocco was the first country to recognize our independence and that today, we share commitments to peace, democracy, regional stability and economic stability. Through our continued cooperation and increased business relationships, we will continue to meet our common security and economic goals while strengthening our relationship for years to come.

RECOGNIZING HONOREES AND OF- FICERS OF THE ANNANDALE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Annandale Volunteer Fire Department, and to congratulate the 2013 award recipients and incoming 2014 officers and board members.

The Annandale Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department is 1 of 12 volunteer fire departments in Fairfax County, and since its founding in 1940, it has provided lifesaving, fire suppression/prevention, and emergency medical/rescue services to the residents of the Annandale area and the surrounding community. The AVFD owns two stations, Station 8 on Columbia Pike and Station 23 on Little River Turnpike, and its front line fleet includes ambulances, a medic, 2 engines, and 1 canteen unit. The Department also provides opportunities for professional growth and development of the membership.

The most valuable assets of the AVFD are the volunteers who donate their time and resources in service to our community. Last year alone, these highly skilled and committed volunteers contributed in excess of 15,000 hours responding to emergency incidents, attending training, and fundraising. Each year the AVFD recognizes those volunteers who have excelled in service and commitment, and it is my honor to enter the following names of the 2013 Annandale Volunteer Fire Department into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Outstanding Service Award (5 recipients): Steve Menger, Walt Ferrebee, Lisa Lieu, Leslie Plummer, and Kathleen Hinman

Highest Admin Hours Award: Shirley Binsky
Admin Member of the Year: Anthony Ruth
Rookie Members of the Year (2 recipients): Chessy Dintruff and Roberto Melgar

Most Training Hours: Suzanne Adams
Most Riding Hours: Tiffany Disbrow
Support Member of the Year: Fran Carfaro

President's Award (2 recipients): Michael Hassan and Diana Phan
Chief's Award (2 recipients): Sean Beatty and Tiffany Disbrow

John G. Fox, Jr. Memorial Award (2 recipients): Ronald Waller and Laura Dye