

the beginning of last year. The power company placed part of the blame on the burdensome cost of federal environmental regulation.

The resulting slowdown in demand and surge in costly regulation have forced coal mines to shut down or reduce production. Last summer, the head of a Western PA coal company attributed the idling of some of its mines to the escalating costs and uncertainty caused by EPA regulations.

Layoffs caused by shuttering of power plants and idling of coal mines—and job losses in related industries—devastate middle-class workers, their families, and their communities.

It is too easy for unelected federal elites in Washington to write regulations without an understanding of the human costs of their actions.

That is why I am working with my colleagues to pass the REINS Act. The REINS Act will provide a check and balance on the Obama Administration by requiring that any regulation with an annual economic impact of \$100 million or more be subject to the approval of the House and Senate. Last week, I voted in favor of the REINS Act in the House Judiciary Committee. The Act was approved and now moves to the full House for consideration.

Middle-class moms and dads, coal miners, seniors, and those on fixed incomes deserve the support of all of my colleagues in the House and Senate on a pro-growth agenda. I call on both chambers to pass the REINS Act as a good first step towards sensible regulation that helps grow all parts of our economy.

There is a war on coal in this country, and it needs to stop. It's time to keep the lights on in America. It's time to relight America, and we need to do that here in this House and stop this war on coal.

With that, I thank the gentleman from Kentucky.

Mr. BARR. I thank the gentleman.

I would now like to yield to the gentlelady from Wyoming.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentleman for yielding and hosting this Special Order.

Wyoming is the largest coal-producing State in the Nation. It has been since 1986. The 10 largest coal mines in the United States are in the State of Wyoming. And we're having trouble exporting our coal. Even if Americans don't want to use it and would disadvantage themselves in comparison to other countries, we'd like to send it overseas to people who want it.

Who wants it? I'll show you.

China, India, and even Turkey wants our coal. Yet here's the United States, this little dot. This is all the United States wants. It's silly, given this tremendous resource the United States has that produces jobs and revenue and electricity that keeps our manufacturing competitive, to have to send it to those other countries. They want it because they want what we have. They want inexpensive, affordable, abundant energy so their people can manufacture.

We need to protect these jobs in manufacturing. We need to protect the affordability and the reliability by keep-

ing these resources working at home for Americans with American energy.

Mr. BARR. I thank the gentlelady.

I appreciate all of my colleagues here this evening talking about and highlighting the importance of the future of energy freedom in this country and independence.

I would like to yield the balance of our time to the gentleman from California.

Mr. LAMALFA I appreciate my colleague from Kentucky having this conversation tonight and allowing me to speak on it.

Being from California, we don't have a lot of coal in California, and we don't really use a lot of it either. But what I would like to point out is we have a very similar plight in that many of our industries have been devastated by out-of-control regulations by Federal Government: our timber industry, mining, our ability to trap more water for our water supply. Agriculture is also being affected by overreaching regulations.

Also, coal is very important for our entire Nation, and it does have an effect on California, too. What I'm saying here is that, with 42 percent of our Nation's grid being powered by coal and a mandate coming down from the EPA and the President's very aggressive remarks saying that coal is a thing of the past, we're going to put our country in great peril by devastating this industry for our electricity grid. For all the many jobs that are all over the eastern part of this country and part of the West, we're really going to hurt ourselves in this country with this type of policy.

□ 1830

In California, we've seen the effects, for example, in that we have a self-inflicted mandate that makes it where California can no longer use coal, and we've devolved down to only 8 percent as part of our grid—and getting lower. So we're going to be seeing higher and higher energy costs in our State. Why would we want to do this to the rest of our Nation here? California's energy costs are 14 cents per kilowatt while the Nation's average is about 10 cents.

That's why we see an exodus of business from the State of California and their moving to other States. If we do this type of thing in this country, this mandate, we're going to see a bigger exodus to places like China, where they don't have near our environmental regulations. Indeed, China's smoke plume comes over in the jet stream and affects California. We're going backwards with this type of mandate, with this type of policy.

So, for many reasons, I think it's key that we support the coal industry in America—for our economy and for our electricity grid. For those who want to be agitators against coal, then they should be the first ones to sit in the dark, in the cold, from not having electricity on the grid.

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

IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from California (Mr. VARGAS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. VARGAS. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I appreciate it.

I would first like to say and take a moment to remember the victims of the Boston attack. Certainly, my prayers and the prayers of all of us here go to the families and everyone affected.

I had the great opportunity to go to Harvard Law School and to graduate from that school and spend 3 years there. I ran the marathon once. Usually, when you finish the marathon, it's a great celebration. It's an incredible time. The people there are so friendly, so nice, and everyone is excited. So what this horrible tragedy has done is unbelievable, and our prayers go out to each and every one affected.

I also rise today in recognition of the need for our great Nation to address immigration reform. Tomorrow, many evangelical churches are scheduled to come to the Capitol to pray for just and merciful immigration reform. I want to welcome them here. I think it is about time that we listened to some of the voices of these pastors, to some of the voices of their congregations. I welcome them here, and I'm very, very excited about their presence here at the Capitol tomorrow. I know that they will be praying for us. I know that they will be here to open up our hearts and to listen to what immigration reform can do for us, which is to set us on a path of not only more justice but a more merciful path, so I am very excited about tomorrow.

I want to put this in the context of what has been happening in the United States because of our immigration laws, and I'd like read an excerpt from *The New York Times*. This is entitled, "Immigration Status of Army Spouses Often Leads to Snags":

Lieutenant Kenneth Tenebro enlisted in the Armed Forces after the September 11 terrorist attacks, signing up even before he became an American citizen. He served one tour of duty in Iraq, dodging roadside bombs . . . but throughout that . . . mission, he harbored a fear he did not share with anyone in the military. Lieutenant Tenebro worried that his wife, Wilma, back home in New York with their infant daughter, would be deported. Wilma, who like her husband was born in the Philippines, is an undocumented immigrant.

"That was our fear all the time," he said. When he called home, "She often cried about it," he said. "Like, hey, what's going to happen? Where will I leave my daughter?"

It goes on and explains:

Like Lieutenant Tenebro, many soldiers, anticipating rebuke and possibly damage to their careers, do not reveal to others in the military their family ties to immigrants here illegally.

Mrs. Tenebro is snagged on a statute, notorious among immigration lawyers, that makes it virtually impossible for her to become a legal resident without first leaving

the United States and staying away for 10 years.

So our current law requires that the wife of this brave American soldier leave the country for 10 years before her status can be legalized. There are very few things that I can think of that are less just than that law, and that law must be changed.

I want to thank the Senators, the Group of Eight—I don't like the word "gang" because I'm from California, and there it has a very negative connotation. I don't think of the Senators as gangs or as anything other than good guys over there, so I want to thank the Group of Eight that has come forward with these proposals, because I think these proposals are very, very important.

You might think that Wilma and Lieutenant Tenebro are unique, but they're not. In fact, we've heard testimony here, interestingly. A brave marine said something in such stark terms that I'll never forget it. He came and told his story, and he said this:

I've been through two tours of duty in Iraq, and I'm going back to Afghanistan. I'm not afraid of dying, "because that's what soldiers do."

I thought that was really stark. He's not afraid of dying in fighting for our country, but what he said he was afraid of was that his wife might be deported. It was the exact same thing as Lieutenant Tenebro. His fear was not that he would be killed in action. His fear was that his wife would be deported. He said, What will I do then with my two children? What will happen with my two children if they deport my wife?

He told the story that he met his wife at church. I understand from him she's a beautiful young lady. They fell in love, they got married, and they began to have children. The next thing he thinks about is—well, he gets deployed to fight for his country, and he's proud to do it, but his fear is that his wife and his kids will be separated, that the family will be broken.

He did a very interesting thing that I've heard a couple of soldiers do now. He has covered his wife's car with "Go, Marines. My husband is a marine in Iraq." He says he has blanketed his car with that, suspecting that they won't pull her over for a minor traffic issue because, if they do pull her over, the police will find out that she does not have a driver's license because she's not a citizen. So his fear is that they're going to deport her. What will become then of their kids?

Again, he's not unique. We also met here—and he testified over in the Senate—a gentleman who was an Army soldier. He was in the Army. He went to Iraq, and unfortunately, he was injured. He then came home, and thank God for his loving wife, who has taken care of him, and his children. He has the opportunity then to live with them, but they live in fear. He says:

I'm captured here. I am a prisoner of my country. I'm afraid to go anywhere because I can't drive. My wife drives, but my wife's un-

documented. I am afraid that they're going to pull us over and they're going to deport her. Then what am I supposed to do? How am I going to take care of myself and my kids?

This is a very unjust law. This law has to be changed. How can it be that we can allow this? One of our brave soldiers is called by his Nation to fight. He fights and he's injured. He comes home, and his loving wife takes care of him, and his fear is that his wife is going to be deported. We have to change this law. We have to change this law because it's unjust.

I would like to take a moment to review what our immigration law is, because a lot of people say, Well, you know, these people broke the law. They broke the law. Maybe they should be deported. Maybe the soldier's wife should be deported. She broke the law. I would say this: let's take a look at the law because the law is very interesting. I'm an attorney, and I can tell you this, that the law usually is divided in a very special way, and that is: malum in se and malum prohibitum.

□ 1840

So what is malum in se? Malum in se is this. Malum in se means the thing is wrong or bad in itself. It's malum in itself. Malum in se. So, for example, murder, murder is illegal because it's malum in se. It's always wrong. It's bad. It's wrong to murder and it's illegal to murder, so that's malum in se.

So what is malum prohibitum? Malum prohibitum is it's bad or wrong or illegal because it's prohibited, not because it's wrong or immoral in itself. So the act itself is not wrong; it's simply illegal because we make it illegal. A good example is the speed limit. You could be traveling 56 miles an hour in a 55-mile-an-hour zone. Now you've broken the law, but have you done something immoral? Have you done something wrong? Well, you broke the law, but you know what? You didn't endanger anybody. And, in fact, your car is built to go safely at 56 miles an hour. The road, we call them in California freeways, the freeway was built to do 70, so you're actually obeying common sense. So it's illegal only because it's malum prohibitum, because we created the law, not because it's wrong in itself. And, in fact, we often change the law because we say that's a silly law. It doesn't make sense to travel 55 miles an hour on a freeway, so we change the law to 70. Although I drove through Texas, and I see that they have 75. They think it's safe at 75, which is great. I'm sure it is. And so they changed the law. Why they'd change the law, because there's nothing wrong or immoral about it. It's simply malum prohibitum, so they changed the law. That's what we have to do with our immigration laws.

When a person comes here to work, when a wife like Wilma lives here with her husband, she's not violating any type of moral law. She's violating malum prohibitum, a law that we made that we can change.

So let's review, then, a little bit of the immigration laws in our Nation.

The Naturalization Act of 1790 stated that Congress adopted the uniform rule so that any free white person could apply for citizenship after 2 years of residency. So if you were here, if you lived here for 2 years, you could become a resident.

Then there were minor changes, and in 1882, we had the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. It was the first Federal immigration law that suspended Chinese immigration for 10 years and barred Chinese in the U.S. from becoming citizens. A terrible law that, of course, we changed. Why? Because it was malum prohibitum. It was a dumb law. It was an immoral law. We changed it, and we should've changed it. Thank God we changed it.

Then in 1892 we opened up Ellis Island. No one ever talks about California, by the way. We had Angel Island located in San Francisco. Not as many people went through Angel Island. In fact, between 1892 and 1953, in Ellis Island we had over 12 million immigrants that were processed in that facility. Angel Island had nowhere near that.

What was the law then? The law said this: first-and second-class passengers, those on ships, were not required to undergo inspections at Ellis Island unless they were sick or had legal problems. So, in other words, you showed up; come on in. That's the law. That was the law. You showed up; come on in. You're in first-class, second-class on a ship, yup, come on through. No problem.

Third-class passengers had to undergo a medical and legal inspection. If in good health and papers in order, the process took 3 to 5 hours, and then they were citizens. That was the law. That was the law. So it's very interesting when people say, Well, we did it the right way. My ancestors did it the right way.

They came here. There was basically no law. All you had to do was walk in. It was very interesting.

Then there were minor changes. But in 1986, we had a major change—the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. It is also known as the Simpson-Mazzoli Act. And what this law did, it set a ceiling of 540,000 immigrants a year. It also required employers to attest to their employees' immigration status, that they were here legally, and made it illegal to knowingly hire or recruit unauthorized immigrants. It legalized certain seasonal agricultural immigrants, and it legalized illegal immigrants who entered the United States before January 1, 1982, and had resided here in the United States continuously.

And who signed the law? Ronald Reagan. Ronald Reagan signed the law. It's very interesting because I'm a Californian. Ronald Reagan, even though he is from Illinois originally, we claim him as one of our own. We're very proud of Ronald Reagan in California,

and even as a Democrat, I'm very proud of Ronald Reagan. I've always liked Ronald Reagan. I thought he was a good man, and I think he set a great example. He certainly set a great example when it came to immigration. He looked at the humanity of the immigrants here, and I'll read a couple of quotes from him a little later on, but he signed it, and it was something he never regretted. He never regretted. Just the opposite. He said, I regretted raising taxes in California and a bunch of other bills that he signed when he was still a fairly young Governor, but he never regretted this. Just the opposite; it was something that he was proud of.

So what now? Where do we go from here? I think what we should do is we should remember the people that are coming tomorrow, the evangelical pastors and churches, and thank them for coming and opening our hearts. I want to read a few letters from both Catholic priests, pastors and a rabbi, and see what they think about immigration because it has been very interesting. I do watch here some of the speeches that are given, and I have to say that they're very negative about immigrants. You hear about all the terrible things, the parade of horrors that some people come up here and talk about day after day after day, and you'd think that most immigrants are terrible. It would be as if I came up here and talked about some of the terrible things that some mothers do, and say, Well, mothers are terrible. We should get rid of mothers. That's ridiculous.

The reality is most immigrants are very hardworking people. They come here for a better life. They work hard. I want to read a few letters from pastors and priests and a rabbi that talks to this and puts it into the context of Scriptures because I think it is very important. Obviously they are here tomorrow because they read the Scriptures, they believe in the Scriptures, and that's why they're here tomorrow; and I want to put this debate within that context because I think that we are a very fair and merciful people. I think we need to put this immigration debate within the context of our faith communities, and so I'm going to read this letter.

The first letter is from Father Scott Santarosa. He's the pastor at Dolores Mission Catholic Church in Los Angeles, California. He's a Jesuit. He addresses this letter to me and it reads like this:

Dear Congressman Vargas,

I applaud your enthusiastic support of comprehensive immigration reform that includes a pathway to citizenship. I believe you are correct in stating, as you did before the House of Representatives last week, that immigration reform is one of the most pressing moral issues of our time.

He says it's "one of our most pressing moral issues of our time."

He goes on and says:

The truth is there are numerous biblical reasons for advocating for immigration reform. Indeed, our Judeo-Christian history as people is built on immigration, and Jesus, who himself is the new covenant with us, calls us to be compassionate to all.

He goes on and says:

Early in Genesis, we find God's exhortation to Abraham: "Leave your country, your people, and your father's household and go to the land I will show you."

That's from Genesis 12:1.

He goes on and says:

God makes a promise to Abraham to make him a great nation. It is a promise of a better life, a better future.

Again, a quote from the Bible:

"I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, so that you will be a blessing."

Genesis 12:2-3.

This is God's calling his people to immigration as their pathway to greatness, and we of Christian and Jewish faith cannot deny that our roots are built on immigration, on God's call to us to be migrants.

And once we arrive at our destination, we cannot rest there, but we must remember what it was to be immigrants, to be aliens. God instructs us, His people, "to love those who are aliens for you, yourselves, were aliens in Egypt" (Deuteronomy 10:19) and to treat strangers by providing a place of rest, food, and hospitality: "Let some water be brought that you may bathe your feet and then rest yourselves under the tree. Now that you have come close to your servant, let me bring you a little food that you may refresh yourselves." (Genesis 18:4-5)

□ 1850

Scripture is clear on the treatment of the immigrant. We read this time and again in passages like the following:

"When an alien lives with you in your land, do not mistreat him. The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born."

I'm going to read that again:

"When an alien lives with you in your land, do not mistreat him. The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born. Love him as yourself, for you were aliens in Egypt. I am the Lord your God." (Leviticus 19:33-34)

Then Father goes on and quotes from Deuteronomy:

"Cursed is the man who withholds justice from the alien, the fatherless or the widow."

He then quotes Exodus 23:9:

"Do not mistreat the alien or oppress him, for you were aliens in Egypt. Do not oppress an alien; you yourselves know what it feels to be aliens, because you were aliens in Egypt."

Father Santarosa goes on and says:

Jesus himself is an immigrant, as very early in His life He and His parents, Mary and Joseph, are forced to flee to Egypt for His safety. We must understand that His heritage as a Jewish person and as an immigrant informed His teachings on how we are called to treat the other, in particular the most vulnerable among us. Jesus goes so far as to say that how we treat the least among us, namely, the immigrant, is how we treat him: "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me in. I needed clothes and you clothed me. I was sick and you looked after me. I was in prison and you came to visit

me." (Matthew 25:35-36). Jesus clearly mandates that we are to treat the immigrant and the alien as we would treat Jesus himself.

Other New Testament readings after Jesus continue to emphasize the just and humane treatment of our immigrant brothers and sisters. First, we read that we, though perhaps not actual immigrants, are called to see ourselves as people who have no home here on Earth, that our destination is beyond this world: "But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a Savior" (Philippians 3:20) and "Beloved, I urge you as aliens and sojourners to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against the soul." (1 Peter 2:11).

And second, we are called to be just and fair in our treatment of immigrants. "Contribute to the needs of the holy ones. Exercise hospitality." (Romans 12:13). "Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels." (Hebrews 13:1-2).

He goes on and says:

In sum, as people of Judeo-Christian heritage, and as people of faith, we cannot escape or get around Jesus' call to exercise hospitality towards our immigrant brothers and sisters. Jesus' call to love one another as He loves us requires that we not simply do the least or the minimum just to get by, for that is not how He has loved us. Jesus has loved us to the maximum. So, also, we are called to go above and beyond what could be expected in order to love others. In this country, this would imply granting full citizenship to our undocumented brothers and sisters. Less than this would be creating a level of society that is devalued as persons, and this would be in direct violation of everything that Jesus teaches. To be a person of value in this democratic country is to be a person with a voice, a person with a vote. This is the democratic foundation of our country.

He goes on and ends like this:

Thank you for reading this letter to fellow leaders in Congress. I, together with my parishioners of Dolores Mission, and with 26 other multi-faith congregations of Los Angeles, and 1 million families in 150 cities of this country which make up PICO, am praying for your good discernment as you propose to enact an immigration reform which is just and humane, rooted in our faith and biblical values.

Gratefully and faithfully yours,

Father Reverend Scott Santarosa, S.J., Society of Jesus, Pastor.

I want to thank Father Santarosa. I want to let him know that tomorrow he will have help here. He will have plenty of help from the evangelical ministers and pastors that will be here tomorrow on hand to open up the hearts and the minds of those that are not yet convinced that we have to have a humane, a just, and a merciful immigration reform package. And I thank him.

The second letter that I'd like to read is from Father Sean Carroll. Father Sean Carroll is the executive director at the Kino Border Initiative for Nogales, Arizona, and Nogales, Sonora, Mexico. He also addresses the letter to me and says this:

Dear Congressman Vargas:

Since 2009 I have been working with deported migrant men, women and children along the U.S./Mexico border. These past 4 years I have witnessed firsthand their brokenness in body and spirit when they are deported due to days and weeks in detention

and forced separation from their spouses and children. I have held the hand of the mother separated from her children in Chicago, and listened to the father deported away from his two children in North Dakota. I have been present with the mother so far apart from her children in New York and with the son seeking to be reunited with his mother in Central California.

He goes on and says:

I know God calls us not to oppress the widow, the orphan and the stranger (Exodus 22:21-22 and Deuteronomy 27:19) and yet I have been a witness to how we essentially make widows out of women migrants when we deport them away from their husbands in the United States. I am also keenly aware of how we turn U.S. citizen children into orphans by repatriating their migrant parents to Mexico and placing their sons and daughters in foster care. And I see the ways we reject the stranger in our midst, the person seeking a better life for themselves and their families, the one who in the Gospel of Matthew (25:35-40) reflects the presence of Jesus himself.

What would happen if we accepted God's invitation to remember the moments that we were in exile (Exodus 22:21), the times when we felt like strangers, and to recall how God has led us through those experiences to new life? My memory of God's action in my own struggles and challenges compels me in gratitude to put this Word of God into practice in the here and now, to support a path to citizenship for our undocumented sisters and brothers, to reunify family members separated due to mixed immigration status, and to provide some ways for people that come to work in the United States with dignity and with their human rights respected.

Jesus quotes the book of Isaiah (61:1-2) when He opens the scroll and says, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. Today, this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." (Luke 4:16-19; 21). I firmly believe that God has given us the gift of His Spirit, the same Spirit that Jesus breathed on His friends when he rose from the dead (John 20:19-22). It is a spirit that empowers us to make the promise and command of the word, God's word, a reality, by working for comprehensive immigration reform.

□ 1900

He concludes by saying this:

Please count on my prayers for you and the other Members of Congress, as you follow God's word on this issue of great importance for us as a country and as a people of faith.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Reverend Sean Carroll, Society of Jesus
Executive Director
Kino Border Initiative
Nogales, Arizona, and Nogales, Sonora, Mexico.

Thank you, Father Carroll. I appreciate that very much.

Father Carroll very poignantly says that our policy today makes orphans out of children of migrants.

Recently, I had the opportunity in San Diego to listen to a young lady who is very accomplished in her short life. I believe she's 17 years old. She's very excited about going to college next year. She attends the Preuss School. It's a magnet school at UCSD. She has very, very good grades and is

excited about college. We're very excited for her. She started off with a great tempo and we thought wow, this is going to be a great story. She's a lovely young person. She was telling her story and we were all excited to listen and hear what was going on in her life. And then she stopped for a moment, sort of an awkward cadence, and started crying. She said, Of course, my parents have just been deported. She said she didn't know what to do because her parents had been deported.

It really was a shocking moment to me to listen to her because she's an American citizen, she was born here, but her parents are undocumented immigrants. Right at the moment of great accomplishment, the moment of great pride for her, and I'm certain for her parents, her parents are pulled away, not because they're terrible, not because they have done anything wrong other than try to provide a better life for themselves and for their daughter, but because they're undocumented.

The good thing is that we have a chance to do something about this. We have a chance to pass immigration reform that's merciful, that lives up to the values that we hold dearly in this country. And so I'm very excited about this reform. I'm very excited about tomorrow, frankly. I have to be honest and say I've always been in favor of immigration reform. I thought that President Reagan got it right, that we should have a humane policy towards immigrants. I think he was following certainly the Good Book. I appreciate Ronald Reagan, and I appreciate all those that felt like him previously.

I've always thought that we should have immigration reform that makes sense. But not everyone was always convinced of this. In fact, a few years ago, I had a conversation with a pastor in San Diego who was pretty sour on the notion that we should give an opportunity for the people that came here without documents to stay. We got into a heated but loving discussion. I do love the pastor. He's a great guy. But we got into somewhat a heated discussion. I said, I don't see how this tracks the Bible. I know the Bible pretty well. I studied to be a priest myself for 5 years. So I certainly read the Good Book and am humbled by what's in there. I said, I challenge you to go through there and find a place that criticizes the immigrant, that criticizes the stranger. Because it's just the opposite.

Anyway, we got into a theological discussion. And we remain friends. I met him again recently and he told me that he was praying for me and for the rest of us in Congress to pass a very comprehensive, just, merciful reform package. And I said, Pastor, I remember our conversation. He says, Yes, so do I. He said, I was wrong. I said, What happened? He said, I want to say it was simply the Bible. I read it. But the reality is my congregation has changed. We evangelize. That's our mission. I'm

an evangelizing preacher here, and in my evangelization I have brought in people who are undocumented. And they're wonderful. They come, they pray. They make my church a better place. Some of them have married, he mentioned two people, in fact, who were in the Navy, the people in his congregation. He says, I've changed. I was wrong about them.

So I thank the evangelical churches, most of whom now are ardent supporters of immigration reform, a comprehensive immigration reform that's just, that's merciful, that leads to citizenship so people are not second-class citizens. I want to thank them.

Tomorrow, I know that they're going to have an opportunity to mix among us Congress Members and senators. And I hope that we have an open heart to receive them and to receive their words because I think they're here on a good mission.

I would like to read a letter from Mark Potter. He is the Provincial Assistant for the Social Ministries at the California Province, Society of Jesus, the Jesuits. And it reads like this:

In the Hebrew scriptures the story of Israel is a story of a people on the move, called by God to migrate and to become strangers in strange lands, motivated by God's promise of something better—a better life, a better future: "The Lord said to Abram: 'Go forth from your land, your relatives, and from your father's house to a land that I will show you.'" This is how the people of Abraham wound up in Egypt, where they were forced into captivity. The Egypt experience of being enslaved because they were immigrants became for Israel the touchstone of God's command to treat aliens with hospitality.

And they certainly have. And I thank the Jewish community. I know a number of rabbis in San Diego, and they are the first people to defend immigrants in such a strong way. And I thank the Jewish community. That faith community is one that has always had the immigrant at heart. I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

It goes on with a quote from Deuteronomy:

"So you, too, should love the resident alien, for that is what you were in the land of Egypt." Care and hospitality for the stranger became a hallmark of Jewish ethics, law, and culture, famously invoked dozens of times throughout the Hebrew scripture as the particular concern for the "widow, the orphan, and stranger in your midst." Living according to these values became for Israel a sign of fidelity to God's laws. Violating this concern for the widow, the orphan, and the alien became reasons for God's judgment against his people.

Exodus 22:20-22:

"You shall not oppress or afflict a resident alien, for you were once aliens residing in the land of Egypt. You shall not wrong any widow or orphan. If ever you wrong them and they cry out to me, I will surely listen to their cry."

Leviticus 19:33-34:

"When an alien resides with you in your land, do not mistreat such a one. You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you; you shall love the alien as yourself; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt. I, the Lord, am your God."

Deuteronomy 27:19:

"Cursed be anyone who deprives the resident alien, the orphan, or the widow of justice! And all the people shall answer, 'Amen.'"

He goes on and quotes a number of passages from the Bible. And then he concludes his letter by stating this:

The most literal reference to care for the stranger is found in the famous story of the Final Judgment in Matthew 25, where Jesus instructs His followers about how they will ultimately be judged by how they treated the most vulnerable: "The King shall say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.'" (Matthew 25: 34-37)

Tomorrow we will have, again, the opportunity, and I hope that we all take the opportunity to meet with the pastors that are going to be here, the evangelical churches.

□ 1910

I would like to quote a pastor who wrote very eloquently. He is a doctor, Pastor Dr. Richard Land, outgoing president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission and executive editor of *The Christian Post*. He writes:

Southern Baptists have gotten to know immigrants as brothers and sisters in Christ. It has put a human face on this.

He also pointed out that Southern Baptist churches now include several hundred thousand Hispanics as a result of their evangelization efforts. An Hispanic pastor told Reverend Land that he estimates that as many as 40 percent of those Southern Baptist Hispanics probably do not have legal status in this country.

So I am very excited about tomorrow. I know that Dr. Pastor Richard Land and others are praying for us. They're very excited about coming and speaking to us and opening up our hearts and our minds and making sure that we do the right thing, which I'm sure we will do—I'm hoping we will do.

The last letter that I'm going to read is a letter that was actually written by Rabbi Laurie Coskey, executive director of the Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice, and Pedro Rios, chairperson of the San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium and director of the American Friends Service Committee. The letter is addressed to the San Diego Council, which just last week unanimously approved a resolution in support of comprehensive immigration reform.

I would note that the San Diego City Council is made up pretty equally of Democrats and Republicans, and here they put aside partisanship and they strongly passed a resolution in support of comprehensive immigration reform. So this is the letter that Rabbi Laurie Coskey and Mr. Pedro Rios wrote:

Dear San Diego City Council, we are writing to you today representing ourselves and

the myriad of organizations that have worked within our city to support immigrants and refugees over many decades. Over the years, in the spirit of good faith, we have urged our City Council members to take a stand with immigrant and refugee communities who live and work in the city of San Diego.

As the conundrum of our broken immigration system has affected all of us in profound ways, many times over the years the City Council of San Diego has been at the forefront of human rights issues that affect the people living and working here. We come to you now, recognizing the importance of your voice.

Today, we stand at a unique moment in history, where the Federal Government has recognized that the immigration laws and policies are no longer of benefit, and that they are stretching to craft a new comprehensive immigration policy that we pray will be generous, humane, and transformational for those who live and work here.

As the leaders of the largest border city in the United States, we passionately urge you to take a leadership stand by passing a bipartisan resolution in support of reasonable immigration policy reform.

In parenthesis, they did, they did exactly that. They did it unanimously. And I thank the San Diego City Council—every member, the Democrats and the Republicans. Thank you. Thank you deeply for that.

They go on and say:

Because of the prominence of San Diego, your bipartisan resolution can serve as an example and as a model to the Federal legislators that the benefit of such policy change demands bipartisan collaboration and agreement in order to pass sweeping immigration policy reform. To put it simply, by working together quickly, you may teach the Congress what bipartisan collaboration can actually accomplish.

They did exactly that. They acted together; they acted swiftly; they acted unanimously; they acted compassionately. I hope we do the same.

They go on and say:

Additionally, your action will encourage immigrant and refugee community members and their supporters by demonstrating that their city representatives understand and support the call for reforming immigration laws.

We all recognize that in recent years the failure of Congress to reform immigration laws has led to great hardships for too many people who live in fear. In San Diego, we have witnessed the devastating impact of the broken immigration system. Families have been torn apart in immigration raids; immigrant workers are silent in the face of abusive labor practices; distrust has generated fear for immigrants, who otherwise contribute to the social fabric of our communities; and the current immigration laws have led to an unbalanced focus on enforcement.

To be sure, the city of San Diego would not be America's finest city without numerous ways that immigrant and refugee communities contribute economically, culturally, and socially, from the agriculture fields in northern San Diego County to the tech industries, and adding to the cultural vibrancy that make San Diego an attraction to people around the world.

As a border city, San Diego is uniquely positioned to address immigration issues and to offer insight into what reasonable immigration reform might look like. A resolution

might address the need to improve the port's infrastructure. It can address human and civil rights implications and enforcement mechanisms. It can advocate for a broad and inclusive pathway to citizenship without burdensome obstacles.

As representative organizations and coalitions, we urge you to adopt a resolution that supports a reasonable and comprehensive approach to immigration reform.

It's signed, Sincerely Rabbi Laurie Coskey, Educational Doctorate, Executive Director, Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice; Pedro Rios, Chairperson, Director of the San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium and the American Friends Service Committee.

I want to thank Rabbi Laurie Coskey for this letter. I also want to thank Pedro Rios for coauthoring this letter.

I have to say that one of the reasons that I'm up here reading these letters is that there are a lot of people that want to be heard out in the Nation about this issue of immigration. From this podium, day after day after day, they've only been hearing the negative voices, the parade of horrors, the instances when immigrants have failed or have even committed horrible crimes, and some have. But unfortunately, it has been somewhat of a less than veiled attack on all immigrants, especially those that came to this country for no other reason but to better their lives and to work very hard so their children could have a better life. That's the American Dream. That's the American Dream for all of us, for our children, that we can have a better life.

I want to read now from President Ronald Reagan. Again, many of us are very proud of Ronald Reagan. I will give Illinois their due, he was from there originally, but the reality is he's a Californian. If you look at the statue here in Statuary Hall, he's here as a Californian. So I'm very proud of him. As a Democrat, I've always been very proud of him. I say that, and some of my Democrat friends, they get a little nervous about that. The reality is I'm very proud of him. I didn't agree with everything, obviously, but I agreed with his humanity.

I think we will see that in some of these quotes. I think what made Reagan a great person and a great President was that he didn't stick to some of the tired dogma of others. Instead, he led us forward as a great President. I quote him:

Unless the United States makes a more sensible and efficient system for admitting legal migrants who come to take advantage of work opportunities, no reasonable level of enforcement is likely to be enough to resolve this illegal immigration problem.

How true he was. How true he is still.

I also agree with former President Reagan when he said the following, referring to the Immigration Reform and Control Act, again, the Simpson-Mazoli Act of 1986:

We have consistently supported a legalization program which is both generous to the alien and fair to the countless thousands of people throughout the world who seek legally to come to America.

You know what? Ronald Reagan was generous. I hope that each and every one of us can have that spirit of generosity, that magnanimous spirit that he had.

I'm going to quote him again and continue with his quote:

The legalization provisions in this act will go far to improve the lives of a class of individuals who now must hide in the shadows without access to many of the benefits of a free and open society. Very soon many of these men and women will be able to step into the sunlight, and ultimately, if they choose, they may become Americans.

□ 1920

I thank Ronald Reagan because I think he was very generous. It's very interesting how many Republicans are running away from his legacy on this, his legacy of generosity. You shouldn't be running away from it; you should be running towards it; you should be running to it. You will be like him if you have that spirit that he had, the spirit of a generous soul.

I know I have a few minutes left here, and I thank the Speaker very much for the opportunity that they've given me here. Normally I don't speak this long, but I thought it was important to come and hear another voice, not just the voice that condemns the immigrant, a voice that says there's millions and millions and millions of Americans out there, in fact, a great majority now, that want comprehensive immigration reform that's just, that matches up with our values of a generous people.

This is a statement of citizenship from the evangelical churches. This is the evangelical statement of principles for immigration reform.

Our national immigration laws have created a moral, economic, and political crisis in America. Initiatives to remedy this crisis have led to polarization and name calling, in which opponents have misrepresented each other's position as open borders and amnesty versus deportations of millions. This false choice has led to an unacceptable political stalemate at the Federal level at a tragic cost of human life, at tragic human cost.

As evangelical Christian leaders, they say:

We call for a bipartisan solution on immigration that respects the God-given dignity of every person, protects the unity of the immediate family, respects the rule of law, guarantees secure national borders, ensures fairness to taxpayers, establishes a path toward legal status and/or citizenship for those who qualify and those who wish to become permanent residents. We urge our Nation's leaders to work together with the American people to pass immigration reform that embodies these key principles and that will make our Nation proud.

There's heads of the evangelical immigration table, and it's very, very lengthy. In fact, I'm not going to go through and read it. I was tempted to do that because day after day I heard a few people come in here and you'd think that everyone in the United States was against immigration reform. In fact, just the opposite.

I could read that Leith Anderson, President of the National Association

of Evangelicals; Stephan Bauman, President and CEO of the World Relief; David Beckmann, President of Bread for the World; Noel Castellanos, CEO of Christian Community Development Association—I could go on and on and on because this thing goes on for pages. My trustee staff gave me pages and pages and pages of leaders in the evangelical churches that have signed on to this, so I won't go on and read all the names.

But I will say this. I believe we will come to an agreement on immigration. I do believe that. I honestly believe that. I do believe that the prayers that the faith communities are directing towards us, and especially towards the immigrants, are going to be heard. I believe that. I believe it deeply that this time we won't fail, that this time will be different, that this time, in fact, we will pass a law that is just, a law that treats immigrants as we're supposed to treat them, as it says in this Good Book. As our values as Americans, I think that we will have a just, a merciful immigration law, and I'm very excited about it.

I wanted to end with a story of a young woman that came and testified in California last year. I spoke about it in California and I want to speak about it here, because it's one of those incredible tragedies in life, and I called it, "Two Days in Mexicali." And, unfortunately, for many of us Californians, when we think about 2 days in Mexicali or 2 days in Tijuana, it's normally not the 2 days that I'm going to speak about here.

Instead, this was a young lady. This was a young lady who was born in Mexicali. Her mother was a prostitute and a drug addict. They lived in Los Angeles. The mother had been born and raised there. She went to Mexicali and then had a child in Mexicali.

She abandoned the child there, and this child's grandmother went and found her, brought her back to Los Angeles. And the grandmother was, I suspect, a very Christian, devout woman, and raised this child in a beautiful way, because for 13 years she developed into a very successful student and a very nice person.

We got to meet her because she was, I guess, 19 years old. She had turned 19, and she had not known that she was an undocumented person because that never came up. So, instead, she lived her life thinking she was an American citizen. Then she applied for college. And at that point, we hadn't changed the law yet as they had in Texas to allow an undocumented person to get in-State tuition or to get any kind of financial aid; so even though her mother was a prostitute and a drug addict who abandoned this little girl, this little girl grew up to be a wonderful person, and then the law oppressed her by not allowing her to continue.

We have a chance to change that for her and for so many other people. And I hope we listen to the pastors tomorrow, our evangelical brothers and sis-

ters that are going to come tomorrow to pray for us, to pray that we open up our hearts, pray that we will see the immigrant as the stranger in Matthew 25, that we will treat them in a way that is humane and that cherishes our values as Americans.

Madam Speaker, I thank you very much for the opportunity today to speak. I think this is a very important issue, an issue that I have great faith in God that will be resolved according to our best values; and our best values are those of mercy.

I thank you very much, and I yield back the balance of my time.

CURRENT EVENTS IN REVIEW

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. WALORSKI). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, we know that there is so much going on after the tragedy in Boston where not just Boston was attacked, but the United States was attacked by acts of sheer evil, perpetrators who did not care about innocent people and innocent lives. They thought it better to try to kill, maim, and destroy. What sick, twisted, evil human being or human beings would do that?

But we saw 9/11/2001 vividly clear. There actually are people who are so radical, so mean, so evil, so twisted that they actually believe they could make for themselves a way to paradise by killing innocent people, killing children not even old enough to have really done anything wrong, and that is what they obviously felt would make their great mark in the world. I can't help but strongly believe with all my heart that, unless they repent and find grace, they are in for a very rude awakening in the next life.

It is my hope, as well, that the individual or individuals who are responsible will be held to account with the death penalty that will be implemented behind closed doors, without cameras present, without an opportunity for them to yet insult or hurt anyone else. They've done enough.

□ 1930

We'll await to see who it is that ends up being responsible. Perhaps there's an announcement tonight, perhaps not.

I am glad that even though there was a person of interest, that the investigators did not rush to judgment on that, that they continue to explore every possible clue, every possible video and photograph, thoroughly doing a good job it certainly appears in law enforcement so that when the evil culprits are apprehended and they go to trial and their attorneys are trying to raise a reasonable doubt with a jury, that the investigation will have been so thorough and there will not have been an inappropriate rush to judgment such that a fair trial is had, due process is had, and then making sure that it is,