

my brother and my sister can have Christmas.” That is what I met that night.

When I came home, I carried with me a reminder, because one day, I picked up the Stars and Stripes—you know, in a war zone, you pick up anything to read, and I would pick up the Stars and Stripes, pick up everything. One of those papers I happened to just be reading while I was eating, and I opened it up, and in the Stars and Stripes, they carry pictures of those who did not make it. They died in combat. I remember opening that page up, and I looked, and along the bottom, there were eight pictures. I remember distinctly four of them because I stood beside their bed and held their hand in Balad. I carry that picture and that flag.

As Congressman WENSTRUP has said, the National Anthem is no longer—if it ever was—just a song. It is a spirit that lives.

The Ninth District of Georgia has a great legacy of citizens who have proudly served in our Armed Forces. This spring, we lost one of our greatest, Colonel Benjamin Purcell, United States Army. Colonel Purcell was the highest-ranking Army officer held as a prisoner of war.

Colonel Purcell was commissioned a lieutenant through the Army Reserve Officers Training program at North Georgia College, my alma mater. He was stationed at Fort Benning, Georgia, and was subsequently sent to Europe. In August 1967, a year after I was born, he was stationed in Vietnam.

Colonel Purcell became a POW after his helicopter was shot down in Quang Tri City, Vietnam, in 1968. Most of his time as a POW was spent in solitary confinement. He was unable to be with other prisoners until shortly before he was released. On March 27, 1973, Colonel Purcell was freed, as the U.S. was finally pulling out of Vietnam.

During his military career, Purcell was awarded the Silver Star, the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star, and the Purple Heart, along with the Parachutist and Combat Infantryman badges. Colonel Purcell was laid to rest with full military honors.

Colonel Purcell's courageous story is just one of the many we remember on Veterans Day. He will always have the thanks and admiration of many Georgians.

On this Veterans Day, I will think about a young Marine from my hometown of Gainesville. In 2011, Corporal Sean Adams was on patrol in Afghanistan when he stepped on an improvised explosive device. The IED left him without legs, his left thumb, and his right pinky finger. He told me that when he went to Afghanistan, “I fought for myself, my family, my country, and the Corps, and now I'm fighting for my life.”

Sean is being medically retired from his beloved Marine Corps and is even now searching for the opportunity to continue to serve his community. He is

now fitted with prosthetic legs. His stated goal is to run the Marine Corps Marathon next year. Having seen this young man's courage and strength, I am certain he will make it.

Later this week, I have the privilege of attending a retirement ceremony at Dobbins Air Force Reserve Base for Colonel Timothy E. Tarchick, who has honorably served our Nation for his entire adult life. I am humbled to call him a mentor and, most importantly, my friend.

These are just a few of the veterans who have touched my life. I often think back on the men and women of our Armed Forces with whom I have had the pleasure of serving our Nation, and I think of the conversations, the laughter, and also the tears that we have shared. It is often the very short or one-time interactions with a comrade in arms that leave the most indelible memories.

On my desk, if you were to come to my office, if you can find it on the fifth floor of Cannon, you will see on my desk a little bracelet that was made for me by a young lady in Balad who was struggling every day. I would go by and see her, and I would take her stuff, and I would give her encouragement or I would give her a coke or give her a candy. One night, I came by, and she said, “Chap, you are always giving me something. I want to give you something,” and she gave me this parachute bracelet which sits on my desk right now.

So I don't care what goes on on the floor of this House in the big sense because all I have to do is remember that bracelet on my desk and remember why we are here and what that flag means.

This Veterans Day, let us commit ourselves to express our gratitude to America's veterans by remembering their service and sacrifice and, of course, thanking each of the veterans in our own lives in our own way.

Before I yield back, I want it to be known the one who put this together, the gentleman who has become a valued part of my life in the time that we have served together.

Lieutenant Colonel BRAD WENSTRUP has served in the United States Army Reserve since 1998. In 2005 and 2006, he served a tour in Iraq as a combat surgeon and was awarded the Bronze Star and the Combat Action Badge for his service. During his time in Congress, BRAD is fulfilling his Reserve duties by treating patients at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda.

I commit to you, Mr. Speaker, he is serving every day on a place called Capitol Hill with the gifts that he has been entrusted to by his Creator. He is also a soon-to-be dad who will pass along this legacy of service to his child.

With that, I yield back to you, sir.

Mr. WENSTRUP. I thank the gentleman from Georgia, my dear friend, Chaplain DOUG COLLINS, for those kind words.

We are honored to serve here with so many that have served—not all of them are here tonight—on both sides of the aisle.

I think of my colleague from Illinois, TAMMY DUCKWORTH, who suffered severe injuries in Iraq, has bilateral leg prosthesis. She had the courage to serve again and to continue to serve not only in the Guard but here as a Congresswoman from Illinois. It is an honor to serve with her here on Capitol Hill.

Teddy Roosevelt said it so well when he said, “It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood.”

Our veterans serve. They fight in wars, wars they didn't start, and those who serve in war are probably the greatest lovers of peace, the ones who appreciate it the most.

Our great American veterans, they may be best described in this way: they are what others care not to be. They go where others fear to go, and they do what others fail to do, and they ask nothing from those that gave nothing.

I want to thank everyone for being here tonight to honor those that felt that they should give of themselves for something greater than themselves.

You know, when I was a child, and we would go to bed at night, we would kiss my parents good night, and my father would come in one more time, and he would take his thumb, and he would make the sign of the cross on our forehead.

When you tuck your children in at night, when you go to bed and you close your eyes and you feel safe and secure and unafraid, remember why.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BENTIVOLIO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) for 30 minutes.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, tonight we will be talking about a very important accomplishment that this body, the House of Representatives, could make on a bipartisan basis for our country, and that is immigration reform.

By refusing to act on comprehensive immigration reform, there is great cost to the American people in jobs, the undermining of the rule of law, and destruction of the opportunities that will arise by tackling this head-on. The longer we delay passing comprehensive immigration reform, the greater the cost of inaction in both economic, human, and security terms. Every week that Congress is in session for the rest of the year, I will be here on the floor, talking about the cost of inaction on immigration reform.

There is a clear path forward. There is a comprehensive immigration reform bill, a compromise. It took a little give-and-take from both sides, a compromise supported by the business community and labor, by the faith community, by the law enforcement community, by farmers, and by farmworkers, that has passed the United States Senate with more than a two-thirds majority.

We have introduced a similar bill, H.R. 15, here in the House with a growing number of bipartisan cosponsors and are encouraging the Speaker and the majority leader to bring this bill to a vote, where we have confidence that it will pass.

Our economy will suffer tremendously if we fail to pass comprehensive immigration reform. According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, immigration reform helps grow the economy, creating between 500,000 and 1 million jobs, reduces the deficit by over \$200 billion, bolsters job creation, and strengthens the viability of Social Security and Medicare. What is not to like?

Let's restore the rule of law to our country. Let's improve our security, and let's unite families. In human terms, the cost of inaction is inflicting a heavy toll.

Over 135,000 deportations have taken place since the Senate passed immigration reform last June, including thousands of people who are noncriminals who would have benefited from immigration reform and, instead, became a cost to U.S. taxpayers to the tune of more than \$10,000 each to deport.

Take a few examples from my district of people that immigration reform will help today. Dianna and Kathia are two young women from Larimer County in my district. They are high school students who were brought here from Mexico as young children by their parents. They are excellent students, both straight-A students. They want to go to college. Kathia wants to go to medical school, and Dianna wants to study cinematography.

Both of these young women are applicants to the President's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA program, and we hope that they receive their DACA permit soon, but that is only a temporary fix for a limited period of time. They are both ambitious, capable young women who want to give back to our country and make it stronger, if only we will let them.

It is time to find a way for Kathia and Dianna and the so many like them to pursue their dreams and contribute to our communities without having to live in constant fear because of lack of status.

Another woman in my district who feels the pain of our current broken immigration system is Norma. Norma came to the U.S. over a decade ago, like so many of our ancestors, including my great grandparents, in search of a better life. She is the mother and pri-

mary caretaker of twin boys who are U.S. citizens. Both of her children suffer from medical conditions, and she works incredibly hard to ensure that her kids have access to what they need. She is a hardworking, honest person, a leader in her community, doesn't have any criminal history or pose any kind of threat to national security. All she wants to do is to give back to our country, to pay taxes, and contribute like every other American.

Nevertheless, Norma was placed in deportation proceedings last year following a traffic stop. If we don't reform our broken immigration system today, how many more families will be torn apart?

People like Kathia, Dianna, and Norma feel the negative impact of this House of Representatives' failure to act on the Senate immigration reform bill every single day. There is no excuse for inaction. We need to finalize and pass immigration reform this year.

I will be talking more about the cost of inaction in a few moments, but I want to yield to my good friend and colleague from Florida (Mr. GARCIA), the sponsor of H.R. 15.

Mr. GARCIA. I thank the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. Speaker, I have the distinct privilege of representing a district that, in the last several decades, has in large part been built by immigrants.

I lived in south Florida during some very tough times for the immigrant community. I remember as a young man seeing bumper stickers on the backs of cars that said, "Would the last American please bring the flag." But you know what? The flag still flies high in Miami. It is a thriving, growing economy and a beacon of work and opportunity for millions. People from all over are drawn to my community because they believe in the American Dream.

My constituents know that immigrants only add to the American way of life. They make our country better. They create more opportunity for all. A vast majority of Americans recognize this.

Some polls show that 70 to 80 percent of Americans support comprehensive immigration reform, with a pathway to citizenship. Fixing our broken immigration system isn't something that we can tackle on a step-by-step basis, only addressing parts of the problem.

□ 2030

It is a bill that secures our borders, builds our economy, and provides a way forward for millions of undocumented individuals living in the United States.

With every day that passes, millions continue to live in the shadows and jobs continue slipping away overseas. This is an issue that is not simply about justice. It is about fairness. It is about ensuring, also, America's economic prosperity.

In Florida alone, legalizing all of the currently undocumented immigrants

would generate \$1.3 billion in additional tax revenues and create 97,000 new jobs. Fixing our broken immigration system will help small businesses expand, foster innovation, increase productivity, raise wages, and help create thousands of jobs.

The fight for comprehensive immigration reform is one that makes all Americans better, makes our country richer, and creates opportunity for all. In the history of the world, there has never been a great nation that was shedding citizens. In fact, great nations welcome opportunities.

The last few weeks have not cast a positive light on the House of Representatives, but this is an issue where we can repair that broken image. It is possible to find a bipartisan compromise that is the right thing for our Nation to do. The costs of inaction are simply too high.

More than enough Members of this Chamber understand the benefits of immigration, understand that it is a necessity for our country's prosperity, and understand that it is what we will do inevitably. Let's do it now. Let's do it right. Let's get it done.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from Miami, a leader on the effort to reform our broken immigration system.

I want to talk about the overwhelming public support for immigration reform.

More than 70 percent of the American people support immigration reform, including majorities of Republicans, Independents, and Democrats. The American people know that what we are doing now isn't working, and by failing to act and only continuing to perpetuate the undermining of the rule of law, a population of over 10 million people that are here illegally and a system that is out of whack with reality, will only continue to hurt the American people.

With that, I am happy to yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

Mr. TAKANO. I thank the gentleman from Colorado for yielding the time.

Reforming our immigration system is one of the top issues in our Nation. I was happy to see the Senate act this past June when it passed a comprehensive immigration bill with an overwhelming bipartisan vote.

The Senate bill solves many of the problems with our current immigration system. It creates a pathway to citizenship, secures our borders, addresses the current backlog, and helps the DREAMers, who were brought here through no fault of their own. Unfortunately, the push for immigration reform hit a brick wall when the legislation moved over to the House and Speaker BOEHNER flatly refused to bring it up for a vote.

Sadly, this is not the first time Speaker BOEHNER and his irresponsible faction of the House Republican caucus have stood in the way of what is best for the American people, even though

there is a clear governing majority that is ready to act. Despite Speaker BOEHNER's desperate attempt to follow the so-called rule which requires him only to allow votes supported by a majority of House Republicans, the governing majority has been able to pass several pieces of substantive legislation this year.

Just who is this governing majority? It is made up of nearly the entire Democratic Caucus and a handful of moderate, sensible Republicans.

In January of this year, a governing majority of 172 Democrats and 85 Republicans came together to avoid the fiscal cliff, saving our economy from ruin.

Several weeks later, when a majority of the Republican caucus stood opposed to relief for the victims of Superstorm Sandy, it took overwhelming support from Democrats and a small group of Republicans to help those in need.

Shortly thereafter, the House passed the Senate's version of the Violence Against Women Act, providing protections for victims of domestic violence, with unanimous Democratic support and a portion of the Republican caucus.

Then, in March, facing the deadline of a government shutdown, a temporary budget extension to keep the government funded until September 30 also needed the support of the Democrats to pass the House.

Finally, despite claims indicating that the votes weren't there to pass a clean CR, the House reopened the government and avoided default with the unanimous support of Democrats and a group of Republicans.

The reality is, to pass anything with substance, Speaker BOEHNER needs to stand up to the extreme faction of his party, stop blocking important legislation, and get out of the way and let the House of Representatives work its will. America needs Democrats and Republicans to come together. We have seen what can be accomplished when we are united.

And who are we kidding about the Hastert rule? The Speaker has already violated it multiple times this year.

In the lead-up to the most recent crisis, he said that he didn't want the government to shut down or default on its debts. If Speaker BOEHNER truly meant that, he would have turned to the governing majority and we would have avoided a 16-day shutdown that cost our country \$24 billion in economic activity.

The governing majority has done its job with the fiscal cliff, with aid to Superstorm Sandy, with the Violence Against Women Act, and the recent government shutdown and debt ceiling negotiations. We have escaped manufactured crisis after manufactured crisis. I know that the American people are eagerly waiting for the House of Representatives to pass meaningful legislation that addresses our challenges.

The governing majority is ready to do its job once again with comprehen-

sive immigration reform. As millions of Americans and aspiring Americans are waiting for this body to act, it is time to put aside the theatrical displays, Mr. Speaker. Let us govern so we can bring our brothers and sisters out of the shadows.

I believe that if the Senate's comprehensive immigration reform bill came to the floor of the House, the governing majority would once again do what is right for the American people and pass this important legislation. Let's vote on the Senate's bill and fix our broken immigration system. The time is now.

Mr. GARCIA. I thank the gentleman from California.

I take this opportunity to sort of point out that, as he talks about the governing majority, we are seeing a coalition already built around immigration reform. In a bill that was filed less than 3 weeks ago, we already have 187 cosponsors, which puts us in a very good place to pass it if it is allowed to come to the floor. That means that already 95 percent of Democrats have signed on to the bill. That means that a Democratic Senate already passed out a bill and that the President stands ready to sign a comprehensive immigration reform if it gets to his desk.

So our hope is that in the days to come, the 17 days left of working session before the end of the year, that we will find the will to bring something to the floor so that we can move this forward.

With that, I yield to the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from Miami.

I want to talk a little bit about supporting Colorado.

Colorado is a purple State. It is middle of the road, with four Republicans and three Democrats in our congressional delegation. It is a State that is affected by immigration. We have a strong tradition of immigration in our district, a strong exchange of economic ties with our neighboring countries.

Here are some recent polls in a few of our congressional districts in our State:

In the Third Congressional District, represented by my friend, Congressman SCOTT TIPTON, a recent poll showed that 77 percent of the people in the district—this is the district including Pueblo, Grand Junction, and Aspen—support immigration reform with a pathway to citizenship. Only 17 percent oppose it.

In the neighboring district of my good friend CORY GARDNER, the Fourth Congressional District of Colorado, 76 percent support immigration reform with a pathway to citizenship.

In the district of my friend and colleague MIKE COFFMAN of Aurora, Colorado, and Douglas County, 74 percent support immigration reform with a pathway to citizenship.

Failure to act and avoid this issue is, in fact, not delivering for the American people. One cannot speak out of both

sides of their mouth forever and say that in some abstract sense we are for immigration reform but not give this body the ability to pass immigration reform. The American people, Mr. Speaker, are smarter than that.

It has been 123 days since the Senate has passed an immigration reform bill. And you know what? We have H.R. 15 in the House. We want that to come to a vote. But there may be other immigration reform packages. I know there has been a bipartisan group that has been meeting for awhile. Recently, some of the Members have pulled out. If there are other ideas, let's put them on the table. But inaction for 123 days is inexcusable—inexcusable.

The time for action is not now. It wasn't just yesterday. It was last year. It was 5 years ago. It was 10 years ago. We can't afford to continue to wait day after day, week after week, year after year, without taking action. The American people, Mr. Speaker, have had enough and are demanding more.

There is something that we know for sure. The enforcement-only approach has failed. It hasn't worked. The number of people here illegally has only increased. We have increased the budget of the Border Patrol by 10 times, and the number of unauthorized people here illegally increased by 3 times during that same period.

So what does that mean? If we increase that budget 20 times, does that mean the number of people here illegally will quadruple? Maybe. But that is clearly not a solution; just look at the data.

And there is a human toll, Mr. Speaker. From 1998 to 2010, over 5,000 people died crossing the U.S.-Mexico border looking for a better life, just as my ancestors did, Mr. Speaker, and just as your ancestors did.

From 1998 to 2007, over 100,000 parents of U.S. citizen children were removed from this country. Yes, little Johnny, little Sara coming home from school, they are American. They were born here. They will vote some day. Coming home from school and, Sorry, Mom is in deportation proceedings. Your mom won't be here for you, little Johnny or little Sara. What did she do? A tail-light out on her car or 10 miles over the speed limit.

I got a speeding ticket last year, Mr. Speaker. I have a 2-year-old son, Mr. Speaker. To think something like that could force me to be ripped from my family—not for months, not for years—forever.

There is something called the lifetime bar, Mr. Speaker. Forever being taken away from my family, Mr. Speaker, I would risk crossing that border and dying—like 5,000 people did—to be with my son, Mr. Speaker. And that is an American trait. That is what a good American would do. That is what a good American parent would do, Mr. Speaker.

Let's let people give back to our country and provide for their families. That is an American value, and we can do that now.

My colleague, Mr. TAKANO, talked about a governing majority. There is a governing majority for passing H.R. 15, the Comprehensive Immigration Reform bill, now.

□ 2045

I can't tell you whether it is 25 Republicans or 45 Republicans or 80 Republicans, but they will join nearly every Democrat, if not every Democrat, in passing comprehensive immigration reform now.

I ask my colleague from Miami if he has ever seen this kind of coalition of business and labor and faith-based community and agriculture and farm workers—unlikely suspects—coming together around something that is such common sense. Have you seen this kind of unprecedented coalition of public support on any other issue, and what do you think it means for immigration reform?

Mr. GARCIA. I would like to thank the gentleman from Colorado, and I think he is absolutely right.

This is an unprecedented partnership with business, labor, the tech community all coming together around a basic thing—to help our country move forward. I think about all of the opportunities that we are missing and of all of the places that are doing better than we are in competition because we don't offer a pathway forward.

I would mention to the gentleman from Colorado that there are 130,000 Chinese students in the United States right now, that there are somewhere in the neighborhood of 90,000 Indians studying in the United States, that there are 70,000 South Koreans studying in the United States. Under the present immigration system, if your company thinks, "Hey, I can hire this guy, and it will be good for us," they just can't. He has got to go home. So we are sending them home to come back and compete with our workers when we could offer them a future here and when they could create a better future for other Americans.

This is something we have done always. We take people from all over the world, and we put them to work for America in the best interest of America. Yet, under our broken immigration system, you just can't do it.

Mr. POLIS. I represent a district with two fine universities—the University of Colorado at Boulder and Colorado State University. Both have excellent graduate programs—engineering, physics, environmental engineering, the biological sciences, you name it. Like many of our institutions of higher education, a high number of students there are foreign nationals who are studying under student visas.

Under our current immigration policy, Mr. Speaker, at our public State institutions, we provide this world-class education for people who fill a need in the economy—they are going to be great engineers; they are going to be great mathematicians; they are going to be great computer scientists. Guess

what? They graduate with a master's, and they graduate with a Ph.D., and what do we tell them? Oh. Go back to another country, and compete against us.

Compete against us. We are telling them to compete against us. How does that make sense, Mr. Speaker?

What we need to do is to provide a way—and the Senate bill and H.R. 15 do this—for people who graduate with advanced degrees in these fields to be able to stay here, keeping the jobs here, because guess what? Today's companies don't care where the jobs are. You can be a computer programmer in India. You can be a computer programmer in France. You can be a computer programmer here. Out of convenience, we would rather have you here, but the job is going to follow you. It is not the other way around.

In addition, if we act with H.R. 15, it will lead to over \$5 billion in additional tax revenues. It will reduce our deficit by over \$200 billion. It will create between three-quarters of a million and 900,000 jobs for Americans—jobs for Americans that are created under H.R. 15. It includes provisions around startups and entrepreneurs—people who want to come here to found companies and hire Americans. Don't we want that? Don't we want jobs for our brothers, our sisters, our friends, and our neighbors, jobs for Americans? H.R. 15 is the biggest jobs bill for Americans before the House of Representatives, and that is another reason we need to pass it.

Mr. GARCIA. I would also add to that the report that the Congressional Budget Office has released.

Here is what we know: in the next 10 years, if we move forward with comprehensive immigration reform, it will produce \$175 billion to the U.S. economy. Here is what we know even further: in the 10 years after that, it will produce \$870 billion to our economy. This is a net positive overall.

For my colleagues across the aisle who love to talk about the deficit, who love to talk about the fact that our country isn't bringing in revenue, here is revenue that is sitting there—people who are working, people who are ready to contribute to the American economy. They are there, and we know that, if we bring them out from the shadows and give them a pathway forward, they will make our Nation richer, and they will make our country better.

Mr. POLIS. So we can improve our security, and we can restore the rule of law, and we can create jobs for Americans, and we can reduce our deficit—all in one bill? What is not to like?

I yield to my colleague from probably the longest congressional district in the country. I don't know if it is the largest in area, but I think it is probably the longest in the country. I yield to my good friend from Texas.

Mr. GALLEG0. Thank you for yielding.

We were visited today by a group called Bibles, Badges and Business. One

of the Bible passages which was quoted to me today is in the Gospel according to St. Matthew, in which he talks about, I was hungry, and you gave me to eat. I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink. I was a stranger, and you took me in.

That is the genesis, I think, for a lot of people who want, from a Christian ethics' perspective, to support immigration reform.

You also have the people who support immigration reform, frankly, because of the idea that they are parents. Frankly, I think any parent understands that, once you hold that kid in your arms for the first time, I mean, you will do anything you have to do to make sure your little boy or your little girl eats.

Then there are the economic arguments that we have been talking about. For me, the economic arguments also are so important because the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, for example, has cited a study that shows that immigrant-owned businesses would generate more than \$775 billion in revenue with \$125 billion in payroll and \$100 billion in income. That is pretty impressive.

Do you know what percentage of the American workforce they could employ if they were unleashed? They could employ 1 out of every 10 workers, which is just a phenomenal statistic.

The other thought that I find really interesting is, of course, that immigrants are also consumers, and when they consume, they further drive the job growth. Now, many Members of Congress and, certainly, many people from Texas are familiar with George W. Bush.

Do you know there is now a George W. Bush Institute? Were you aware of that?

The George W. Bush Institute has, frankly, been a very strong proponent of immigration reform, and it has produced a 65-page document titled "Growth and Immigration" which states that immigrants serve as catalysts for growth. In fact, the report from the George W. Bush Institute says that communicating the positive economic contributions of immigrants is the first step in helping Americans recognize the hidden advantages of immigration. The institute is confident that bipartisan solutions exist and that, when properly informed, Americans agree more on this topic than they realize. That is pretty impressive coming from the George W. Bush Institute.

Further, the Congressional Budget Office shows that immigration reform wouldn't negatively impact U.S. workers and that it would reduce the Federal budget deficit by \$175 billion.

So I think it is important that we get the facts out and that we make a difference because comprehensive immigration reform is so important to everybody from across the border. I have never seen so many groups unified to pass comprehensive immigration reform.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from Texas for his words.

This is 123 days. That is 123 days too long. Let's pass immigration reform now.

I yield back the balance of my time.

OBAMACARE ORIGINATION CLAUSE

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

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, in 2012, the Supreme Court narrowly and specifically upheld the individual mandate at the heart of ObamaCare under Congress' general taxing power. The Court specifically noted:

Even if the taxing power enables Congress to impose a tax on not obtaining health insurance, any tax must still comply with the other requirements in the Constitution.

Let me read that again, Mr. Speaker:

Even if the taxing power enables Congress to impose a tax on not obtaining health insurance, any tax must still comply with the other requirements in the Constitution.

In short, ObamaCare was upheld as a tax. The Supreme Court did not and has not yet considered a challenge to the Affordable Care Act's taxing provisions on the grounds that it violated the Origination Clause in the United States Constitution, and it most certainly did exactly that. The Origination Clause is found in article I, section VII of the Constitution, and it states:

All bills for raising revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives.

In creating ObamaCare, Senator HARRY REID took an entirely unrelated bill, H.R. 3590, containing just 714 words that did not raise taxes, and then stripped it of everything but its bill number. He then put the 400,000-word ObamaCare that raised taxes in 17 different places into its empty shell. Through this bit of legislative trickery, Mr. REID claims that ObamaCare originated in the House, when, in fact, every last provision of ObamaCare, including the largest tax increase in American history, all came from the Senate.

This sort of procedure absolutely ignores and vacates the Founders' intent, and it renders the Origination Clause of our Constitution completely meaningless. If it is allowed to stand, the Origination Clause in the Constitution is a dead letter.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a small or marginal issue. The principle behind the Origination Clause was the moral justification for our entire War of Independence. Its importance was expressed through the Virginia House of Burgesses, the Stamp Act Congress, and the First Continental Congress, all of whom petitioned the Crown and the Parliament in England for redress of their tax grievances. It was with these realities in mind that the Origination Clause of our Constitution was written, and without it at the core of the Great Compromise of 1787, the 13 original

States would have never agreed to ratify the Constitution.

When our Founding Fathers wrote the Constitution, they knew it was vital for the power to raise and levy taxes to originate in the people's House, whose Members are closest to the electorate with 2-year terms, rather than in the Senate, whose members sit unchallenged for 6-year terms and who do not proportionally represent the American population and who already enjoy their own unique and separate Senate powers intentionally divided by the Framers between the two Chambers.

If we as Members of the House of Representatives, who took a solemn oath to support and defend the Constitution, including its Origination Clause, fail to assert this right and responsibility as the immediate Representatives of the people and those most accountable to them, we dishonor the Founders' memory, and we fundamentally abrogate our sworn oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States from all enemies, foreign and domestic.

This fall, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit will hear an appeal in the case of *Sissel v. HHS* as to whether ObamaCare violates the Origination Clause of the Constitution. I would urge my colleagues to sign on to H. Res. 153 and to join me in an amicus brief, along with currently 31 other Members of Congress, that I will be filing with the court. This brief expresses our collective conviction that the passage of ObamaCare was and is unconstitutional.

Mr. Speaker, ObamaCare was the largest tax increase in American history. The United States Supreme Court specifically and officially ruled it a tax. Consequently, under NANCY PELOSI and HARRY REID, the House and the Senate, in passing it in the manner that they did, categorically violated the Origination Clause, without which the U.S. Constitution never would have been born in the first place.

It is now the duty of the judiciary to strike down ObamaCare as a clear violation of the Origination Clause.

□ 2100

By following this amicus brief, we hope the judiciary will seize on the opportunity to support and defend the origination clause of the United States Constitution. If the judiciary does not strike down ObamaCare as an unconditional Senate-originated tax, Mr. Speaker, it would allow the Obama administration to blow yet another huge hole into the constitutional fabric of this noble Republic.

Mr. Speaker, Daniel Webster once said:

Hold on, my friends, to the Constitution and to the Republic for which it stands. Miracles do not cluster and what has happened once in 6,000 years, may never happen again. Hold on to the Constitution, for if the American Constitution should fall, there will be anarchy throughout the world.

U.S.-IRAN NUCLEAR NEGOTIATIONS ACT

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move to another subject.

Mr. Speaker, the greatest security threat in the world today is that of a nuclear-armed Iran. Now, Iran is once again the news of the moment. As talks between the United States and Iran have begun, American leaders given the charge to protect America's national security must not be charmed by wolves in sheep's clothing.

When innocent Syrian civilians were mercilessly attacked by chemical weapons, the Obama administration was caught on its heels in a foreign policy quandary. America was reminded again that the United States must always be vigilant and embrace an international relations framework which enables proactive engagement rather than merely reactionary, crisis response.

Mr. Speaker, I desperately hope that these discussions will proceed in the context of the grave reality the human family will face if nuclear weapons fall into the hands of jihadists in Iran.

To use the slightly altered words of our Secretary of State, Mr. Speaker: In a world of terrorists and extremists, we ignore these risks at our peril. We simply cannot afford to have nuclear weapons become the IED or car bomb of tomorrow. Neither our country, nor our conscience, can bear the costs of inaction.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S.-Iran Nuclear Negotiations Act is: an action that will reinforce the prohibition against illegal nuclear weapons development. We are talking about actions that will degrade Iran's capacity to use these weapons and ensure that they do not proliferate.

With this authorization, the President will simply have the power to make sure that the United States of America means what we say.

Now, Mr. Speaker, actually, the words I have just quoted are really just the essential words of Secretary Kerry's recent justification for wanting to attack Bashar al Assad's regime in Syria. However, I changed the quote a little bit, Mr. Speaker. Whenever he said "Syria," I inserted "Iran," and whenever he said "chemical weapons," I inserted "nuclear weapons," Mr. Speaker. If this line of reasoning of the administration chooses to stand behind this, then we simply cannot refute the parallel argument related to a nuclear Iran which poses an exponentially greater threat in terms of our security to the United States of America.

Secretary Kerry asserted that Mr. Obama "means what he says." But, Mr. Speaker, if the world truly believed that this President means what he says, the chemical weapons crisis in Syria would never have occurred in the first place.

Secretary Kerry said of the Syrian crisis that North Korea and Iran were closely watching our actions. However, Mr. Speaker, the converse is actually