

□ 1830

“The entire question of 20 percent enriched uranium,” says former Representative Shelley Berkley, “is a smoke screen.”

For many years, making a bomb went like this: first you spent a lot of time enriching uranium to 3.5 percent purity. That is difficult, but that is exactly what Iran would be allowed to continue to do. Then you enriched what you had created to 20 percent purity. When you had enough of that—and the centrifuges Iran has now are better and faster and quicker than what they had before, five times faster, as a matter of fact—you would be in a position to easily and quickly convert that material to 90 percent purity that is good enough for a nuclear warhead.

In recent months, Iran has advanced dramatically in both the number of centrifuges—again, nearly 19,000 centrifuges today at its disposal and their efficiency. Today, experts say that in just a few weeks’ time Iran could go from 3.5 percent all the way to 90 percent, which is “bingo,” bomb-making material for Iran. The whole issue of 20 percent enrichment has become absolutely irrelevant. Instead, the most important questions are how much 3.5 percent enriched uranium they have and whether they are allowed to keep their centrifuges spinning. If the answer to both is yes, they are moving forward on a bomb.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, if we have a deal with Iran, the number one parameter that must be included—and I spoke with both the current intelligence director and the former intelligence director of Israel, and they both said: A nonnegotiable is that Iran has to give up the 9 to 10 tons of enriched uranium that they have on hand. Why wouldn’t you? Why wouldn’t they be forced to give up the fissile material to make a bomb? It only makes sense.

Number two, they need to give up the ability to make further enriched uranium. Those are the centrifuges. That has to go as well.

The world is saying if you want to have the material, the nuclear material, that you need for a peaceful civilian use of power, if you want, for instance, nuclear reactors, that is fine. The world has no problem with nuclear power for true electricity, or if they want radio isotopes for cancer research, no problem. But that means that the material comes into Iran, and it is used for a civilian purpose, and we have inspectors. That is reasonable.

We have countries like Spain that have civilian-use nuclear reactors. They bring their uranium in, and they don’t enrich it themselves, and there are inspectors. The same with Sweden. The same with other countries.

This is fine to have nuclear reactors for electricity. We would back that, but what we will not back, what we must not ever back is the ability for Iran to create a nuclear bomb. That does not change in the current Obama

administration effort of the deal that came out and was thankfully put on hold by the French at Geneva at this P5+1.

The new agreement would allow Iran to continue to freely enrich to 3.5 percent at its Natanz and Fordow facilities. That is beyond all comprehension. How can you have a deal if Iran is continuing to enrich their uranium at two facilities and to continue building centrifuges that can easily and quickly be installed?

“At the end of the 6-month period,” Representative Shelley Berkley writes, “Iran would be even closer to breakout capacity.” Meaning the ability to build a nuclear warhead so quickly that no one could mobilize forces in time to stop it.

In other words, what we would have given Iran last weekend is the luxury of time, time to develop a deadly nuclear weapon. It takes time for a nation, the United States, Israel, the United Kingdom, Canada, any nation, it takes time for a nation to mobilize, to come against a bad actor nation, like Iran, in its development of a nuclear weapon.

Again, that is why this is so important—this chart that was created by Senator MARK KIRK. He accurately reported what the score will be for the world. We will get nothing, and Iran will get everything; and that must not be.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a concurrent resolution of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. Con. Res. 25. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for activities associated with the ceremony to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Native American code talkers.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. POLIS. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Before I get to my remarks, I briefly want to address the nuclear proliferation issue in Iran. The gentlelady from Minnesota, as well as myself, and the vast majority of Members of this body, have been supportive of crippling sanctions against Iran. Many of us believe that that has helped drive Iran to the negotiating table.

We hope for, of course, a peaceful outcome that takes nuclear weapons off the table and prevents Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons; and, of

course, we continue to keep the use of force on the table if our diplomatic solution fails to be enacted that reaches President Obama’s objective of preventing Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

The issue has had strong bipartisan support, nearly unanimous, here in this Chamber, with regard to continuing the pressure on Iran to rejoin the responsible nations and renounce the acquisition of nuclear weapons.

But I am here today to talk about something closer to home, Mr. Speaker, in fact, at home, Mr. Speaker, namely, the need to act on immigration reform. It has been 138 days since the Senate passed a commonsense bipartisan immigration reform bill. I was proud to be part of a bipartisan group of Members here in the House that introduced H.R. 15, a companion bill to the Senate’s immigration reform bill that makes additional improvements on outcome-based border enforcement and would address our broken immigration system and replace it with one that reflects our values as Americans, helps create jobs here at home, reduces our deficit by over \$100 billion, and restores the rule of law here in our country, which is currently being undermined by the presence of 10 million, 15 million, 8 million—nobody knows how many people are here illegally.

The issue will not resolve itself, Mr. Speaker. I call upon this body to act immediately and bring to the floor H.R. 15 and pass comprehensive immigration reform.

Later on in my remarks, given that this is the week of Veterans Day, I will be talking about the contributions that many members of our military have made who are from immigrant backgrounds, including the talent that our military is missing out on today, including DACA, or deferred action recipients, who are able to work legally in our country, but are not allowed to serve in our military.

H.R. 15 would solve that issue, and we will be talking about the many contributions that immigrants have made and continue to make with regards to our military.

My colleague, Mr. TONKO from New York, is here; and I would be happy to yield to him for a moment.

Mr. TONKO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Representative POLIS, for bringing us together for what I believe is very thoughtful discussion about immigration reform, for we are by definition a Nation of immigrants.

I believe that the passion that is the luring card to America is that American Dream. People for decades and centuries throughout the history of this Nation have pursued that American Dream with the opportunity to climb those economic ladders, those opportunities that present themselves in this country, where we are emboldened by immigrants; and certainly the military is no exception.

Tonight, we will be talking about the empowerment that comes with H.R. 15,

which is a very thoughtful piece of legislation. I am a cosponsor on that legislation. I believe it is important for us to follow suit that the bipartisan spirit in the Senate has already initiated.

The opportunities for us to allow for, some suggest, 11 million, if not more, immigrants to pursue that path to citizenship is an empowerment tool. It is great for our economic recovery. As was mentioned by Representative POLIS, it provides for a great dent in our deficit. It allows for us over the 20 years to come to experience tens of billions of reduction in the deficit, which is no short feat to be ignored. It is important for us to understand the economic vitality that sound immigration reform produces for this Nation.

We are in need of many of the skill sets that our immigrants bring. You talk to the agriculture industry and those skill sets are there. You talk to the medical industry, you talk to the engineers that are required in this Nation, and many immigrants are assuming those roles. So it is important.

We look at the tremendous history in this Nation of the military, the empowerment that came to this Nation, that comes to this Nation as we speak. There are our daughters and sons on the battlefield protecting our liberties, promoting our freedoms in this Nation to freedom-loving nations around the world.

There has been an awesome sector within that military force that either is immigrants or those who are residing in this country and are not yet United States citizens. They have made a statement in the military history of this Nation. They have made a very strong statement of support of this Nation and all for which she stands. They have defended the banner that unites us as the United States flag. They have certainly made their mark.

As of 2009, I am informed that there are some 114,000-plus foreign-born individuals serving in the military. Twelve percent of them were not even United States citizens. So it makes a very powerful statement.

I am a grandson of immigrants. My grandfather, William Tonko, served in World War I. I am proud of that history that he helped to write. He did that as an immigrant coming to this Nation, understanding that as he left Poland that there would be this American Dream that he could pursue.

My colleague made mention of the DREAMers—a tremendous bit of nomenclature that we put on to people who were born here, perhaps, or came as youngsters and are denied opportunities.

We have within the context of H.R. 15 the opportunity to empower DREAMers. They are allowed with certain programming now that we have with the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, with that program they are enabled to, perhaps, get a reprieve from deportation or be able to secure a work permit; but they cannot serve in this Nation's military.

H.R. 15 would empower the DREAMers, people who know no other country, who have been raised here and want to serve but cannot.

There are great improvements made in H.R. 15. I am proud to stand here with my colleagues who will speak in support of H.R. 15. It, I believe, provides a shot in the arm for our economic recovery. It provides military strength, as has been proven throughout our history. Twenty percent of all Medal of Honor recipients have been immigrant servicemembers.

The track record is there. The data are speaking to the empowerment that comes to the military with those who have that passion. That passion of immigrants, that passion of naturalized citizens, that whole effort of those who are looking to be naturalized, believing in this Nation and all for which she stands is a tremendous statement of who we are as a Nation and our definition as a clustering of immigrants with this quilt work of Americana that allows for the economic climb for the opportunities, the ladders of opportunity, called the American Dream."

That is the passion that fills our hearts and souls. They have given to this military, they have given to the fight for freedom, they have given to the fight to protect our liberties. H.R. 15 goes a long way to recognize that and further strengthen this Nation.

I am happy to join my colleagues tonight in support of H.R. 15.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from New York for his leadership on the immigration reform issue and his impassioned words.

We also have with us this evening one of the original cosponsors of H.R. 15, a leader on immigration reform, the gentlelady from Washington, Ms. DELBENE.

□ 1845

Ms. DELBENE. This is an important moment for immigration reform. My district in Washington State is very representative of why we need reform. We have a northern border and a diverse economy with a rich agricultural industry, including dairy and berry farmers. In the southern part of my district, there are some of the world's most innovative companies, including technology, advanced manufacturing, biotech, and countless startups. These businesses have been making the case that fixing our immigration system must be a top priority for our economy.

Whether it is an ultrasound manufacturer who needs an acoustic engineer or a video game developer looking for a 3-D modeler, companies in my district are in need of specialized high-skilled workers. We have to ensure that foreign graduate students can stay here to start new companies or support ongoing research that will lead to future breakthroughs in many areas.

Also, farmers need immigration reform in order to find a stable, skilled, and reliable workforce to help us grow our food and our economy.

That's why I helped lead the introduction of H.R. 15. This is a bipartisan bill with 190 cosponsors. In light of Veterans Day earlier this week, I can think of no better way to honor our Active Duty military servicemembers who are immigrants—currently, there are more than 65,000 immigrants, or 5 percent of the force—than by taking action on immigration reform.

Unless Congress takes action, there are many DREAMers who were brought here as children and are undocumented who want to serve their country but cannot do so as the military can currently only enlist people who have legal status.

The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program that we talked about earlier that the administration announced last year allows many DREAMers to apply for a reprieve from deportation and a work permit, but it does not confer legal status, which means that recipients of this deferred action remain ineligible to serve.

The American people want our broken immigration system fixed, and they are tired of congressional inaction. The time to act is now, and I join my colleagues in asking us to act as quickly as possible.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentlelady from Washington for her leadership on this issue. This body's continual refusal to act on immigration reform sadly comes at a tremendous cost to our country and to our security as a Nation.

The financial costs, according to the CBO—it is estimated that the Senate bill would reduce our deficit by over \$135 billion, grow millions of new jobs, and boost our economy.

In fact, in the 4 months since the Senate bill was passed, we have already missed over \$5 billion in revenue and tens of thousands of jobs, jobs that Americans could use that have not been created, that don't exist today, because of this body's failure to act.

In the spirit of Veterans Day, it is important to highlight the tradition of military service that the gentleman from New York and the gentlelady from Washington talked about. At a time when the military is facing recruitment issues, making sure we have the very best men and women to wear our uniform and defend our Nation, many individuals who fall under the deferred action program are not allowed to serve in our military. We are talking about DREAMers, young people who grew up here, might have been here since 2 or 5, and know no other country, are as American as you or I, many of whom want to give back, want to risk their life to protect their country, the only country they know, the country that they love, and yet, the military is not allowed to recruit them, and they are not allowed to serve.

It has been estimated that more than 30,000 young immigrants would join the military and qualify for legal status if we passed comprehensive immigration

reform. Key provisions of H.R. 15, our immigration reform bill, would have important and lasting benefits for our Armed Forces, and it has broad support from the military.

For example, the bill would allow deferred action childhood arrivals to enlist in all branches of the U.S. military, including the National Guard, and be provided with an expedited path to citizenship in recognition of their service to our great Nation.

Many immigrant servicemembers have become exemplary soldiers. Until 2009, only citizens and permanent residents were allowed to serve. In 2009, the Department of Defense introduced the Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest program, which allowed visa holders with high-level skills to enlist in the military and earn U.S. citizenship through their service.

We are fortunate as a Nation to have talented and hardworking immigrants who want to serve in the military, but this opportunity today is largely restricted to special visas for medical professionals and language experts. While that improves the security of our country, it would be improved even more by passing H.R. 15 to benefit from the great potential and the tens of thousands of would-be servicemembers who are asking to give back to our country, who are asking to put their lives on the line to defend the country they love, the country they know, the country that they want to serve. Millions of aspiring Americans who want nothing more than to pay their fair share, who want nothing more than to give back to our country, to make our country stronger.

It is time for us to find a way for DREAMers, for hundreds of thousands of other talented people, to pursue their dreams in the only country they know. Whether their dreams take them to the front lines of combat defending our Nation or to the front lines of competitive jobs in the private sector, or to other forms of public service, failure to take action only perpetuates an underground economy in which our Nation fails to benefit from the great depth of human capital and talent that resides in immigrants that are already here, are already in many cases working, and already in many cases are contributing members of the communities that they live in. It is simply a matter of formalizing that process and restoring the rule of law so that we have a legal way of facilitating the flow of immigrants to our country.

I can reconcile that we are both a Nation of immigrants and a Nation of laws. Those two values that we have as Americans, a Nation of immigrants and a Nation of laws, far from being mutually exclusive, are complementary. H.R. 15 and the comprehensive Senate bill honor that tradition. That is why more than 70 percent of the American people support comprehensive immigration reform. It is why I am confident, Mr. Speaker, that placed before the floor of this House, H.R. 15 would

pass today, would pass tomorrow, would pass next week.

I had the opportunity to ask Mr. GOODLATTE, as well as the chair of the Rules Committee, Mr. SESSIONS, yesterday in the Rules Committee what the plan was for immigration reform, why we were bringing forth bills with regard to asbestos, a legitimate problem to be sure, a bill that has passed this Chamber before, and a bill that will not likely be taken up by the Senate, but a bill that comes under the jurisdiction of the Judiciary Committee, why are we spending days and days debating this bill rather than actually solving a problem of immigration reform.

Mr. Speaker, I know there are victims of asbestos poisoning, I know there are companies that want to resolve this issue, but I can tell you honestly, I haven't heard from any constituents who called my office begging Congress to take up asbestos reform. It is an issue; we should deal with it. I hope there is a bipartisan approach. But not one, not one of my constituents, last week, last month, last year, not one, called my office and said: We demand action. We demand action on asbestos reform.

Not one. Thousands—thousands—not only have called my office, have attended rallies in my office. I have never had thousands of people with the archbishop, with my good friend from Chicago, LUIS GUTIÉRREZ, who joined us in my district, thousands packed a church for immigration reform. Thousands packed a church for immigration reform. Not one call, not one phone call, not one email, asking Congress to pass asbestos reform. A thousand people in an afternoon. We had to close off promotion because it filled up so much, not to mention the thousands if not tens of thousands of emails and phone calls and letters saying, solve this issue. Solve this issue, Congressman. Solve this issue, Congress; we don't like the fact that there are 10 million people here illegally. We don't like that we dishonor the rule of law. I don't like the fact that my cousin is in detention and might be deported even though he has American kids to support. I don't like that.

You know what, Mr. Speaker? When we consider how unpopular this Congress is, it is no wonder that instead of acting on issues that Americans care about, we are discussing issues that, yes, we can discuss, of course, spend a day, spend 2 days. Are they going anywhere? I don't know, but issues that I haven't heard about. I certainly haven't had a church with thousands of people in my district calling for that issue. That's why we need to act.

Mr. TONKO. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. POLIS. I am happy to yield.

Mr. TONKO. The gentleman from Colorado speaks of the tremendous support of the American public to do immigration reform. I think it is very easy to understand. It is explained by

the deep-rooted sense of heritage in this Nation for everyone. Many of us can identify with immigrant roots. I believe that is what drives the desire to have this reform put into play. We talk about the overwhelming polls for support for this effort, and we are halfway through this battle because the Senate has made a major statement with the measure that they have brought forth, and so we can meet that opportunity here in the House of Representatives.

Earlier, the gentleman from Colorado talked about the military strength that comes with immigrants, and cited many of the facts that really speak favorably to the shot in the arm that they give the military. We think of some of those unique skills that they bring to the military as the immigrant servicemembers. We talk about the opportunity to draw upon their second language proficiency. That is very important in service to the military. Certainly their greater cultural understanding, which is again a benefit that is borne by the military because of immigrants or those looking in some way at some time to be naturalized. They could join the military and provide that strength. We have a long history of decorated service, with 20 percent of all Medal of Honor recipients having been immigrant servicemembers. The list goes on and on. There is a lower attrition rate. There is proven data that are available.

So this is a powerful statement, and when we think about the heritage of this Nation, when we think about that American quilt, there are so many patches brought together under one common banner of different cultures, of races, of nationalities, that really make a statement of who we are. So this is just a natural move forward to have an immigration reform policy developed here this year in Congress.

Mr. POLIS. I would ask the gentleman from New York, just to make sure my district isn't atypical, have you gotten more letters or calls about the need to take up asbestos reform or immigration reform?

Mr. TONKO. We have had many, many requests to move with immigration reform. It is one of the greatest bits of requests that we get.

Mr. POLIS. Not to put you on the spot, but would you say it is more or less than people who have demanded that Congress act on asbestos reform?

Mr. TONKO. It is much more.

Mr. POLIS. So your district is similar to mine in that respect.

Mr. TONKO. You are absolutely right. These are very legitimate, justified issues to talk about, but when it comes to immigration reform, people are saying: Look, let's get this done. We have many people who are developing great intellectual skills, they are getting great higher ed opportunities, and we are not taking advantage of that. We are not incorporating them into the American peoplescape. We

have people who are assisting the agricultural industry, the engineering industry, the technical industry, the innovation economy, the medical health care industry, people need to fill these efforts with this immigrant power that is available.

It is great to join you on the floor. I know there are many who want to speak their voice here, and rightfully so, because this is a very pertinent issue right now. Reform is very much required, and let's get it done.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I have a letter to submit to the RECORD from the Evangelical Immigration Table, and to quote in part, the Evangelical Immigration Table and the faith-based community, with strong support from the Catholic Church as well as from evangelical churches across the spectrum, have been strong supporters of immigration reform, from the pews and here in the Halls of Congress. The Evangelical Immigration Table endorsed value-driven immigration reform 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, and establishes a path toward legal status and/or citizenship for those who qualify and those who wish to become permanent residents. I am proud to say that H.R. 15 honors the values of evangelical leaders, of Catholic leaders, of Jewish leaders, of Muslim leaders, of Americans across the faith spectrum, ensuring that our values as Americans and as people of faith are reflected in our immigration system.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE, The time has come to fix our broken immigration system. We are pleased that the Judiciary and Homeland Security Committees have worked on several bills each addressing a part of the immigration reform puzzle. As leaders of evangelical churches and organizations we write to offer our support and encourage further bipartisan cooperation towards enacting common sense immigration reform.

Evangelical leaders from across the country came together in June 2012 to form the *Evangelical Immigration Table*. The Table has issued broad principles for reform, which have been endorsed by prominent evangelical pastors, denominational heads, leaders of national parachurch ministries, and university and seminary presidents. We are working across the country to educate and mobilize our fellow evangelical Christians in support of a just and fair bipartisan policy solution to 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, and

Establishes a path toward legal status and/or citizenship for those who qualify and who wish to become permanent residents.

We applaud the significant progress toward legislation that would secure our borders, marshal additional resources for border enforcement and internal enforcement, and require the Department of Homeland Security to submit, implement and report on a detailed border security plan. The bills take

steps to elevate respect for the rule of law—strengthening E-Verify, establishing a legal guest worker program for agricultural workers, a more workable program for science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) visas, and increasing passport and visa security. We are encouraged by reports of other bills being drafted that would address the need for more low skill visas and the legal status of children, adults, and asylees; addressing these needs is vital to fixing all the components of the current system.

The work the House has done on immigration reform thus far is commendable. However, we remain concerned about several provisions of H.R. 2278, The Strengthen and Fortify Enforcement Act (SAFE Act), that could have unintended consequences adversely affecting religious communities, law enforcement agencies, and the people they are called to serve. The SAFE Act, in its current form, criminalizes unlawful presence and includes broad prohibitions on “harboring” undocumented immigrants that could make criminals of the family members of undocumented immigrants and others, including fellow church members, who assist them with everyday activities. This is a significant problem for our pastors, faith leaders and others in our community, who as an extension of their faith, care in tangible ways for the immigrants (regardless of status) within their community. Pastors, faith leaders and others in our communities should not have to decide between following the law and giving water to a thirsty traveler in the desert, providing food to those who are hungry or giving rides to church for those without transportation. While collaboration and communication between federal, state, and local law enforcement is an essential part of effective policing, it must be structured in a way that fosters buy-in from those agencies and does not compromise their rapport and cooperation with immigrant communities.

As you continue to work towards a complete legislative solution for immigration reform, you and your staff are in our prayers. We appreciate the complexity of designing a system that meets our country's needs and that can meet with broad public acceptance. Through Bible reading, prayer, and public education campaigns we have mobilized a broad base of evangelical support for immigration reform. But while Congress debates reform proposals, immigrant families and workers continue to suffer under our broken system. Now it is time to finish the job. Please prioritize work to finalize immigration reform legislation this year.

May God bless you and your staff in the days ahead.

Sincerely,

THE EVANGELICAL IMMIGRATION TABLE

□ 1900

I now yield to the original sponsor of H.R. 15, a leader in this House on the fight for immigration reform, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GARCIA).

Mr. GARCIA. I would like to thank the gentleman from Colorado.

Madam Speaker, every day thousands of Americans risk their lives for our Nation, despite the fact that our broken immigration system rips them apart, rips their families apart by deporting their mothers, fathers, siblings, and spouses.

In my home State of Florida, Rita Cote, the wife of a gulf war veteran, was detained by local law enforcement when she was translating between police and her sister, her sister who had been a victim of domestic violence. In-

stead of arresting her sister's assailant, Rita was held without a warrant, without being charged, and without seeing a judge for 7 days before being transferred to ICE custody.

This is the spouse of a veteran, of someone who is serving in our Armed Forces. No one deserve this treatment, but certainly not someone who has faced the challenges of being a military spouse. Our Nation's veterans were willing to make the ultimate sacrifice to protect us. The least we could do is protect their families.

At the same time, there are thousands of young people who would give anything to defend our country, the only country they have ever known. While these individuals with green cards cannot serve in the military because DACA doesn't allow for it, they are willing to do it; yet we do not allow it. These kids are an asset to our Nation, and it is simply bad policy to turn them away.

Since 2002, almost 90,000 military servicemembers have become citizens. We should be welcoming them with open arms. All of those willing to fight and risk their lives for our great Nation deserve that respect.

This is an issue that underscores the urgency with which we must pass immigration reform. Fixing our immigration system isn't about justice and fairness. It is about enhancing our national security and military readiness.

There are enough Members in the House that understand the benefits of immigration reform. There are enough people who know that it benefits our Nation's prosperity and understand that we will do this inevitably. But with every day that passes, this problem gets bigger. The consequences of inaction become more costly. This body needs to stop hiding behind empty promises and start doing the job we were sent here to do.

We recognize the sacrifices of America's veterans. Let's remember their loved ones who are left in the shadows.

I want to remind my colleagues across the aisle that there is enough blame to go around, but here is what is clear: a Democratic Senate took up comprehensive immigration reform and passed a bipartisan bill. This would not be the bill that I would love. This would not be the bill that the gentleman from Colorado or the gentleman from California would love. Many of us could probably write a better bill; yet we took up this bill, and it got passed. The President has said he would sign that bill. And before this House, we have a bipartisan bill that has 190 signatures. If the Speaker would allow it to come to the floor, it would pass.

Mr. Speaker, we need you to yield here. You did it on Hurricane Sandy relief, you did it on the budget and fiscal crisis, you did it on VAWA; and it is time to do it now. Let the will of this body happen. Let us vote, and we will vote it through. The consequences are grave not only for our country, not

only for the millions who suffer, not only for the veterans, not only for their spouses and family; but they are going to have a great consequence for your party. The time has come to let this be voted on.

We have been given an unprecedented opportunity to fix our broken immigration system and make our Nation stronger. Now is the time to pass immigration reform.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from Miami for his impassioned words.

It is rare, in my experience here, that more than two-thirds of the Senate can agree to solve an issue. They always talk about reaching the 60-vote threshold. There are only 54 or 55 of one party. How do we get to 60? This was 68 votes, more than two-thirds of the United States Senate. This House could act tomorrow.

As you know, Madam Speaker, what many Americans wonder is if it could pass, why aren't we debating it? Why aren't we discussing it? What we spend our time on and the bills that we debate in this Chamber are determined by the majority leader and the Speaker. That is why we need their ability to bring these bills to the floor. If people want to stand in opposition, let them be public with that and say they don't want to solve immigration. But I am confident that the votes exist today with support of more than a third of the Republicans in the Senate. I think the numbers would be similar here. I think it could be a quarter, it could be a third, it could be 20 percent of the Republicans in this body that would agree it is time to fix our broken immigration system.

I yield to the gentleman from Miami.

Mr. GARCIA. I just wanted to agree with the gentleman from Colorado.

What is clear is that there are enough votes here to pass this. What is clear is if this comes to the floor, this will pass. What is clear is that Mr. CANTOR wants a bill to pass. What is clear is that there has probably been no bill with broader support—probably since I have been in Congress, probably since the gentleman from Colorado got here. We not only have the Chamber of Commerce on our side, but we have the AFL-CIO, who is on the other side of the spectrum. We have the farm workers, and then we have the growers. We have almost every sector, including the religious sector. All of them are looking for a solution here, and there is only one man standing in the way. That is the Speaker.

We ask, Mr. Speaker, for you to yield to the will of this body, yield to the majority, and yield to what is right for our Nation. We demand a vote. The Nation deserves a vote. Our country deserves a vote.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from Florida.

It is not the desire, I don't think of any of us, of the Democrats, of our leader, of our Members, for this to be a political issue that one side is demonized on, that is used to generate polit-

ical support. Rather, we would like to solve it. We would like this issue to go away. We would like to fix our broken immigration system; but if that doesn't happen, of course candidates are going to run on fixing it and the American people, with overwhelming support, will elect candidates who want to fix it.

If Members of this body won't lead, frankly, Madam Speaker, they will need to get out of the way, whether by their choice or whether by the people's choice. The Americans are demanding action.

I yield to the gentleman from California, a leader on immigration reform.

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

The issue of immigration reform is a top priority for our Nation and rightly so. It will not only help our economy grow, but it will also help families stay together.

I was taken aback earlier today when Speaker BOEHNER said that the Republican-controlled House has "no intention of ever going to conference on the Senate immigration bill."

That is clearly at odds with what the American people want and what the American people need.

I just want to recount a bit of my own history.

Mr. POLIS. One way to honor the Speaker's word and not go to conference would simply be to take up the Senate immigration bill and advance it directly to the President. Perhaps we can also call upon the Speaker to honor his word in not having to go to conference by actually bringing the Senate bill before this body.

The conference would not be necessary; is that correct? It would go right to the President.

Mr. TAKANO. I believe so. Just bring it directly to the floor. We can bring that Senate bill directly to the floor and let the House work its will.

The topic of our Special Order had to do with immigration reform in the military and veterans.

I recount a very poignant part of my own family's history. All of my grandparents, both my parents were interned during World War II without trial in Japanese American internment camps.

Despite this great injustice, many children of these immigrants, young men, volunteered for military service. They fought in the 100th Infantry, in the 442nd, suffered some of the greatest casualties, and were most recently awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for their service. These were young men who wanted to demonstrate their loyalty to this country and were given an opportunity to fight for our country. I think it is tragic that young DREAMers under deferred action are not allowed to serve the country that they love, where the language of English is mainly the language they speak, and the culture they know is that of our country, America.

Just like the men of the World War II generation, Japanese Americans who

fought for this country and all Japanese American fighting units, I believe that the children of immigrants today want that opportunity.

Over the past few months, I have received hundreds of letters from residents in my district, letters from business owners, husbands, wives, and perhaps even most distressing, children. One letter I received is from a local teenager who wrote to me about her mother who will likely be deported back to Mexico in 2015. She said:

It is going to be very hard to bring her back to California. Her four kids need her back. She is a single mother. She is the only person we have close to us.

Another letter I received said:

My stepfather's mother died of heart problems, so he had to go back to Mexico to her funeral. He was there for a couple of days, and when he tried to come home, it was hard for him to come back over to California. It has been a while since we have seen him. My mom misses him terribly. She cries every time she talks to him on the phone. It has been 2 months since he left to Mexico, which probably means he lost his job. He is the main provider for our family. This is very stressful and hard on my mom because she is not able to pay the bills. It is hard for her to support us and be strong at the same time. I hate to see her suffer and be sad all the time. Families should not be ripped apart like this. Other families should not have to go through what my family is going through.

Madam Speaker, these are letters from children whose families are being ripped apart.

I also received a letter from a wife and a mother saying:

I myself am one of those many families that unfortunately have to go through this injustice. My husband was deported on his way to work about 3 years ago, and during these few years, it has been really hard for my new 5-year-old daughter and me. The stress I go through every day is unhealthy, and, unfortunately, my daughter has to go through it, as well. My daughter really wants to be with her father, and it really hurts to see her go through this situation.

These are American families that we can help by passing immigration reform.

The last letter I would like to read is from one of the largest employers in my district, the Blue Banner Company, a grower and shipper of California citrus. They wrote to me and detailed the difficulties of a recent crop of theirs when they faced a 30 percent to 35 percent labor shortage. Because of the labor shortage, less fruit was harvested from the trees in a timely manner. Because the fruit was harvested not at peak time, it was sent to be juiced instead of sold fresh for eating by consumers. This resulted in a total loss for their growers of \$3.4 million to \$3.8 million.

The letter goes on to say:

We, California agriculture, desperately need a legal workforce from which to hire.

Reforming our immigration system will help businesses such as Blue Banner by providing a workforce that is ready and willing to work. Let's pass immigration reform and help families stay together and help businesses obtain the workers they need.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, we have here another leader from the great State of California (Mr. CÁRDENAS), my friend.

□ 1915

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Thank you very much for bringing together this important discussion on this floor of our Nation's Capitol.

I think it is really important, Madam Speaker, for us to remind ourselves that the only thing that is stopping comprehensive immigration reform is the fact that, Madam Speaker, the leadership of this House is unwilling to allow the vote to take place.

Today I am proud to join my colleagues to talk about the need for immigration reform but, more importantly, the cost America bears as Congress does nothing.

We were sent to Washington to solve our Nation's problems, but Republican leadership has announced we are done and will not take up immigration reform this year. Madam Speaker, it is November 13. We are not done. We have 6 more weeks to work, just like all Americans. Why don't we just continue doing our job?

Members of our Armed Forces don't get the liberty to say when they are done. There are no vacations or timeouts for them. They proudly wear the U.S. flag on their shoulder and continue to protect our freedoms, even when the leadership in our Congress decides that they no longer want to work.

As of June 2009, for example, there were over 114,000 foreign-born individuals in our United States armed services serving our country. Over 95,000 of those individuals were naturalized U.S. citizens. They were not born in this country, but they went through the process of becoming citizens and serve our country proudly. More than 10,000 of those servicemembers are not U.S.-born citizens. They stand on the front lines because they believe in what America stands for. Let's get to work, pass comprehensive immigration reform, and earn the honor of their service and their sacrifice.

Every day we await action on a comprehensive immigration reform bill, millions of dollars in potential revenue is lost to Americans in our country. Our farms do not have a stable workforce. Far too many high-tech companies are short the workers they need to continue to innovate and grow American jobs.

Our schools attract the best and the brightest from around the world, but when they get their degrees and want to stay in this great country, they are sent away, not allowed to start businesses and hire American citizens.

In all, the full economic potential of undocumented immigrants as workers, taxpayers, consumers, and entrepreneurs is being lost because they are unable to earn legal status. And when we grow the American economy, we create more jobs for Americans.

As many in Congress continue to deny the pressing need for comprehen-

sive immigration reform, the broken U.S. immigration system continues to tear families apart, while simultaneously draining the Federal budget and robbing our American economy. Talking about comprehensive immigration reform is not enough. It is time for Democrats and Republicans to vote together on this floor and pass a solution that will serve all of America. The time for reform is now.

The system is broken, and fixing it in an intelligent, bipartisan way is something that a majority of Americans want. Americans understand that deportation, or even self-deportation, is not an option. They support a pathway to citizenship. Even more support a pathway to legal residency. The American people want this solution.

With the introduction of H.R. 15 in our House, a bipartisan bill for comprehensive immigration reform, we have reached a significant milestone for commonsense immigration reform. The bill is practical and fair and holds everyone accountable. The bill strengthens the border, strengthens the economy, and provides a pathway to citizenship for people who have lived, worked, and raised their families right here in the United States of America.

We cannot wait any longer. It is time for Speaker BOEHNER to bring a comprehensive immigration reform bill to the floor of this House and let the will of the American people have its way. America deserves a solution. We are ready for a vote. It is time that our House do the will of the people, that we have a comprehensive immigration reform bill come to this floor and allow Republicans and Democrats to vote their conscience and pass that bill.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from California.

And just to highlight how we can improve our security as a Nation and honor the tradition of contributions that veterans have made to the security of our Nation, by simply allowing young people loyal to our country, who have lived here and it is the only country they know, who are able to work legally under DACA, simply allowing them, if they choose to, to put their lives on the line for the country that they love, that will make us all safer, Madam Speaker, and is part of H.R. 15 and comprehensive immigration reform.

I yield to another leader in the effort to fix our broken immigration system, a gentleman from a large district in Texas that covers a lot of the border, my good friend, Mr. GALLEG0.

Mr. GALLEG0. I thank the gentleman from Colorado for yielding.

Madam Speaker, thank you so much for the opportunity to speak.

This past Veterans Day, I had the opportunity to recognize and to thank those who served in the military with a duty to defend our country. I and all of us, I think, who serve in this Chamber have a duty to these veterans to defend their needs here in the U.S. Congress, and that would include the need for comprehensive immigration reform.

I am very privileged to represent a portion of San Antonio, Texas, known as Military City, USA. This past weekend, at a Veterans Day ceremony at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, there was a different aspect of that celebration for veterans, because this past weekend, as we honored veterans on Veterans Day at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, there was also, at that same site, that same location, that same time, a naturalization ceremony, where 18 people, servicemembers, were naturalized.

Eddie Rivers, Theophilus Botchway, Lily Alexandra Caceres, Tashique Williams, Kwaku Bosoah, Kenneth Francis, Jr., Nabieula Samura, Maria Cervantes Ramos, Carena Garabet Akridge, Larry Ndungu, Elkanah Yator, Mario Alexis Mares, Omar Ruiz Perez, Guillermo Chavez Cardenas, Marlon Chris Gabriel, Petra Maria Thompson, Gabriel Adjete, all of those were involved in the Veterans Day naturalization ceremony.

They came from Dominica, Ecuador, Germany, Ghana, Honduras, the Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Kenya, Mexico, Sierra Leone, Trinidad and Tobago and Syria.

You see, each year about 8,000 non-citizens join the U.S. military. Their sacrifices throughout history have been many. Immigrants who served in the U.S. military are enlistees like Lance Corporal Jose Gutierrez, who was the first U.S. serviceman killed in combat in Iraq some 10 years ago. Mr. Gutierrez, who was a native of Guatemala, arrived in the U.S. without documents at the age of 14. He received his U.S. citizenship posthumously, after his supreme sacrifice.

Others, like Alfred Rascon, emerged from the war as high achievers. Mr. Rascon, who was an undocumented immigrant from Mexico, was assigned to Fort Sam Houston for basic and for specialist medical training. He was awarded the Medal of Honor during the Vietnam war. He became a U.S. citizen, and he later served as Director of the United States Selective Service System.

The list of stories of noncitizens who have served in the U.S. military is a very long list. Enlistments by immigrants are highest during times of war. At the end of the last decade, Madam Speaker, there were over 100,000 foreign-born individuals serving in various aspects in various capacities in our Armed Forces. That is why it is so important to recognize the contributions of immigration to our national security.

On social media, through Twitter and Facebook, I made it known that I was at this ceremony on Veterans Day in San Antonio, where not only were we honoring veterans, but there was a citizenship and naturalization ceremony at the same time. And there were many comments about, How is this possible?

Well, it is and it has been. In the years since 9/11 and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, we have, in fact, relied on immigrants in our military.

Since 2002, over 89,000 military service-members have become U.S. citizens. Immigrants in the military and other agencies critical to our national security have served as translators, for example; and through their understanding of local communities and through their understanding of local customs, they have helped collect intelligence which better protects Americans, not only at home, but also abroad.

Unfortunately, today the House leadership said that they would not consider immigration reform this year, and, frankly, that is a real tragedy. They said they wouldn't even consider looking at the Senate bill as a starting point to negotiate.

H.R. 15, of which I am a cosponsor, has 190 other cosponsors and 25 or so Republicans who have vowed to support it, and thus, the votes are there to pass immigration reform.

In this time of excessive partisanship and excessive bickering, we have to find a way forward to do the right thing for our country, for our kids, and for our future. We have to figure out a way to succeed, even if we succeed sometimes in spite of ourselves.

Especially in today's political climate, so many of us here in the House, we repeatedly talk about our commitment to principles, our commitment to fighting for what we, as individual Members, believe in. But the reality is that, in a House with 435 people and with 100 Members of the Senate and an all-or-nothing attitude, many times it produces nothing, and that all-or-nothing attitude kills immigration reform. That all-or-nothing attitude produces nothing for children who have known no other home than the United States and are here through no fault of their own. It produces nothing of the estimated \$775 billion in revenue and \$125 billion in payroll from immigrant-owned businesses, and it produces nothing of the \$175 billion in deficit reduction in the first 10 years after immigration reform is enacted or another \$700 billion in deficit reduction in the 10 years after that.

Immigrants are so important to our country in so many ways. We say it all the time. We say it all the time. Ours is a Nation of immigrants. Immigration reform is critical to our economy, to our families, and, yes, even to our national security.

□ 1930

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, I am happy to yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. Thank you, Representative POLIS.

Earlier tonight when we started this hour, I made mention of how proud I am of my grandfather, who was an immigrant from Poland. He added, along with his military colleagues, to the muscle of the military might of this Nation, and together, they were able to help serve this Nation so as to proclaim victory in the war that was to

end all wars. But we know that that wasn't the case.

Nonetheless, with that contribution to this country behind him, he returned home. He returned to build a life. He returned to build a family. He returned to build a community. He returned, like all of our veterans, to build a Nation. Why would we want to stop this pathway to progress? Why would we want to stop this pathway to economic vitality? Why would we want to stop this pathway to citizenship?

You know, it is no wonder that so many from various perspectives have come forth, imploring us in this House, imploring the Republican leadership, to set an agenda that includes immigration reform. For everyone from the Chamber of Commerce to the Farm Bureau, from labor to the farm community to the working families of this Nation to so many of the businesses that have asked for sound immigration reform, let's not stand in the way of progress. We only ask the Republican majority in this House to set the tone, open to the discussion, because if it is brought to the floor, I am convinced that we will recognize, as Representatives, as leaders of this Nation, the true definition of this Nation, a land of immigrants.

With that, I yield back to Representative POLIS and thank him for leading us in this very important discussion here this evening.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) for his impassioned words.

Here in the spirit of Veterans Day week—of course we all honor our veterans every day of the year. This past Monday was Veterans Day. This week, in particular, we are honoring those who serve our Nation. I would like to share the stories of several immigrants who serve in our Armed Forces.

This is Augustus Maiyo, who serves in Colorado with the U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program at Fort Carson. I am proud to say that he won the Marine Corps Marathon last year and led the team to victory. He is a runner and has done remarkable times and ended up winning it. He was fortunate to get the run done right before Hurricane Sandy impacted our Nation. We are proud, of course. I want to thank Augustus Maiyo for his service and for being a role model for so many others.

One of the hats I wear in Congress is I cochair the U.S.-Nepal Caucus, and I am particularly proud to be able to share the story of Saral Shrestha, a Fort Bragg soldier from Katmandu, Nepal, who was selected as the 2012 Soldier of the Year. He came to the United States in 2007 from Nepal. He went to college in Nebraska, joined the Army in 2009, and was deployed in Afghanistan.

We should be proud of the contributions that our 2012 Soldier of the Year has made, himself an immigrant, an inspiration to all the men and women who serve, including those who were born in other nations.

As many of you know, the contest for Soldier of the Year is a very rigorous competition. Shrestha has been promoted to sergeant since he began the competition. We are particularly proud that the announcement was made during the Association of the United States Army annual meeting in Washington, D.C.

There were many others, Madam Speaker, that we would like to be able to share the stories of, who want to lay down their lives to defend our country and to serve with distinction but, under current law, are prevented from serving in the Armed Forces, even though under the deferred action program they are able to work, they are able to attend school in our country, and all that many of them ask is to be able to risk their lives to defend the country they love, the country they know, the United States of America. H.R. 15 and the Senate bill address this situation and would allow these brave young men and women to serve.

It is time, Madam Speaker. It is time to bring this bill forward. It is time to have a simple "yes" or "no" vote. It is what the American people are demanding. The American people are not demanding that we spend our precious hours and days debating asbestos reform. The American people are not demanding that we only work a dozen days before the end of the year here in Congress. The American people are demanding that we solve problems.

More than 70 percent of the American people support comprehensive immigration reform. It would improve the security of the Nation. It would honor the service of our veterans. It would secure our borders. It would reflect our values. It would improve our economy. It would reduce the deficit—and it would create jobs for Americans. What is not to like? Let's pass comprehensive immigration reform now.

I yield back the balance of my time.

DEFENDING ISRAEL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana). 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, one thing becomes very clear from our study of history, and that is that things that nations do have consequences. Things we do individually have consequences, and things we do as a Nation have consequences. That is why some people remember that on May 30, 2010, there were six flotilla ships—and this is from the U.N. release, a report into last year's raid, how events unfolded, dated 2 September 2011.

It points out that on May 30, 2010, six flotilla ships leave Cyprus for Gaza in an attempt to break Israel's naval blockade. The Turkish cruise liner Mavi Marmara is chartered by Islamic charity IHH and carries 581 of the 700