

lend a voice to the 1.5 million workers who have lost their Federal unemployment benefits.

Imagine a choice before you where you had to either put food on the table or have a roof over your head. This is the decision that millions of workers, including 53,000 people in L.A. County alone, will face, all because my colleagues on the other side of the aisle refused to extend unemployment insurance benefits.

Last week, I had an opportunity to talk personally with constituents who are affected by the loss of these benefits. Their message for me to send to my colleagues was clear:

We are not lazy or unmotivated. We want to work. But as we continue to navigate a tough labor market, we need these benefits in order to provide for our families and to pay for the gas and phone bills that help us talk to potential employers and get ourselves to interviews.

Mr. Speaker, unemployment benefits are not handouts. These are benefits workers have earned. They paid into the system to help them precisely during times like this.

It is time to stop disrespecting these people who are continuing to try to find work by mischaracterizing them as lazy or somehow fat and happy living on unemployment benefits.

One of my constituents, in particular, Anthony, wanted me to make crystal clear the fact that he resents those who say that is he not trying hard enough to find a job. He has a bachelor's degree in finance from Cal State Long Beach and has worked as an accountant in the private sector.

In his 47 years on Earth, he has never once been unemployed until now, and he has been trying everything he can to find work, but hasn't found anything yet.

He told me that every morning he gets up and goes to a work center to search the online listings, and that the 20 computers at this particular work center are always full, and every single person at one of those computers is actively looking for work.

Mr. Speaker, unemployment insurance benefits are a lifeline to families who are struggling. Please don't cut off this critical lifeline. Give unemployment insurance the vote that it deserves.

TURKS IN RUSSIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to raise awareness of an ongoing humanitarian crisis in southern Russia, and call on the State Department to respond to that crisis.

In 2003, the United States State Department, responding to a humanitarian crisis against Ahiska Turks in southern Russia, designated Ahiska Turks as a special humanitarian concern for P-2 processing. As a result, between 2004 and 2007, roughly 12,000

Ahiska Turks arrived in the United States as refugees and settled in over 25 States, including a sizable community in my home State of Ohio.

Ahiska Turks, discriminated against, belittled and persecuted in Russia, are model citizens in the United States. In less than a decade, they have been able to fully integrate into American society. They have learned English, adapted to their new environment, educated their children and helped revitalize our neighborhoods.

They live the American Dream and strengthen American society by investing in their people and our cities. It is proven that this group is an asset to our community, as seen by the fact that over 50 percent of them are entrepreneurs and create jobs for others, including many Americans.

Ahiska Turks have shown that refugees can thrive and live the American Dream and help us grow our communities and our country. It is puzzling to me why the State Department abruptly ended this successful program.

There are roughly 80,000 Ahiska Turks who remain in southern Russia in difficult circumstances. The latest report by the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance cites the adverse environment for human rights organizations to even monitor the discrimination being suffered against Ahiska Turks in southern Russia, and acknowledges that the situation is "very bad."

I call on the State Department today to restart the P-2 program and respond to this ongoing humanitarian crisis.

I urge my colleagues to contact the U.S. State Department to restart the P-2 program for Ahiska Turks in Russia. This is a bipartisan issue where Congress can stand up for human rights and stand up for a persecuted group.

COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to speak about legislation that will create jobs, grow our economy, and reduce our deficit. This legislation has already passed the Senate, and the American people are still waiting for the House to do its part. I am speaking about comprehensive immigration reform.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office predicts that over the next 10 years, fixing our broken immigration system will promote job creation and wage increases, cut the deficit by nearly \$158 billion, and increase America's GDP by over \$800 billion.

This bill will be an economic benefit, and it is also the right thing to do for the 11 million immigrant families living in the shadows.

Think about what this legislation means for those families who are facing many challenges, not unlike the

difficulties earlier Irish, Italian, Portuguese and French immigrants faced when they arrived in this great country.

Diversity is a great strength of this country. We are a nation of immigrants, and our laws should reflect our values that, if you work hard and contribute to society, you can provide a life for yourself and your family.

It is time to enact comprehensive immigration reform so we can create jobs, grow our economy, secure our borders, and ensure that the American Dream remains a real opportunity for all future generations.

The American people deserve a vote on this critical legislation, and I urge my colleagues and I urge the Speaker to bring this bill to the floor so we can fix our broken immigration system and enact comprehensive reform that will make a real difference, not only in our economy, but in the lives of millions and millions of people.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 15, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on January 15, 2014 at 9:47 a.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 3527.

That the Senate passed S. 1434.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 26 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Gary Grogan, Stone Creek Church, Urbana, Illinois, offered the following prayer:

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the stewards of our government that are gathered here today, those who are willing to serve under grueling public

scrutiny. I pray that You would grant them wisdom, grace, and the fortitude to execute their responsibilities.

Lord, You know, as a Nation, we are facing some of the biggest challenges in our young history. We ask for Your guiding hand. We seek Your guiding hand to do what we cannot do. We acknowledge Your ability to move us past our failures, our sins, and our humanity.

I pray that this session be a time of healing, humility, and laying down our differences to unite us, even as Your son, Jesus Christ, laid down his life for us, a greater purpose. Help our government officials to lay down their own agendas for the greater good: providing for the underserved, caring for the disenfranchised, and fighting for those who cannot fight for themselves.

Bless and protect these men and women and their families from those who would be unreasonable and those who would try to harm them. We pray, Lord, that You would bless the United States of America. In Your name, we pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. MULLIN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING REVEREND GARY GROGAN

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Pastor Gary Grogan. Pastor Grogan has served as lead pastor of Stone Creek Church in Urbana, Illinois, for over 25 years, and today he is our pastor.

Thank you for leading the prayer.

Pastor Grogan and his lovely wife, Bonnie, have two children and five grandchildren. Both of his children also serve in local church ministry.

Under Pastor Grogan's leadership, Stone Creek has grown into a thriving, multiethnic congregation, leading many community outreach programs focused on justice and compassion.

Some of the many projects Pastor Grogan has led include fundraising to build educational community facilities, assisting those trapped in sex trafficking, support for returning war veterans from Afghanistan, and providing medical supplies and other necessities to victims of natural disasters.

The Bible says, in Proverbs 11:25: "Those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed." Pastor Grogan has spent a lifetime refreshing and encouraging those around him.

I want to offer my heartfelt thanks to Pastor Grogan and his entire congregation in Urbana, Illinois, for allowing him the opportunity to be here today.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

IMPROVING EMPLOYMENT, NOT UNEMPLOYMENT

(Mr. BOEHNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BOEHNER. Madam Speaker, today in our country, too many families and small businesses are struggling. Unemployment remains high; wages are stagnant; prices for everything from gas to groceries are rising faster than paychecks. The middle class is getting squeezed, and the policies from this administration have not worked.

Five years after the President took office, many Americans are still asking the question, Where are the jobs? Unfortunately, instead of helping to create jobs, the President is focused on making it easier to live without one. The House is focused on making it easier to find a job, to break the status quo, not to sustain it. We have passed dozens of bills that are sitting over in the Senate. Our focus is on ending this new normal, improving employment, not unemployment.

The President says he wants to make this year a "year of action." Sounds good to me. He can start by calling on the leaders over in the Senate to pass

our jobs bills. He can start by approving the Keystone pipeline and the tens of thousands of jobs it will create. He can start by leading on trade promotion authority that will help employers and provide more employment in our country. And he can start by working with us on education and skills training to give people more opportunities.

Let's make this a year of bipartisan action. I am sure the American people would welcome it.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS MONTH

(Mr. SWALWELL of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize January as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month.

As unbelievable as it may sound, it is estimated that 20.9 million people were victims of some form of forced labor, including trafficking, in 2012. Most of these victims, sadly, were women and children. While we may believe or hope to believe that this is happening across oceans, it is actually occurring rampantly across the East Bay. I saw this firsthand when I worked for 7 years as a prosecutor in the Alameda County District Attorney's Office, mostly with victims who were, too often, young teenage girls.

We cannot sit by as millions of people are exploited in this way—denigrated, demeaned, and disparaged. It is in this month that we recommit ourselves to ending these horrors of slavery and human trafficking once and for all.

My home county of Alameda, under the direction of District Attorney Nancy O'Malley, is doing its part. They run a coordinated effort called H.E.A.T. Watch to fight trafficking. In fact, District Attorney O'Malley recently announced a massive public relations campaign to draw attention to this issue and help victims. I have one of the posters, and I hope people will call (510) 645-9388 if they suspect trafficking is happening. With their hard work and that of people around the world, we can bring trafficking to an end.

UNEMPLOYMENT

(Mr. MULLIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MULLIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the American Dream. Our country is the land of entrepreneurs. We get up every morning, put our boots on, and go to work. Americans should have the opportunity to have a good job and a good life rather than develop a life of dependency on unemployment.

As a business owner, I don't want my company to simply maintain the status