

the rise in energy costs with policies that discourage exploration of domestic resources and attempt to bypass Congress to implement cap-and-trade. A major way to improve reliability and affordability is to produce more energy here at home.

I am pleased to join my colleagues as we debate energy solutions and advance an all-of-the-above energy policy to power economic growth and job creation.

CELEBRATING IMMIGRANT HERITAGE MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, this month, as we celebrate Immigrant Heritage Month, we reflect upon unique backgrounds and honor our collective history, but the reality is that our current immigration system is badly broken.

Immigration reform is not only the right thing to do morally, it is the right thing to do for our economy. Businesses in Connecticut and across the Nation are demanding that we have immigration reform, so that they can hire employees and expand their businesses.

I have heard from manufacturers and from biotech companies in my own district who are eager to hire new engineers and Ph.D.'s, but our current system forces most of the best and brightest who come from around the world, who train at our research institutions here in the United States, trained at taxpayer expense, we force them to leave this country, taking their talents with them.

I have met with dairy farmers in Connecticut who cannot find enough laborers to work on their farms. Farmers are demanding that Congress reform our immigration system to provide a reliable and stable workforce, so that they can continue to provide local food, milk, and cheese for our families.

There are 11 million immigrants who are ready to emerge from the shadows, ready to join the workforce, and to grow our economy: people like Maria, a mother of three from Meriden, who brought her family here to build a better life; people like Camila and Carolina—twin sisters, honor students—from Danbury, who cofounded Connecticut Students for a DREAM, to help DREAMers navigate the immigration system.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for Congress to act. Let's honor our Nation of immigrants by passing comprehensive immigration reform that secures our borders, keeps our families together, and creates an earned path to citizenship.

AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, last week, I voted against the Defense Appropria-

tions bill because of \$79.4 billion included it included in OCO funding.

During the amendment process, I joined many of my colleagues in both parties in voting to stop funding the war in Afghanistan after 2014.

Unfortunately, we were unsuccessful in this effort, and I am on the floor of the House today because the American people are frustrated with the administration and with Congress for continuing to spend taxpayer money overseas in unnecessary military interventions. I share this frustration with the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I want to bring to the attention of the House an article in the Daily Journal Online titled "No End for Afghanistan's War on the United States Taxpayer"—"No End for Afghanistan's War on the United States Taxpayer," which states:

John F. Sopko, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, known as SIGAR, may have taken Uncle Sam and shaken him by the lapels last month, but the media missed it. Americans, however, need to hear how Sopko, in an address at the Middle East Institute in Washington, D.C., laid out why Afghanistan remains "relevant"—and a cause for outrage—for every U.S. taxpayer and policymaker. In short, Afghanistan is on life support, and Joe Citizen is its permanent IV.

These are the words of John Sopko. This article goes on to say:

SIGAR, on the job since 2008, has produced 118 audits and inspection reports and made 23 quarterly reports to Congress. Nothing seems to penetrate the Capitol dome, however.

Mr. Speaker, this brings me to a quote by Pat Buchanan, with whom I agree strongly on foreign policy issues:

Is it not a symptom of senility to be borrowing from the world, so we can defend the world?

How appropriate a statement is that? We are a debtor nation that has to borrow money every year to pay the debts of our own Nation, and we borrow money to spend overseas in foreign areas. It makes no sense.

That is why I am so disappointed that, last week, we were unable to put a stop on the waste, fraud, and abuse of the American taxpayer money in Afghanistan.

Now, when we also must consider the collapse of Iraq, I am reminded of a quote from our country's first President, in a letter from George Washington to James Monroe, and I quote Washington:

I have always given it as my decided opinion that no nation has a right to intermeddle in the concerns of another, that everybody has a right to form and adopt whatever government they liked best to live under themselves.

Mr. Speaker, beside me is a poster of military carrying the casket of an American soldier killed in either Iraq or Afghanistan. I bring this to the floor because, this past weekend, we had three marines from Camp Lejeune—which is in the district I represent, the Third District of North Carolina—three marines in the engineering battalion in

Afghanistan helping to build roads in Afghanistan. The three were shot and killed.

That is why I continue to join my colleagues, and both parties come to this floor and to say to the Congress: you are not listening to the American people, the American people are sick and tired of their sons and daughters dying in foreign lands, borrowing money from the Chinese to pay for that development in those foreign lands, and we continue to have more and more losing their life and their limbs.

It is time for the Congress to listen to the American people. They are the ones that elect us to come here to represent their views and their interests, and we are not listening to them as it relates to Afghanistan.

I pray for our men and women in uniform, their families, and pray for the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 150th anniversary of the Yosemite Grant Act that was signed into law in 1864 by then-President Abraham Lincoln and the creation of Yosemite National Park, one of our Nation's greatest treasures.

Yosemite receives over 4 million visitors annually, all who come to experience our breathtaking scenery and wonderment that the park provides for all Americans.

As a Californian and a longtime park supporter since my early childhood, I understand the importance of safeguarding our precious national resources.

Yosemite is an integral part of our communities and our country, and it is also a great source of pride for all Californians. Therefore, we must work together, despite the challenges that we face, to not only preserve Yosemite National Park for future generations to come, but for all of America's great natural resources.

Yosemite is just one of many of the crown jewels of America's national park system. Its beautiful and majestic park is, obviously, something to behold and where visitors come every year from not only across America, but from throughout the world.

For all Americans, we must remember that Yosemite National Park represents among the best of America. As it has been said before: America's national parks, perhaps America's best idea.

Therefore, it is my honor to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Yosemite National Park, the first park designated in our country.

23 IN 1—DEL RIO, TEXAS

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

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to continue our journey throughout the vast 23rd District of Texas and talk about San Felipe Del Rio, known today as Del Rio, Texas.

San Felipe Del Rio was founded by the Spaniards in the 1600s. In fact, local lore talks about the Spaniards offering a mass there on St. Philip's Day in 1635, hence the name San Felipe.

When the local post office was established in 1883, the name was condensed simply to Del Rio, in order to avoid confusion with San Felipe de Austin.

Del Rio, from the onset, has been carried forward by those with innovation and entrepreneurship in their blood, from the San Felipe Agricultural, Irrigation, and Manufacturing Company, which first harnessed the clear waters of the San Felipe Creek to satisfy the thirst of crops and a growing population, to Julio's Corn Chips, which went from a smalltown favorite now being mailed to Texans abroad who want a little taste of home.

From the skies over war-torn Europe to protecting our border, Del Rio has a long history of military accomplishment and continues to contribute to the safety and security of our Nation.

□ 1030

In 1942, during World War II, the War Department opened Laughlin Field as a training base to prepare pilots for high-risk missions over European skies.

In 1962, U-2 high-altitude spy planes that played a critical role in the discovery of Russian missiles hidden in Cuba were stationed at Laughlin Air Force Base in Del Rio. This action would eventually lead our Nation to having the resolve to win the Cold War.

Through Laughlin Air Force Base, Del Rio continues its military tradition by training the greatest pilots in the world and serving as a base to those who guard our borders.

Being a mix of Spanish and Mexican tradition, Del Rio is a cultural hub and an example of how in America many cultures can blend together to form something wonderful and exciting.

In Del Rio, you can fill a day visiting a winery run by the Qualia family, which is the oldest winery in Texas; learn about regional history and see Judge Roy Bean's grave at the Whitehead Memorial Museum; or, you can catch an evening show by the Upstagers, Del Rio's award-winning live theater group.

In fact, if you like the outdoors, visit Seminole Canyon, not far from Del Rio, which has one of the largest collections of Indian pictographs found anywhere in the world. You can also visit Devils River, which is the last river in Texas still in its natural state.

If you are a sports fan, there are plenty of sporting events to catch, such as Del Rio's Mighty Ram football team, or the annual fishing tournament held on Lake Amistad, which is an absolutely phenomenal lake and a national recreational area run by the National Park Service.

So if you find yourself near Del Rio, I invite you to experience the culture, take a dip in the clear waters of the San Felipe Creek, or catch a theater show. And bring back a bag of Julio's Corn Chips, which you are sure to enjoy.

BOKO HARAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I just returned from a congressional delegation trip to Nigeria, which was both eye-opening and moving.

Nigeria is a country of huge possibilities. It is an oil rich nation, the largest in Africa, with a population that will surpass the United States by 2050. It is mired with corrupt political leaders and a weakened police and military, leading to a dire political climate of joblessness in the northeast and giving rise to a terrorist organization of mostly young men called Boko Haram. They burn schools, churches, mosques, and police stations. They rob, steal, kidnap, and murder innocent victims in their path. Their violence has resulted in the deaths of thousands in the last decade.

Boko Haram's most notorious activity, which was the focus of our trip, was the recent kidnapping of 270 innocent girls attending school. These girls remain hidden—most likely scattered—and subjected to unimaginable crimes. This kidnapping received international attention for a short time, and then, like the girls, disappeared.

While in Nigeria, we met with victims of Boko Haram, as well as political, military, and civic leaders. We learned of the horrific suffering at the hands of Boko Haram and the inability of the corrupt Nigerian government, which is involved in a competitive upcoming election, to stop this violence.

Embedded in my mind are the young teen girls who told us harrowing stories of how they escaped Boko Haram terrorists while their friends, tragically, remained behind. We met with a weeping father of one such girl.

I will never forget the story of a young mother who witnessed Boko Haram decapitate her husband's head and left her dying in the street with her throat slit. She survived physically, but has been left broken financially and, of course, psychologically.

We spent time with a fusion team of Nigerian, U.S., British, and French military law enforcement put together to strategize the return of these girls.

Now, Mr. Speaker, some quick observations of mine to a very complicated situation.

As I have said before, some crimes against humanity are of the nature that knows no borders and require a response no matter where you live in the world. The kidnapping of 270 girls is such a crime. It cannot be treated just as a flavor of the week that is soon forgotten.

That is why the United States and the international community must continue to apply pressure to the Nigerian government to do all it can to negotiate the safe return of these young girls to their families.

For those citizens who want to join this fight, I join my colleague FREDERICA WILSON in asking people in this country and all over the world to tweet using #bringbackourgirls every day at 9 a.m.

During our trip, Mr. Speaker, we called upon—and we should continue to call upon—the Nigerian government to set up a relief fund for the victims and the families of Boko Haram for the financial and medical care that they so need.

The United States should continue our efforts with the fusion team and quickly respond to the team's request for approval of a strategic plan.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, we must continue to advise Nigerian authorities on the need for transparency and honesty and the need to deal with the economic plight of their people and urge a free and fair upcoming election.

As I said from the start, Mr. Speaker, Nigeria is a nation of great possibilities. It can one day be a giant economic partner for the United States and her allies, or it can become a safe haven for terrorists. We can keep it on the right path by bringing those girls home.

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 10 o'clock and 37 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

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day. We pause in Your presence and ask guidance for the men and women of the people's House.

On a day when voters in many States participate in congressional primaries, may Your spirit of wisdom be manifest among those who exercise their rights, rights for which so many struggled 50 years ago to secure for all American citizens.

Here in Washington, may all Members realize that Your congregation is wider and broader than ever we could measure or determine. Help them, and help us, O Lord, to put away any judgments that belong to You and do what we can to live together in peace.