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Marine mammals are some of the most intelligent nonhuman animals on Earth. They are highly social and live in matrilineal pods that can be as large as 40 individuals. Pod members are interdependent. Pods often have their own hunting techniques and communication styles that some argue are akin to language or dialect. Orcas in marine parks do not live in natural pods, and separation of calves and mothers has been documented on multiple occasions.

In the wild, not a single human death has been attributed to an orca, but captive orcas are responsible for numerous injuries and deaths. Because of this, the Labor Department's OSHA office has conducted an investigation and issued new rules aimed at protecting human trainers and handlers of orcas by prohibiting those trainers from getting in close contact with the animals during the shows. These rules have recently been upheld by the court of appeals.

Last month, my colleague JARED HUFFMAN and I advanced an amendment to require USDA to finalize long-delayed regulations pertaining to the captivity of orcas. It is my hope that USDA will do so based on sound science and recognition of the harm these animals suffer in captivity, and not grounded in an effort to placate the interests of the industry that showcases them.

We cannot be responsible stewards of our natural environment and propagate messages about the importance of animal welfare when our policies and practices do not reflect our deeply held principles.

From my own point of view, I believe it is time to phase out killer whale captivity. This means no more captive breeding, no more wild captures. Orcas held in captivity now should live out their lives in their current habitats if they cannot likely survive in the wild. But with the death of this generation of captive orcas, we should draw a line: no more confinement in tiny tanks; no more forced social structures; no more captivity for our entertainment.

High mortality rates, aberrant behavior among orcas, the consistent collapsed dorsal fins, and the tragic deaths of trainers themselves all point in the same direction—an end to the forced captivity of these majestic creatures.

Mr. Speaker, while the documentary *Blackfish* ignited a passionate public debate over whether orcas should be held in captivity for the purposes of display and entertainment, as they are at Sea World and other parks around the world, marine mammal experts have, for decades, been engaged in a longer discussion about the scientific value and morality of keeping killer whales in captivity.

*Blackfish* documents the history of the captivity of orcas in the United States, focusing on one whale named Tilikum, who figured in the deaths of three of his trainers.

Public displays of animals can engage our children, and kindle a lifelong interest in and

respect for wildlife. They can sometimes add to our scientific body of knowledge. Indeed, these are often cited as justifications for keeping these animals in captivity. Yet the shows in which these animals are displayed often have more in common with a rock concert than a scientific exposition, and many believe that the psychological and physical harm done to these animals far outweighs any benefits reaped from their display.

Here are some very simple facts that call into question the propriety of keeping these magnificent animals in captivity:

In the wild, orcas frequently swim 100 miles in a day and dive to great depths in search of food. In captivity, they are held in tiny, shallow concrete pools, where they often wallow listlessly when not being asked to perform.

In the wild, the average life expectancy for male orcas is 30, and for females is 50, whereas most captive orcas die before they reach the age of 25. Remarkably, a 103-year-old orca was recently spotted off the coast of Canada.

In the wild, dorsal fin collapse is extremely rare, but all adult male orcas in captivity have collapsed dorsal fins. Many scientists attribute this phenomenon to the conditions of their captivity—such as repetitive circular swimming patterns, gravitational pull from spending the vast majority of the time at the surface of the water, and dehydration.

Marine mammals are some of the most intelligent non-human animals on Earth. They are highly social and live in matrilineal pods that can be as large as 40 individuals. Pod members are interdependent and pods have their own hunting techniques and communication styles that some argue are akin to different languages.

Orcas in marine parks do not live in natural pods, and separations of calves and mothers have been documented on multiple occasions. When I watched the *Blackfish*, I was particularly struck by the description of a mother's visceral reaction when her calf was taken away from her and transported to another park—crying out with long-distance calling sounds—noises not heard previously by marine biologists at the park.

As the film *Blackfish* documents, several factors lead to severe psychological and physical problems for these animals when in captivity, and in many instances, can result in premature death—not to mention putting the lives of their handlers at risk. In the wild, not a single human death has been attributed to an orca, but captive orcas are responsible for numerous injuries and deaths. Because of this, the Labor Department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) conducted an investigation and issued new rules aimed to protect the human trainers and handlers of orcas by prohibiting trainers from getting in close proximity to the animals during shows. These rules were recently upheld by the U.S. Court of Appeals.

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#### AMERICA'S DEBT IMPACTS ILLEGAL ALIEN CHILDREN SOLUTION

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

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, America's deficits have averaged a trillion dollars a year for 5 years. America's total debt has blown through the \$17 trillion mark, and our Comptroller General warns America that our financial path is unsustainable.

Last year, America's debt service cost roughly \$250 billion—which is five Federal transportation or 14 NASA programs we can't afford because we have to pay debt service.

If not fixed, what do these deficits and debt mean?

On a micro level, America must learn from Detroit and Stockton, where bankruptcy courts battle over pension plan funding. On a macro level, we must learn from Greece and Spain, where unemployment is 26 and 28 percent worse than America at any time during the Great Depression. We must learn from Argentina and Venezuela, where inflation rates were 28 percent and 56 percent in one year, in 2012.

Closer to home, we must learn from Puerto Rico, the home for 3.5 million Americans. In February, Puerto Rico's sovereign debt was downgraded to junk bond status, thereby damaging Puerto Rico's economy for years, if not decades, to come.

This brings me to the taxpayer cost of today's massive flood of illegal alien children surging across America.

According to Customs and Border Protection data, in fiscal year 2012, 24,000 illegal alien children surged across our border. That surge increased by 59 percent, to 39,000 illegal alien children in FY 2013. That surge increased by another 58,000 illegal alien children so far this fiscal year, with an estimated total of 90,000 crossing our borders for all of fiscal year 2014—a startling 132 percent increase.

How should America fix this problem?

First, the Obama administration must stop enticing illegal alien children to America with promises of amnesty and money. America cannot give

free food, free clothing, free shelter, free health care, free transportation, free entertainment, and billions of dollars a year in fraudulent tax refunds to illegal aliens and then wonder why we have an illegal alien crisis.

Second, illegal alien children from Central America and Mexico must be treated equally—prompt returns to parents and homes without costly and time-consuming deportation hearings. All contrary laws must be repealed or amended.

Third, America must immediately fly illegal alien children home by the least expensive means possible. It costs as little as \$258 at cheapflightnow.com to fly from Houston to Managua, Nicaragua. United Airlines flies from San Antonio to Guatemala City for as little as \$363 and to San Salvador, El Salvador, for as little as \$292.

At roughly \$300 a pop, it costs less than \$20 million to fly 60,000 illegal alien children home. That is everyone so far this fiscal year. If America used C-5 military aircraft and counted flight time as pilot training time, the cost is even less.

Given America's perilous financial condition, the illegal alien children surge issue must be considered in the context of America's debt threat that risks a debilitating American insolvency and bankruptcy.

President Obama demands \$3.7 billion to spend in just the next few months on a policy that does not solve the illegal alien children problem. Think about that. The President proposes spending \$3.7 billion to not solve the problem. Yet spending \$20 million wisely does solve the problem.

Mr. Speaker, this is a no-brainer. It is financially irresponsible—no, financial insanity—to spend \$3.7 billion America does not have, must borrow to get, and cannot afford to pay back when we can spend \$20 million and get better results and better border security.

## 23 IN 1—BRACKETTVILLE, TEXAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GALLEG0) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GALLEG0. Mr. Speaker, this morning, as I continue highlighting places in the 23rd District, which comprises nearly 24 percent of the land area of Texas, I would like to talk about the city of Brackettville. With a population of a little over 1,500 people, it is a small town with a big history.

Located as the county seat in Kinney County, Brackettville was once the drive-in movie capital of Texas. It was founded in 1852 as Las Moras, the name of a nearby spring and creek it feeds. The town initially was a supply stop on the old San Antonio-El Paso Road and a supply depot for the U.S. Army's Fort Clark, which was also established in 1852.

The town was later called Brackett, after Oscar B. Brackett, the owner of the first dry goods store in the area. It

is a name that still sticks among locals. In 1873, when a post office opened in the town, the "ville" was added to "Brackett" in order to differentiate it from another town.

The town grew exponentially in the 19th century with the expansion of the garrison at Fort Clark during the Indian wars. During that time, the town's fortune was completely tied to Fort Clark.

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For many years, Fort Clark was the headquarters of the famous Buffalo Soldiers, made up of African Americans. At that time, Brackettville had a large proportion of Black Seminoles, who were people of mixed African American and Seminole ancestry, who originated in Florida. The Black Seminoles were recruited by the U.S. to act as scouts for the Buffalo Soldiers, and they settled with their families in Brackettville. During slavery years, the Black Seminoles began living in a settlement in northern Mexico in order to escape conditions in the U.S. Their language, Afro-Seminole Creole, was developed in Florida. Impressively, even today, Afro-Seminole Creole is still spoken by some in Brackettville. After the Buffalo Soldiers moved out to Fort Clark with the waning of the Indian Wars, Brackettville became a cavalry post.

In 1914, the Seminole Negro Indian Scouts were finally disbanded, but these scouts had an amazing history of service. In fact, the Seminole cemetery near Brackettville has the highest number of Congressional Medal of Honor winners resting there per capita than has any other cemetery in the country. Virtually every cavalry unit in the U.S. Army was stationed at or was trained at Fort Clark at one time or another, and many famous soldiers, including John Pershing and George Patton, were there. Others just visited, people like George Armstrong Custer and Phil Sheridan, who nearly lost his life near Fort Clark to a Comanche war party. It was there that he made his famous statement: "If I owned Texas and hell, I would rent out Texas and live in hell."

In 1943, during World War II, the U.S. Army activated the 2nd Cavalry, which was the last horse-mounted unit. By 1944, even the 2nd Cavalry had been mechanized. Fort Clark, so long the center of mounted cavalry, was targeted for closure, but before it closed, it was used as a German prisoner of war camp.

Because of the families of soldiers at the fort and the African American veterans and the descendants of those who had settled in Brackettville during the war, the U.S. Government funded the construction of a high school for Black students. The school opened in 1944 so that the children of these veterans could be educated. At that time, Texas was still racially segregated. This high school is believed to have been the only federally built school of its kind between San Antonio and El Paso.

After Fort Clark closed in 1946, it had a variety of uses. It was converted to a resort or a retirement center, and the Historic District of Fort Clark is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. North of the town are the remains of the Alamo Village, built in the 1950s as the set for John Wayne's movie "The Alamo," and scenes of the 1969 comedy "Viva Max!" were also shot there.

I invite everyone to visit the city of Brackettville to learn more about the cultures and traditions of the incredible 23rd District of Texas.

## THE UNITED STATES—A NATION OF LAWS

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

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, there is no denying that we are a kind and caring Nation. We have always welcomed those who have come to this country in order to make better lives for themselves and their families. In fact, many of the successes we have achieved in the fields of science, business, and art are directly attributable to individuals coming here with their ideas and ambitions.

But we are a Nation of laws.

Granting amnesty to those who have come here illegally not only erodes the rule of law, but it is unfair to the millions of folks who have respected our legal system and are working to gain citizenship in the right way. Further, undocumented immigration poses a threat to our national security. We have no way of tracking whether these individuals who are crossing our borders have ties to criminal enterprises, terrorism, or whether they are even carrying dangerous communicable diseases.

This is why it is critical we secure our borders.

The recent surge of illegal immigration at the border is a direct result of the Obama administration's failed policies. According to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, over the past year, there has been a 92 percent increase in the number of unaccompanied children crossing over our southwestern border. By usurping the legislative process and changing parts of existing laws while refusing to enforce others, the Obama administration has created an immigration policy that rewards those who have come here illegally.

Now the President has requested \$3.7 billion to purportedly combat this immigration crisis. Unfortunately, according to the administration's own proposal, only a small portion of that money—roughly 9 percent—would be used to actually secure our southern border. Rather, if history has shown us anything, it is that, if we give this President a blank check, he will simply squander it on furthering his far-left