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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LAMALFA).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
December 9, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DOUG LAMALFA to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

NOTICE

If the 113th Congress, 2nd Session, adjourns sine die on or before December 24, 2014, a final issue of the *Congressional Record* for the 113th Congress, 2nd Session, will be published on Wednesday, December 31, 2014, to permit Members to insert statements.

All material for insertion must be signed by the Member and delivered to the respective offices of the Official Reporters of Debates (Room HT-59 or S-123 of the Capitol), Monday through Friday, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. through Tuesday, December 30. The final issue will be dated Wednesday, December 31, 2014, and will be delivered on Monday, January 5, 2015.

None of the material printed in the final issue of the *Congressional Record* may contain subject matter, or relate to any event, that occurred after the sine die date.

Senators' statements should also be formatted according to the instructions at http://webster/secretary/cong_record.pdf, and submitted electronically, either on a disk to accompany the signed statement, or by e-mail to the Official Reporters of Debates at "Record@Sec.Senate.gov".

Members of the House of Representatives' statements may also be submitted electronically by e-mail, to accompany the signed statement, and formatted according to the instructions for the Extensions of Remarks template at <https://housenet.house.gov/legislative/research-and-reference/transcripts-and-records/electronic-congressional-record-inserts>. The Official Reporters will transmit to GPO the template formatted electronic file only after receipt of, and authentication with, the hard copy, and signed manuscript. Deliver statements to the Official Reporters in Room HT-59.

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By order of the Joint Committee on Printing.

CHARLES E. SCHUMER, *Chairman*.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority

leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

REPRESSIVE CUBAN REGIME

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, just 90 miles from U.S. shores the most repressive human rights abuses in our hemisphere are being perpetrated by a regime that has shown no respect for human life and that will never change as long as the Castro brothers and their kind remain in power in Cuba.

Every day these brutal thugs continue to repress 11 million Cubans who yearn for freedom and the respect of

☐ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., ☐ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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their basic human rights. But the regime isn't just a threat to the people of Cuba. They also operate within the United States, with sophisticated espionage, tradecraft, and are allies of our worst enemies.

We have but to remember the story of Ana Belen Montes. A senior analyst in our Defense Intelligence Agency, Ana Belen Montes was one of the masterminds of Cuba intelligence in the U.S. She was the top spy for the Castro regime and undermined U.S. foreign policy efforts throughout the world due to her nefarious espionage activities. She is certainly serving a long sentence in Texas.

But Castro also harbors fugitives from U.S. law, such as Joanne Chesimard. She is a New Jersey cop killer and earned the terrible distinction of being the first woman on the FBI's most wanted list of terrorists.

In 2001, Fidel Castro went to Iran and met with Iranian Supreme Leader Khamenei, and Castro said at that time: Together, Cuba and Iran will bring America to its knees.

These are just a few of the examples of why it is imperative for the Obama administration to get tough with Castro, not only to protect our U.S. national security interests, but also to extend a helpful hand to the pro-democracy leaders on the island who are struggling for freedom.

The Cuban regime continues to repress independent journalists, human rights activists, and commits arbitrary detentions every day, all to thwart any attempt at the exercise of freedom of expression. I will show you just a few of the names and faces of the voices of those opposition leaders in the push for freedom on the island, and each deserves the attention of this body.

Mr. Speaker, this is Berta Soler. Berta Soler is the leader of a movement called Ladies in White, Las Damas de Blanco, a group of women tirelessly advocating for the release of political prisoners in Cuba. These courageous women walk to mass peacefully holding up flowers and are met with brutal attacks by Castro's state security. Berta Soler became the leader of this organization after the death of her predecessor, Laura Pollan.

Laura Pollan started this movement in Cuba. She died under mysterious causes in October 2011. Many people in the island and outside have blamed the Castro regime for the unfortunate and suspicious circumstances of her passing.

We also have many pro-democracy leaders who are still languishing in Cuban jails, and these are some of their faces. This first young man, his name is Angel Yunier Remon. He is also known as El Critico. He is another face of repression on the island. Angel was arrested in March for criticizing the Castro regime's brutal human rights abuses and the oppression of 11 million of his fellow countrymen. To this day, El Critico remains in prison for the mere crime of simply expressing his

right to address grievances through rhyme.

Then there is the face of Sonia Garro. Sonia is another member of the Ladies in White. Sonia and her husband were arrested 2 years ago in a violent raid. Her trial has been suspended four times without an explanation or any reason being given.

Along with Sonia, fighting for the causes of freedom and liberty is this young man, Jorge Luis Garcia Perez, better known as Antunez, who has been in prison in Castro's gulag for nearly 17 years. Antunez and his wife, Yris, have repeatedly been assaulted and beaten by state security forces, and their scars tell a story of resilience and commitment to the cause of freedom on the island. They are free now, but one does not know for how long.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, there is the case of Juan Carlos Gonzalez, another freedom fighter I would like to highlight. He is a lawyer who is blind. He has spent years defending the human rights of the Cuban people.

These are just a few of the faces of the pro-human rights activists in Cuba, Mr. Speaker. I could not possibly cover the face of every single dissident on the island, but these faces are representative of the horrors of the Cuban regime and the horrors that liberty fighters face there every day; and that is why, Mr. Speaker, it is our moral obligation to stand in solidarity with these pro-democracy activists and to be a voice for 11 million people who are being oppressed and silenced in Cuba.

PAUL SIMON WATER FOR THE WORLD ACT

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, by unanimous consent motion offered by my friend, and the bill's Republican lead, TED POE, the House passed H.R. 2901, our Paul Simon Water for the World Act. It was almost anticlimactic, considering all the ins and outs it has taken for years to be able to hammer out the details necessary to take the next step in reform.

The hard work was all worth it, enhancing our efforts to have the United States embrace its responsibility to help the world deal with our water and sanitation crisis. Make no mistake about it; it is a crisis.

Today 152 million hours will be spent by women and girls to get water—often dirty, polluted water—to meet the basic needs of their families. Almost three-quarter billion people still lack access to this fundamental necessity of life.

There is an even greater crisis with inadequate sanitation. There are approximately 2.5 billion people who suffer from this lack of what most of us take for granted. It results in horrific disease, stunted growth, and malnutrition. In fact, the children under 5 who

are malnourished in India are suffering less from a lack of food and more from the diseases produced by poor sanitation. The children who do survive are left with mental and physical burdens for their entire life.

In a world where there are more cell phones than toilets, this is something that we can do something about. It is seriously out of kilter. The world knows what to do, and we can afford a solution. The enactment of the Water for the World legislation moves us in that direction by focusing the United States' efforts on things that will work, areas of the world most in need, and making sure our solutions are sustainable.

I deeply appreciate the leadership of my friend, colleague, and principle cosponsor of the bill, TED POE, who has been tireless in his efforts; the work of Chairman ROYCE and the Foreign Affairs Committee; our partners in the other body, Senators DICK DURBIN and BOB CORKER; and, of course, dozens of nongovernmental organizations that have been at work around the globe making progress while they have been unrelenting advocates here at home.

I must also acknowledge the tireless efforts of my legislative director, Michael Harold, who has done as much as any human alive to get this across the finish line.

Mr. Speaker, this is an amazing and important accomplishment, but it makes me pause. What else could we do in the spirit of bipartisan cooperation and doing what is right?

Might it be possible to take a small step, show a little courage, and embrace what Ronald Reagan and Tip O'Neill could do over 30 years ago? President Reagan used his radio address on Thanksgiving 1982 to provide leadership to more than double the gas tax, which he correctly pointed out was really a user fee and which had not increased in 23 years while roads were falling apart.

Well, the current gas tax has not been increased in almost 22 years, and America is falling apart and falling behind. The highway trust fund is going bankrupt. Everyone acknowledges an increase is long overdue. With gasoline prices falling dramatically, seemingly every week, and expected to continue doing so well into the foreseeable future, a nickel a gallon per year is hardly going to be noticed.

But as President Reagan pointed out, people will directly benefit. Today poor road maintenance costs the typical family \$377 per year in damage to their cars, far more than they would pay in a small increase in the gas tax. Millions of hours and billions of dollars are wasted due to highway congestion.

So let's square our shoulders. Let's show some backbone and vision and take another step forward. Let's raise the user fee we call the gas tax, put hundreds of thousands of people to work all across America at family wage jobs, and renew and rebuild this great country. This would be a nice