

of the Holocaust, and this bill will enhance these efforts through targeted grants to non-profit educational organizations to support teacher training, student field trips, and the development of high-quality educational materials.

A Pew Research Center report published earlier this year found that the harassment of Jews worldwide reached a seven-year high in 2013, and violent anti-Semitic attacks across Europe last year highlight that intolerance persists even in the 21st century. Programs supported by this legislation will help students learn the consequences of intolerance to work towards unity and peace.

I hope my colleagues will join me to support the Simon Wiesenthal Holocaust Education Assistance Act.

IN RECOGNITION OF BOBBIE STEEVER, RECIPIENT OF THE GREATER WILKES-BARRE SALVATION ARMY OTHERS AWARD

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 21, 2015

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Bobbie Steever, who is receiving the Greater Wilkes-Barre Salvation Army Others Award.

Since retiring from Bell of America in 1991, Mrs. Steever refused to let retirement slow her down. She has worked for several companies and organizations including Trade Eastern, Inc., Lewith & Freeman Real Estate, and Penn State Wilkes-Barre. Following her time at Penn State, she spent 15 years with TRR & Associates as a professional consultant in fundraising, events planning, and public relations. Today, she serves as the Executive Director of Community Services for TFP Limited, a real estate development and management company.

Driven by a genuine passion to serve others, Mrs. Steever's outreach to the community began many years ago serving as Chair of Bell's Community Relations Service Team. She has served as chair, board member, solicitor, and friend of several local non-profits, including the Osterhout Library, Back Mountain Memorial Library, Catherine McAuley House, Family Service Association of Wyoming Valley, Luzerne County Community College, Penn State Wilkes-Barre, Wyoming Valley United Way, Association for the Blind, American Heart Association, and the Salvation Army. In 2010, the Times Leader newspaper recognized Mrs. Steever as one of the Great Women of Northeast Pennsylvania for her accomplishments in the workplace and in her community.

Mrs. Steever also served with the Salvation Army's Wilkes-Barre Corps for nine years, where she repeatedly proved her ability to effectively orchestrate their Annual Community Award Dinners, raising approximately \$1,300,000 for the Kirby Health Center Family House, a transitional housing program for homeless families.

It is a distinct honor to congratulate Bobbie Steever on receiving the Greater Wilkes-Barre Salvation Army Others Award, and I commend her for the many years of dedicated service she provided to our local community. Her work

on behalf of others serves as an inspiration for all of us.

DEVELOPMENTS IN RWANDA

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 21, 2015

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, in 1994, the east African nation of Rwanda experienced one of the most horrific genocides in modern times. An estimated 800,000 Rwandans—mostly ethnic Tutsis and moderates among the ethnic Hutus were brutally murdered in a state-backed extermination campaign that lasted for months.

Hutu-Tutsi tensions date back to colonial times, when the Belgians created a superior class composed of Tutsis, shutting out Hutus from government jobs and higher education despite Hutus comprising about 85% of the population. In 1959 and 1960, tensions among the Hutus exploded in a campaign that left 20,000 Tutsis dead and created 300,000 Tutsi refugees.

As with this earlier genocide, the international community watched largely from the sidelines during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda as the death toll rose from April until July of that year until the Rwandan Patriotic Front or RPF defeated the Hutu-led government militarily. More than two million mostly-Hutu refugees flooded into the Democratic Republic of the Congo, leading to continuing problems in that country. The RPF-led Rwandan government has criticized the United Nations for sheltering Hutu participants in the genocide and for allowing them to arm in refugee camps.

Over the years, the RPF has used the guilt of the international community as a shield to prevent criticism of its action. U.N. Ambassador Samantha Power referred to Ambassador Susan Rice and her colleagues in the Clinton administration in the 1990s as By-standers to Genocide. She quotes Rice in the 2002 book as saying, "If we use the word 'genocide' and are seen as doing nothing, what will be the effect on the November congressional election?" Part of Rice's team during those years was Gayle Smith, current nominee to head the U.S. Agency for International Development.

As far back as May 1998, I chaired a hearing that included testimony about the willful U.S. neglect in preventing the Rwandan genocide. As recounted in an issue of the New Yorker magazine at the time, a high-ranking Rwandan informant had warned the U.N. leadership, including Kofi Annan, and the United States about preparations for killings 3 months before they began. The recipients apparently did not act on that information.

Furthermore, the United States has been accused not merely of inaction, but also of obstructing preemptive multilateral efforts to quell the crisis. Some have alleged that, in the words of Refugees International president Lionel Rosenblatt, "The ball was not only dropped by the United States, it was blocked by the United States."

Paul Kagame, now President of Rwanda, was hailed as one of "Africa's new leaders" by Rice and her team during the 1990s, and there has been no apparent change in their

high opinion of him since then despite what Deputy Assistant Secretary Robert Jackson describes as several public administration statements related to human rights concerns and ongoing dialogue with the Rwandan government.

Kagame has been considered a hero on the international stage, and has long been immune to public criticism. However, human rights reports about abuses in Rwanda have grown over the years. The most recent State Department human rights report about Rwanda accuses the government of "targeting of political opponents and human rights advocates for harassment, arrest and abuse." Many observers note the constraints on freedom of expression that criminalizes public criticism of the RPF and its policies, as well as outlawing public discussion of ethnic issues. In that vein, the RPF has used charges of "genocide ideology" and "divisionism" as well as national security concerns, to justify prosecution of opposition political figures and journalists and prevent human rights organizations from reporting on events in their country.

In recent years, there are credible reports that the RPF government has commissioned assassins to kill dissidents living in exile who criticize the government or attempt to form political associations or parties.

Several years ago, our committee Chairman ED ROYCE was told by Paul Russessabagina of Hotel Rwanda fame that the Rwandan Government had targeted him and was behind several attempts on his life in Belgium.

In early 2014, former Rwandan intelligence chief Patrick Karegeya who had been living in exile in South Africa, was found murdered in his hotel room in Johannesburg.

Karegeya was one of two dissidents, one of the witnesses at a hearing I held yesterday—former Rwandan Major Robert Higiroye—says he was asked to have killed. The assassination plot he revealed was investigated and substantiated in a series of articles in Canada's Globe and Mail newspaper, which interviewed Rwandan exiles in South Africa and Belgium.

Since 2012, I have chaired a series of hearings on the violence perpetrated by various militias in eastern DRC. Perhaps the best known of them, the so-called M23, was supported by Rwanda. This Congress has enacted restrictions on some military assistance to Rwanda in response to its involvement in militia activity in the DRC and involvement in resource smuggling from that country, as uncovered in several U.N. reports.

These charges of serious human rights and other abuses would be troubling in any case, but Rwanda is a country that has enjoyed significant U.S. and international support. By largely avoiding criticism of Rwandan human rights issues, the Bush and Obama administrations raised appropriations to Rwanda from \$39 million in FY2003 to \$188 million in FY2014. This largely has involved funding of health, food security and other socioeconomic projects, as well as support for Rwandan participation in international peacekeeping.

Rwanda is the sixth largest troop and police contributing country in the U.N., with more than 4,000 troops, more than 400 police, and 13 military observers in seven U.N. missions, including: the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID); the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS); the U.N. Stabilization Mission in Haiti

(MINUSTAH); the U.N. Mission in Liberia (UNMIL); the U.N. Interim Security Force in Abyei (UNISFA); the U.N. Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), and the U.N. Integrated Peace-building Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS).

Rwanda, due to donor aid, political stability and favorable investor policies, has grown by an average of 8% annually over the past decade. It is considered one of the recipient countries most able to achieve results from aid programs. Yet donors began reducing or redirecting funds in 2012 because of Rwanda's role in supporting M23. The growing reports of human rights abuses also are leading to greater caution among donor nations about directly supporting the Rwandan Government.

LONG TERM FUNDING FOR HIGHWAY TRUST FUND

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 21, 2015

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise in support of a long-term surface transportation bill.

Right now Americans are looking to Congress for REAL bipartisan solutions to fund and upgrade our deteriorating infrastructure system. As hard as it may be, as uncomfortable and contentious as the debates may become, it's time to for us to move past the senseless chatter and to stop kicking the can down the road.

We must get serious about fixing America's infrastructure and establishing long-term funding for the Highway Trust Fund. This is not the time for partisan politics. We need to work together for the benefit of the men and women who sent us here.

Yesterday, the House passed a bill that was nothing more than another "Band-Aid" for a much larger problem. The American Society of Civil Engineers estimates that 1 out of every 9 bridges in the U.S. is structurally deficient, and gave our overall infrastructure a "D-."

An alarming 54 percent of all major U.S. roads are in poor or mediocre condition, and these roads account for 1 in 3 fatal traffic accidents. In my home state of Alabama alone, driving on roads in need of repair cost motorists \$1.2 billion a year.

Now is the time for a lasting solution to this important issue. Yet, here we are, at the end of May, and we are no closer to crafting a long-term solution to invest in our roads, bridges, and rails than we were this time last year.

The benefits to investing in our highways, bridges, railroads, and other transit systems are clear. By building the infrastructure of tomorrow, we would create thousands of good-paying jobs that help more hard-working Americans earn a living.

A solid transportation system is necessary to quickly move goods, which will help further grow our economy. This is vital if America is to compete in the 21st century global marketplace.

I urge my colleagues to work together to develop a long-term plan that will improve our aging infrastructure, encourage job creation, and strengthen our nation's economic development.

IN HONOR OF SSGT MICHAEL WAYNE SCHAFFER

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 21, 2015

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of a real American Hero, SSGT Michael Schaffer of the United States Army, 2nd BATTALION, 173 Airborne. Mike served in Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan. He received the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, and the Silver Star. Michael was killed in Oruzgan in combat on July 25, 2005 as part of a quick response team while helping fellow soldiers under fire. He is survived by his wife Danielle, son Devin, his mother Karen and step-father Daniel Barr, his father Mark Schaffer, retired Navy of Williamsburg, his sister Sarah, and two brothers, Mark Shafer and Timothy Barr. Today and every day let us all remember all of those selfless heroes like Michael and their families who give that last full measure in the name of freedom. Michael wanted to become a Ranger, but due to a loss of hearing in combat, was told he should retire. Instead, he chose to return to his brothers in combat and died on his last tour. Albert Caswell penned the following poem, "Our America's Son", in honor of Michael Shafer this Memorial Day.

"Our, America's Son
this chosen one
Of warm heart and steal,
who to us all has so revealed
How it is on earth,
as it is in heaven as they will be done.
Who so gave that full measure.
The greatest of all possible treasures,
as did America's Son
As now we all so weep
As all in our heart's Michael you we keep,
oh so very deep.
As we remember what to all of us what you'd
so teach
About life and death,
all in honor's quest . . . for all your brothers
in arms you'd seek . . .
As you were a man of actions and deeds
All else supersedes
Could all our hearts as high yours exceed?
But for the greater good,
in all you could.
Now all in our grief.
Now all in our loss we seek.
Of such cost it reaps.
This pain to ease.
As to us now all so speaks.
For your life was Army Strong.
For magnificent men like you Mike,
all live ever after in history like a song.
Whose courage forever rings loud and long.
As but The Best of the Best.
Because moments are all we have.
Just minutes to turn good from bad.
And now we lay your fine body down to
sleep.
All in our hearts now so very deep.
And across Williamsburg tonight
There comes a gentle rain
Comes our Lord's tears to so help to ease
your families pain
To wash down upon you to remain
Until, once again up in Heaven you will all
meet again,
and you won't have to cry no more
And hush little baby don't you cry,
because one day up in heaven you will look
into your father's eyes
And remember he is with you this day by
your side.
And you too Danielle his lovely wife, must
somehow find the strength to start a
new life
And all of his family find peace all in his
light.
Now rest my son,
your war is over on earth, is done.
And rise up for your new battle begun.
As an Angel in the Army of our Lord
To watch over us ever more.
For Michael you are now so one.
At Ease, America's Son!"