

need a modern enforcement with an electronic verification system that replaces a paper-based system of documentation. We need modern border security that works hand in hand with modern visa and enforcement systems so that we channel traffic through ports of entry where commodities, cargo, and people are inspected efficiently.

More militarization, more deportation, and narrower legal immigration channels have not given us greater control over the immigration process and have led us to a number of problems.

If you are serious about border security, legalization enforcement, legal immigration, then my door is always open. Tell me what you need to move forward. Do you need more fences? More high tech visas? More immigration judges? Tell me what it will take to get this Congress out of the current rut.

In the meantime, I and a lot of my colleagues are going to be out there around the country protecting American families from destruction and protecting millions from deportation.

AMERICA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH CUBA

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, the recent concessions by President Obama to the Castro regime mark a drastic departure from one of the most consistent tenets of United States foreign policy and traditional American values, and sets a dangerous precedent for other rogue regimes to emulate.

The pardoning of convicted Cuban spies follows an ill-advised exchange with the Taliban in which the rhetoric emerging from the White House to justify its actions has been unnervingly similar. As predicted, the course of policy by this administration on caving to terrorist demands makes the United States more vulnerable.

We see those repercussions manifest themselves across the globe. Just recently, Venezuela's thug Nicolas Maduro jumped at the opportunity to request an exchange of a convicted criminal in the United States for the freedom of pro-democracy leader Leopoldo Lopez, whom Maduro has jailed in Venezuela.

This is not the way to protect U.S. national security interests throughout the world; this is a way of putting them in jeopardy.

When we equate unjustly imprisoned Americans to battle-hardened terrorists or convicted spies, we set a dangerous precedent for the world to follow.

The Cuban regime has already signaled strongly that it will not unclench its fist, despite recent developments.

On December 30, just 13 days after President Obama's announcement, the

Cuban regime arrested nearly 60 activists seeking to express themselves freely—this in addition to the arrest of more than 200 activists on Human Rights Day—ha, that is rich—just 7 days before the announcement normalizing relations.

Yet the administration proudly and openly touts the promised but yet unproven release of 53 dissidents as a major breakthrough when in reality the net result will mean hundreds more in Castro's gulags. Raul Castro will free 53 and arrest 60 more in the next months.

This shows the failure of the administration's argument and proves that there is no intention by the Castros to move in the direction of reform or freedom. Instead, President Obama has created an atmosphere that emboldens the regime to continue its violent tactics with no concern about consequences from this White House.

We must not forget that Cuba not only poses a threat to its people but also threatens us here at home. Cuba must remain a state sponsor of terrorism because it has not changed its terrorist ways.

For example, in the year 2013 Cuba was caught helping another dangerous regime, North Korea, evade U.N. Security Council resolutions of sanctions by shipping arms and munitions to the Kim Jong-un regime. At a time when many in Congress and even the White House are trying to punish the North Korean regime for its cyber attacks against the U.S., we cannot forget that those rogue regimes helped North Korea—like the one in Cuba.

The Castro regime continues to thumb its nose at the U.S. by harboring fugitives such as New Jersey State trooper killer Joanne Chesimard, by harboring Puerto Rican terrorist William Guillermo Morales and bank robber Victor Gerena and many others who have fled U.S. justice for the shores of Cuba.

These are just a few of the reasons, Mr. Speaker, why the administration must reexamine its relationship with Castro and impose strict sanctions against the thugs, not offer it concessions for all of these transgressions. Just like a zebra cannot change its stripes, the Castro regime cannot and will not change its anti-freedom, terrorist ways.

It is our duty to support democracy and be a voice for those 11 million Cubans oppressed throughout the island. By appeasing dictators, we have disappointed people all over the world who are struggling to achieve freedom, and the White House has betrayed core American values and principles: the respect for human rights and the right for people to choose their own destiny.

As the first Cuban American-born Member of Congress who went from being a political refugee, fleeing the oppressive and brutal Castro regime, to a senior Member of this hallowed and cherished body, I will fight tooth and nail to ensure that the cause for free-

dom and democracy in Cuba is not forgotten. Until the oppressive yoke of tyranny installed by the Castro brothers has been lifted and the regime has been replaced by a representative democracy like the one we have here in our cherished Nation, I have a moral obligation to freedom-loving people everywhere, and I will not ever forget that responsibility.

BIPARTISANSHIP AND END OF LIFE CARE

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, as we begin the new Congress, America sees the two parties in both the House and the Senate, along with the White House, making statements that establish positions that distinguish one from another.

But what if we started not by defining our differences but with efforts that would bring us together?

We ended the last Congress with the passage of the Paul Simon Water for the World Act, something I have worked on with my friend and partner from Texas, TED POE, for years here in the House. There was extraordinary bipartisan leadership demonstrated by Congressmen CHARLIE DENT, AARON SCHOCK, Senator DICK DURBIN. It did take 6 years, but this bipartisan effort for a humanitarian cause, especially benefiting women and girls around the globe, was worth the time and effort.

The legislation focused and enhanced American efforts dealing with international water and sanitation. Today 152 million hours will be spent by women and girls traveling to get water, often dirty water, to meet the needs of their families in some of the poorest regions of the planet.

This legislation created more focused American leadership, and it was backed up by unprecedented increases in American aid for water and sanitation. It will pay benefits for generations to come for millions, making friends for America while it allows children to live longer and makes the lives of women and girls more bearable. And we did it together.

Are there other such candidates for legislation that will bring us together? Dr. PHIL ROE and I have been working on the Personalize Your Care Act with medical groups, advocacy organizations, experts in palliative care, hospitals, the community of faith.

This is an effort to make sure that at the end of life for our loved ones, they actually get the treatment they want, not health care on autopilot.

We have had tragic stories about how medical decisions by reflex and default have put people in isolated ICUs in painful and foreign settings when actually most of them, and in fact most of us, would rather be comfortable at home, surrounded by our loved ones.

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There has been a brilliant and exhaustive report by the Institute of Medicine that deals with the problems and concerns and how we can do better. Dr. Atul Gawande's bestselling book, "Being Mortal," makes it clear that there are crying needs and simple, commonsense compassionate solutions.

There is a revolution taking place in health care today. What if, as part of that revolution, Congress started the new year with our bipartisan legislation, the Personalize Your Care Act, to make sure those families understand their choices, that their choices are known, and—most important—their choices are respected?

We had dozens of cosponsors and broad support across the medical establishment and the community of faith. Maybe we can pick up where we left off and have this legislation bring us together to protect our families and start the year on a united front, giving families the protection they want for the care they need.

There is no reason we in Congress need to spin our wheels and shout at and past each other. Mr. Speaker, I could have made this same presentation not about the water and sanitation, but about how this Congress came together in the final hours to help save the lives of Afghans and Iraqis who are now at risk from the tender mercies of the Taliban and al Qaeda because they helped Americans as guides and interpreters when we needed them.

These are some of my examples of bipartisan cooperation that are important which we have done in the past. I would invite my colleagues to share their agenda of bipartisan, low or no-cost legislation that allows us to work together.

It is not too late to start the year and this Congress right.

THE SAVE AMERICAN WORKERS ACT

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

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 30, the Save American Workers Act, and to urge all of my colleagues to join me in voting "yes" on this important initiative.

I have heard from many people across northern Michigan—from working moms and dads and small business owners to county government—that the President's health care law is stifling economic growth, job creation, and hours of work.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most burdensome and baffling regulations imposed by the President's health care law was the reclassification of what constitutes a full-time employee.

The Save American Workers Act will get rid of this rule, helping employees in Michigan and around the country create more opportunities in our area.

This simple and commonsense fix will be a good first step towards restoring the true definition of full-time employment and increasing jobs in northern Michigan.

I have joined with 147 of my colleagues—more than one-third of the entire House—in being an original cosponsor of this legislation. I am happy that this is one of the first bills that the House of Representatives will pass.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

THE KEYSTONE PIPELINE

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, a new Congress, but the sights are familiar: the same rhetoric with no regard for the truth.

Ahead of another ill-advised vote to approve the Keystone pipeline, the same myths are being spread pitting environmental protection against job creation.

Winston Churchill once said:

The truth is incontrovertible. Malice may attack it, ignorance may deride it, but in the end, there it is.

Let us separate myths from reality. It is time to decide: truth or scare. Approval of the Keystone pipeline will have very little impact in the way of job creation but a detrimental impact on the environment and hinder our promise of a clean energy future. That is the truth.

My question is: Why are we ignoring these facts and voting once again to approve the Keystone pipeline, which would carry one of the dirtiest energy sources on the planet? Perhaps it has something to do with the many myths associated with this project. Pipeline proponents are quick to point to the creation of jobs as the primary reason for the project's approval; however, the facts don't match up.

According to the only independent analysis by Cornell University's Global Labor Institute, these claims are not accurate. TransCanada's job claims are complete fabrications. The Cornell report concludes that Keystone will not be a major source of jobs, nor will it play any substantial role at all in putting Americans back to work.

The State Department says Keystone would only create 35 permanent jobs and 1,950 construction jobs for 2 years. Most of those jobs created by this project will be nonlocal and temporary.

In reality, we can and should be creating jobs by improving our existing infrastructure and investing in clean energy, education, and research. In fact, Keystone would make it much harder for the United States to invest in clean energy jobs and address global climate change. Our best bet at a clean energy economy lies far, far away from tar sands. That is the truth.

Proponents of the pipeline claim that Keystone will bring down gas prices for Americans, but in reality, prices at

Midwestern pumps could actually increase. According to its own documents, TransCanada expects the pipeline to increase gas prices in the Midwest up to 15 cents per gallon.

Currently, a surplus of gas in the region means that our prices stay stable. If the pipeline is built, oil companies will be able to send their product to the gulf coast for export, which will reduce the surplus and drive up costs for Midwestern consumers. That is the truth.

On top of all this, let's not forget TransCanada is the same company that operates the existing Keystone pipeline which spilled a dozen times in the first year of operation. The twelfth spill released 21,000 gallons of oil in North Dakota, contaminating the soil and water.

Across the country, about 3.2 million gallons of oil spill from pipelines every year. These spills pose a great threat to American drinking water, especially when you consider the proposed project route would cross 1,073 surface water bodies and affect 383 acres of wetlands.

Most Americans understand that oil spills in the past have had severe environmental impacts, but any Keystone spill would be truly catastrophic. That is the truth.

In the end, Keystone brings a whole lot of environmental risk and very little reward. It is time we stopped perpetuating the myths. It is time we heed the warnings. It is time we decide: truth or scare.

MOBILE COOPER RIVERSIDE PARK

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

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, in Mobile's Cooper Riverside Park, there stands a statue of Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, the French founder of Mobile, a statue which is identical to another statue located in Havana, Cuba.

This statue is just one example of the robust ties between the city of Mobile, located in my Congressional district, and Cuba. These ties go all the way back to Spanish colonization in the 18th century.

It is safe to say that I represent a district that stands to benefit from improved relationships with Cuba. In fact, the Port of Mobile is a straight shot to Cuba and could be an important economic hub, just as it was going back to the 18th century.

Under the right circumstances, I would gladly support lifting the trade embargo with Cuba and improving diplomatic relations. Unfortunately, now is not that time. The economic benefits should not come at the cost of enabling a ruthless regime that is unwilling to change.

Once again, the President seems to be more interested in a publicity stunt than in a substantive solution. The White House will tell you that this action is no different from previous efforts to improve relations with other