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Mr. Speaker, I have cosponsored a resolution authorizing the use of military force introduced by the gentleman from Illinois, my friend ADAM KINZINGER. It would guarantee the President and our military every tool necessary to defeat ISIS. This resolution deserves a vote so that we can fight to win a war that we cannot afford to lose.

CUBAN CRISIS

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, since the announcement of the President's engagement policy with the Cuban dictatorship in December of last year, we have witnessed a 78 percent spike in the number of Cubans arriving into our country. An untold number have been lost to the sea.

But they aren't only coming by sea. Thousands of Cubans are illegally entering Central American nations, making the long trek north through Mexico and entering via our southern border. Too many are at the mercy of reprehensible human trafficking rings.

Costa Rican authorities report that the number of Cubans entering their country illegally has grown from 5,400 last year to 12,166 so far this year. This problem has become so severe that the Costa Rican Government had to temporarily close its borders this past weekend.

These trends show no signs of letting up, and I am concerned about another migrant crisis overwhelming our Nation, particularly south Florida. This is a matter of our national security and requires the President's immediate attention.

Cubans on the island seem to be reacting to the administration's new policy with desperation and fear, risking their lives and their safety to escape the prison that is Castro's Cuba.

WHITE HOUSE ACCREDITATION ALTERNATIVE

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of the administration's proposal to provide an alternative to accreditation for providers who develop partnerships with accredited institutions. The introduction of a regulator to judge programs like computer coding boot camps can help challenge traditional accreditors to put more focus on the success of students after graduation.

This could be the groundwork for a true alternative to accreditation that would not replace the traditional system. Rather, it would enhance and allow other successful models to access funding resources to replicate and extend their reach.

Accreditors maintain an important role within higher education; however, alternative models can help deal with segments that traditional accreditors may not be able to address effectively. As a large number of students enroll in noninstitutional programs, we should encourage the growth of successful models that are providing students with a path to successful and rewarding careers.

Emphasizing outputs is an important step forward in helping the system of higher education in the United States evolve. As we continue our work toward reauthorizing the Higher Education Act here in the House, I look forward to collaborating with my colleagues to ensure that we are helping prepare students for success.

In education, one size does not fit all. This step by the administration is one in the right direction.

TRIBUTE TO A FRIEND, REGINALD "HATS" ADAMS

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

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Mr. Reginald "Hats" Adams, a dear friend whom I have known and worked with since the late 1960s.

In 1986, Hats was hired as the chief youth worker at the Mile Square Health Center. He had previously worked with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Chicago. After having the titles of community liaison and employee relations coordinator, he was named director of community affairs at Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center in 1974 and held that position which he defined and redefined several times to coincide with what he was doing.

Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center is a large, complex, and diverse corporate entity which trains thousands of doctors, nurses, and other medical personnel and has an excellent record of patient care.

Much of Mr. Adams' work involved outreach to the broad community on the medical center's behalf. Over the years, he has worked with municipal, county, and State entities, while at the same time developing and maintaining close ties to grassroots organizations, social service agencies, and faith institutions.

Mr. Adams has always been seriously interested in and involved with young people. His youth development work is legendary. He has paid special attention to the educational concerns of minority students. As a result, Rush sponsors summer work study programs for minority college students, summer internships for high school students, and math and science enrichment programs for students at more than 60 elementary and high schools.

Through Mr. Adams' efforts, the Science and Math Excellence Network was launched in 1991. The network is a coalition of public and private organizations working directly with the local schools to improve science and math education for elementary students.

Rush and its corporate partners sponsor after-school science clubs, provide judging at local science fairs, offer summer training programs for teachers, and sponsor a mobile science lab that visits schools without laboratory facilities.

Each year, the network hosts an awards dinner to recognize the top science and math students at participating schools. Since 1991, the network also has coordinated the construction of 10 science laboratories in local schools, including several specially designed facilities for preschool-age children. Mr. Adams served as president of the network.

Notwithstanding his outstanding professional work and civic involvement, Mr. Adams has always been endeared to his personal family, church, and friends. He was passionate about his family, and at times was known to have his own seat staked out at church.

Mr. Adams was also actively involved in the affirmative action activities of the medical center and helped assure that minority vendors, contractors, and business interests had access to business opportunities at the medical center.

Hats was a man of great wisdom, courage, and determination, always protecting the interests of the medical center but never forgetting the community from which he came and was a part of.

The poet Kipling may have had Hats in mind when he wrote:

If you can walk with Kings and Queens and not lose the common touch; if neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you; if all men matter with you, but none too much; and finally, if you can give the unforgiven moment with 60 seconds' worth of distance run; yours will be the Earth and all that is in it; and what is more, you will be a man, my son.

Reginald "Hats" Adams, what a man. His life is gone, but his legacy lives on.

SYRIAN REFUGEES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the issue of the Syrian refugees and the Islamic State terrorists who are coming across our southern border and, in relation to this, the Office of Refugee Resettlement loophole that exists there.

Also, Mr. Speaker, as I begin my remarks, I commend the House and our Speaker for speaking out and taking an action to condemn the Paris attacks.

This administration has announced its intention to resettle 10,000 Syrian refugees within the United States in fiscal year 2016. Now, I want you to think about that number, 10,000 in the year 2016. They will go to resettlement communities all across the country, if the administration has its way.

It is important to note that the Office of Refugee Resettlement, or the ORR as it is called, does not simply resettle refugees from overseas. In fact, the ORR has been resettling thousands of illegal aliens that are coming across our southern border.

I want to read to you from their 2013 report to Congress:

"Other Categories Eligible for Assistance and Services.

“Certain other persons admitted to the U.S. or granted status under other immigration categories also are eligible for refugee benefits.”

In addition, certain persons deemed to be victims of a severe form of trafficking, though not legally admitted as refugees, are eligible for ORR benefits to the same extent as refugees.

That is correct; the ORR resettles illegal aliens not classified as refugees, providing another potential gateway for the Islamic State terrorists.

Frankly, we would know more about the ORR activities if they filed their annual reports, as required in section 413(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, and did it in a timely fashion. The last report we have from them is 2013. It is not transparent, it is not accountable, and it cannot be trusted.

I know this firsthand, Mr. Speaker. I wrote Secretary Burwell twice last year about resettlement activities at the ORR and have been investigating them since July 2014, when Congressman BRIDENSTINE and I traveled to a UAC facility at Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD those letters to Secretary Burwell.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, November 21, 2014.

Hon. SYLVIA M. BURWELL,
Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY BURWELL: It has come to my attention that you have failed to submit an annual report to Congress regarding the activities of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) since Fiscal Year 2012. The Secretary is required by law to submit an annual report pursuant to Section 413(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act “no later than the January 31 following the end of each fiscal year, . . .” Reports had been filed annually since 1980 before abruptly stopping after the FY2012 submission.

It is important that ORR operate transparently given its role in re-settling thousands of illegal aliens who crossed our Southern border last summer. ORR has released more than 45,000 Unaccompanied Alien Children (UAC) into our country to adult sponsors through September 30th of this year. My home state of Tennessee has had over 1,000 UACs released within its borders alone. I expect a thorough update on these activities.

I would also note that ORR’s budget appears to have grown exponentially. ORR received over \$750,000,000 million in funding in FY2012. However, HHS requested almost \$1.5 billion for ORR in its FY2015 “Justification of Estimates for Appropriations Committees”. Without annual reports being provided to Congress as part of the oversight process, it becomes increasingly difficult to approve requested funding.

I look forward to your immediate submission of ORR’s FY2013 report to Congress. Also, I expect ORR’s FY2014 report no later than January 31, 2015, as required by law.

Sincerely,

MARSHA BLACKBURN,
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 17, 2014.

Hon. SYLVIA M. BURWELL,
Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY BURWELL: An article titled “Crossing alone: Children fleeing to U.S.

land in shadowy system” was published in the Houston Chronicle on May 24th, 2014. The Chronicle’s investigation revealed that over one-hundred “significant incident reports” were obtained from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) through a Freedom of Information Act Request (FOIA) and detailed instances where children were abused by Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) staff members between March 2011 and March 2013. The article contains several troubling statements:

1) “No shelter worker has been prosecuted under a 2008 federal provision that makes sexual contact with a detainee in ORR’s care a felony.”

2) “Youths in ORR custody in Texas were molested as they slept, sexually harassed and seduced by staff members during the past decade, records from state childcare licensing investigators and law enforcement show. They were shoved, kicked, punched and threatened with deportation if they reported abuses, investigators found.”

3) “The Office of Refugee Resettlement relies on state childcare licensing and local police to investigate abuses of the children in its care, instead of notifying the FBI of serious allegations. In the hands of local police and prosecutors, criminal cases have crumbled because of sloppy detective work, communication gaps with officials and jurisdiction confusion.”

On May 17, 2012 the President issued a memorandum regarding implementation of the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (PREA). The memo stated that “Each agency is responsible for, and must be accountable for, the operations of its own confinement facilities, and each agency has extensive expertise regarding its own facilities, particularly those housing unique populations.”

On March 7, 2013 the President signed the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) into law. Section 1101 of VAWA amended PREA as follows: “Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall publish a final rule adopting national standards for the detection, prevention, reduction and punishment of rape and sexual assault in facilities that maintain custody of unaccompanied alien children.”

According to the Chronicle’s investigation and a letter you received from fifty-nine House Democrats this week, your department has still not published a final rule. This delay directly violates Section 1101 of VAWA. Your failure to act timely is unacceptable given the seriousness of these issues. As a result, please provide responses and document production, as requested, relating to the following inquiries:

1) Has HHS published a final rule adopting final standards for the detection, prevention, reduction and punishment of rape and sexual assault in facilities that maintain custody of unaccompanied children? If so, when did this occur?

2) Please explain why HHS delayed, or continues to delay, publishing a final rule, as required by law.

3) In FY2014, ORR released 53,518 unaccompanied alien children to sponsors within the United States. Please produce any significant incident reports filed by, or on behalf of, unaccompanied alien children against ORR employees in FY2014, regardless of the format in which they are stored. If you redact information, or are unable to produce said reports, outline any legal privileges or exemptions the department is relying upon.

4) Please disclose the number of ORR employees currently being investigated by law enforcement for sexual misconduct or abuse involving unaccompanied alien children.

5) Please disclose the number of ORR employees disciplined or investigated by HHS for sexual misconduct or abuse of unaccompanied alien children in FY2014.

6) What efforts has ORR undertaken to work with federal law enforcement to prosecute employees accused of child abuse within its facilities since 2011?

7) What initiatives has ORR undertaken on its own to protect children from abuse within its facilities since 2011? Please include any internal rules or memorandums that were drafted to address this issue.

ORR’s failure to timely comply with the law is unacceptable and not in keeping with the Administration’s pledges of transparency. Please provide responses to the above inquiries, along with requested documentation, within fifteen days of receipt of this correspondence.

Sincerely,

MARSHA BLACKBURN,
Member of Congress.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. We know that there are more than Mexicans and Central Americans coming across that southern border, and we know that once they are here, the ORR has no way of tracking them and keeping up with them.

In April, a Judicial Watch report cited a Mexican army officer and police inspector who advised that ISIS was operating training bases in close proximity to the U.S. southern border. Another report from August 2014 advised that social media traffic indicated ISIS was planning to infiltrate the southern border in order to carry out a terrorist attack.

Due to these findings, all of our resettlement services must be temporarily suspended. I am currently working on a solution with several of my colleagues to address the loophole that allows nonrefugees to be resettled.

In the past 3 weeks, Islamic State terrorists have bombed a Russian jet-liner, committed suicide bombings in Beirut, and massacred French citizens in Paris. They are now exporting their terror. There is simply no method that will allow us to determine with 100 percent accuracy whether Syrians or illegal aliens that we resettle into the U.S. are really ISIS jihadists.

Mr. Speaker, is the ISIS threat contained? No.

Can we guarantee that Syrian refugees who are resettled into the U.S. will not commit acts of terror against Americans? No.

Do we know who these people are? No.

Are they properly vetted? No.

Would it be responsible to bring Syrian refugees into this country after the attacks in Paris? No.

Do Americans across this country want the administration to resettle Syrian refugees into the U.S.? No.

Is the administration dangerously naive on this policy? Absolutely.

I encourage my colleagues to look closely at the issue.

SYRIAN REFUGEES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) for 5 minutes.