

I would like to highlight several initiatives that are important to my south Florida congressional district included in the FAST Act.

Language was included in this bill that I offered with Representative TITUS to protect our seniors and pedestrians in congested traffic areas. While total traffic crash fatalities are down nearly 25 percent in the last decade, pedestrian deaths are up, hurting children and the elderly most.

This language will encourage States to adopt safe and adequate accommodation standards for roadways and sidewalks when developing future Federal projects.

Also included in the FAST Act is robust funding levels for University Transportation Center programs, with much-welcomed increases over the next 5 years.

One hundred twenty-five universities across the country participate in the UTC program, conducting critical research to develop future transportation technologies. Florida International University, in my district, is a world-recognized leader in accelerated bridge construction, and I am proud to advocate for them and all the UTCs here in Congress.

I also introduced a bill earlier this month with Representative LIPINSKI that was similar to this language and appreciate all the bipartisan support UTCs have received.

Lastly, I would like to thank Chairman GIBBS and Ranking Member NAPOLITANO for their work in the creation of the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act, or WIFIA, in last year's WRRDA legislation. This is a perfect example of good government and will be truly revolutionary in addressing the dire water infrastructure needs throughout the country.

I represent Miami-Dade County, one of the 10 largest water and sewer departments in the Nation, that services 2.3 million people daily. The 14,000 miles of pipeline date back more than 40 years, and repairs are much-needed.

Included in the FAST Act was a fix to the WIFIA program to allow for the use of tax-exempt municipal bonds in these infrastructure projects. Earlier in the year, I introduced a bill with bipartisan support that proposed this fix, and I am grateful it was included in the FAST Act to allow local governments the tools necessary to repair our water systems.

Lastly, I would like to thank Chairman SHUSTER and Ranking Member DEFAZIO and their Senate counterparts for all of their hard work in crafting this important legislation. This final product embodies the essence of bipartisanship, and I am proud to serve on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

I urge the House and Senate to pass the FAST Act to strengthen our Nation's transportation networks. I know my neighbors in south Florida, especially those living in Kendall and South Dade, will be very grateful.

SEVENTH ANNUAL SOUTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL CLIMATE LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give accolades to Monroe County and the city of Key West for holding their Seventh Annual Southeast Florida Regional Climate Leadership Summit.

For 7 years, they have created a forum for people to come together and discuss the importance of mitigating the effects of climate change. I thank them for their continued efforts and for being leaders on this critical issue that warrants serious attention.

Like me, they believe that humans are a contributing factor to climate change and that our years of living irresponsibly have caught up with us, leaving a blemish on our planet. They have dedicated time to making a positive impact on our world, and I applaud them for their valiant and enduring efforts to see this task through.

To all the attendees of the climate summit in beautiful Key West, thank you for your efforts to make the world a better place. I am confident that if we work together we can do right by future generations and leave them a cleaner, more beautiful planet.

NELSON SOBRINO, STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a student in Homestead, Florida, Mr. Nelson Sobrino, and congratulate him on his recent election as student council president of Somerset City Arts Conservatory.

President Nelson, who is 13 years old, ran on a platform of adding additional school spirit days and helping the less fortunate with food during the holiday season.

The story of President Nelson's path to success at such a young age has a lot to admire. In first grade, he was diagnosed with autism. However, Nelson has overcome difficult odds and has not only been a very successful student academically, winning awards like "Reading Plus" for Web-based comprehension program, but has excelled socially as well.

His teachers, parents, and fellow students have been a tremendous support network and have greatly contributed to President Nelson's success.

So, President Nelson, I proudly recognize your leadership of the student body of Somerset City Arts and look forward to visiting with you soon.

CLIMATE CHANGE

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

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, today, the world leaders, more than 100, are gathered in Paris to talk about an existential threat to all of us. This is not just the Syria issue, it is not just Iraq, it is not just terrorism, but it is about this planet's ability to continue to sustain life as we know it. It is about climate change.

Here in Washington, it is as though it is a different universe, not the universe in which we live, but a completely different one.

What I want to do is to basically cover this issue today of climate change. Let's start with the underlying problem, the emission of carbon into our atmosphere.

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For thousands and thousands of years, the atmospheric carbon has remained below 300 parts per million. This little spike here at the end—this year we reached 400 parts per million, and the consensus of scientists around the world is that this level of carbon will significantly increase the ambient air temperature of the world and the temperatures of the ocean, having a profound effect on the world's ability to sustain itself, like the production of food.

The last 2 years—2014 and this year—are going to be the hottest ever recorded in recent centuries. What does that mean? Well, it means that the ice in Greenland is rapidly melting, as it is in the Arctic Ocean as well as Antarctica. Sea levels are rising and will continue to rise both because of the melting ice and the warmer temperature of the ocean, which causes the water to expand.

All of this is a serious problem for us if we care about the production of food and if we care about our ability to survive. Here in Washington, yesterday, on the floor of this House of Representatives, it was a different universe.

It was not the universe in which we live. It was not the planet on which we live. It was some very, very strange place, because yesterday the majority in the House of Representatives passed two pieces of legislation that would wipe out the Clean Power Act, an effort by the administration to reduce the production of coal energy here in the United States.

Now, there is a problem in the rest of the world with the use of coal, and we still have that problem here in the United States.

In The Washington Post yesterday there was a picture of Beijing, China. You couldn't even see across the street. The article goes on to say that it is principally from the production of coal.

So while we have a chance here in the United States—and we have been at this for many years, reducing the effect of coal and the production of coal both in terms of pollution as well as in terms of its carbon emissions—the House of Representatives, the majority party, yesterday voted to take not a step, but to take a whole mile backwards and eliminate the ability and the effort of this Nation to continue to reduce our consumption of coal and the pollution that is caused from there.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, but today, maybe tomorrow, we will be taking up H.R. 8, a bill that would again turn us away from the world

problem and the solutions to it and to take a mighty step back into the last century. H.R. 8 is said to be energy security. Well, it is the security of the coal and oil industry to be sure, but not the security of our Nation's ability to survive in a climate-changed environment.

It does, in fact, increase the production and the use of coal. It does, in fact, allow for the export of oil. We want to be energy independent, but this legislation would allow the export of oil without any regulation at all and without any consideration for the American economy or the American automobile user.

We are going in the wrong direction here. We ought to recognize, as 120 leaders in Paris are recognizing today, that we have a serious climate problem. We must address it not with the policies that we are seeing here on the floor of the House of Representatives this week, in complete denial of what is happening around the world.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for us to wake up. It is time for us to be aware of what is happening.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARTYRDOM OF SR. DOROTHY KAZEL, JEAN DONOVAN, SR. ITA FORD, AND SR. MAURA CLARKE

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

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, with great solemnity and gratitude, today I wish to honor four grace-filled women. Each of them were called to live their faith in the nation that bears their Savior's name. Each worked tirelessly to bring hope, healing, and joy to the poor of El Salvador. Each were bound together in tragedy on December 2, 1980.

Maryknoll Sisters Ita Ford and Maura Clarke, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel, and a young woman named Jean Donovan each traveled different paths to El Salvador. In the words of Sister Dorothy, they were united by a powerful sense of responsibility to "spread the Gospel to people who needed help."

They sought to bring peace and comfort to vulnerable persons caught in a maelstrom of political turmoil on the cusp of a brutal 12-year civil war that followed the 1980 murder of newly beatified Archbishop Oscar Romero, who was killed by an assassin's bullet as he said Mass.

Mr. Speaker, Sister Dorothy and Jean had each joined a mission team from the diocese of Cleveland, Ohio. Together they worked to ferry food and medical supplies to the sick and wounded, in whom they saw the face of Christ.

Sister Dorothy had been engaged, but postponed her marriage to test a call to religious life. Jean Donovan wanted to get closer to Christ in the poor, though her friends hoped that she would leave El Salvador.

Reunited with her fiancé briefly to attend a friend's wedding in Ireland, Jean actually chose to stay in El Salvador a little bit longer. She was drawn by the beauty and warmth of the Salvadoran people.

Sister Ita and Sister Maura, both from New York and born nearly 10 years apart, had each sought a life of service through the Maryknoll religious sisters. Their paths led through Chile and Nicaragua, respectively, and ultimately to El Salvador, where they each responded to Archbishop Romero's call, a plea for help.

It has been said of Sister Ita that "her twinkling eyes and her elfin grin would surface irrepressibly, even in the midst of poverty and sorrow." Sister Maura, for her part, "was outstanding in her generosity, always saw the good in others, and could always make those whose lives she touched feel loved."

Mr. Speaker, all of these women could have left. Instead, they remained in El Salvador to be faithful. Sister Maura said, "There is a real peace here in spite of many frustrations and the terror around us. God is very present in His seeming absence."

They gave all that they had to the poor and homeless, whose difficulties were compounded by the counterinsurgency that indiscriminately leveled many innocent lives in its crossfire.

Mr. Speaker, while in college myself, pondering the essence and meaning of things, trying to figure out my own pathway, I heard the news of these women's deaths. The rape and murder of these selfless women greatly disturbed me. I remember going to Mass and, overcoming my own hesitancy, offered a prayer for them during the community's Prayer of the Faithful.

The love that moved these four women to fly into the eye of the hurricane—because they could not bear to see vulnerable people suffer without recourse, without help—profoundly affected me and remains a part of my life today.

As a Member of the United States House of Representatives, I am honored to laud the example of these exceptional heroines. Having met with members of El Salvador's congress, I have witnessed firsthand now the work of reconciliation that is going on, the healing of lives haunted by painful memories.

When I first learned about the decades-long outpouring of love in service, vigils, prayers, and charitable programs that were inspired by the example of these courageous women, I felt moved to actually take some small part in these celebrations, thus this talk today.

In recalling their noble sacrifice, it is my fervent hope that responsible nations throughout this hemisphere will see in the lives of these martyrs of El Salvador a path to genuine prosperity. We can honor them fittingly by embracing the truly needy with integrity, peace, and justice, in genuine mutual solidarity as they live their lives.

HONORING KENTUCKY GOVERNOR STEVE BESHEAR

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 61st Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, Steve Beshear, whose tenure as Governor comes to a close this week.

Of his many significant accomplishments, none came easily or by happenstance. In fact, national basketball championships for both the Universities of Louisville and Kentucky notwithstanding, it is tough to think of a less enviable time to walk into the Governor's mansion.

Within a year of his taking office, the global economy imploded, creating the worst economic crisis in our lifetimes and leading to unemployment as high as 10.7 percent. The health of our State was dismal, with one in five Kentucky adults carrying no health insurance. Mother Nature didn't do him any favors either. During one 11-month span, three presidential disaster declarations were issued for Louisville alone.

To say you wouldn't want to be the Governor to face those challenges is an understatement. To say you want Steve Beshear to be your Governor addressing those challenges, well, that is just common sense.

Our recovery didn't just happen during the tenure of Steve Beshear. It happened because of Steve Beshear. Because we had a Governor who wasn't concerned with what was popular or politically savvy, he was committed to doing what needed to be done.

He said no to the calls for European-style austerity and instead invested in our Commonwealth—in our people, our infrastructure, and our education—giving Kentucky's economy an immediate jolt and keeping our communities and workforce competitive for the long haul.

The results speak for themselves. Today unemployment is half of what it was during the Great Recession, under 5 percent for the first time since 2001. Site Selection magazine says there is no better State in the Nation for economic development.

Companies are investing in Kentucky like never before, \$3.7 billion in investment announced just last year. Kentucky is doing business like never before, with exports of \$27.5 billion last year, four times the national average.

Mr. Speaker, we are building like we haven't done in a long time. When I say our infrastructure was crumbling, it is not hyperbole. Bridges were literally falling down. Now they are going up. Leaders have been talking about the need for a new Ohio River bridge in Louisville for nearly 50 years.

But Governor Beshear doesn't talk the talk. He walks the walk. I will be proud to walk with him across the first of two new Ohio River bridges for the first time this weekend.

But it is his stands that he will be most remembered for. If you asked