

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 fiance 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

him, Steve will tell you he is just doing what is right. But that takes courage. Thankfully, Kentucky's Governor has had no shortage of that.

He reinstated an executive order prohibiting LGBT discrimination against government workers, made Kentucky the first State in the Nation to adopt Common Core and the second to adopt New Generation Science Standards.

When it came to medical care, he absolutely refused to play politics with the health of his State. He expanded Medicaid and led the creation of the Nation's most successful health exchange, Kynect, and reduced the number of Kentuckians without health insurance from 20.4 percent to 9 percent, the best improvement in the Nation.

In my district alone, the uninsured rate dropped 81 percent. For the first time, quality, affordable health insurance is a reality for hundreds of thousands of Kentuckians. It is thanks to Steve Beshear.

Of course, he has been working for the people of Kentucky since long before he was a Governor, and he never did it alone. Throughout his decades of public service, he has depended on the strength of another great Kentucky leader, his wife and our first lady, Jane Beshear.

Mr. Speaker, I have been honored to be Steve and Jane's ally these past 8 years and I have been lucky to have them as mine as we worked to revitalize Louisville's manufacturing sector, address our community's infrastructure needs, and make sure Kentucky children, veterans, and working families are taken care of.

Over the past 30 years, Mr. Speaker, I have had the honor of calling Steve Beshear my Attorney General, my Lieutenant Governor, and now my Governor. But, above all, I have been most proud to call him my friend.

In his first inaugural address in 2007, Governor Beshear noted that the path of progress in Kentucky "will involve new thinking and new ideas. It will require cooperation and patience. And it will demand courage."

Steve, you successfully embraced those new ideas, you promoted cooperation and patience, and you had the courage not only to serve, but to serve us well. I wish you the very best as you leave public service.

I want to thank you, First Lady Jane Beshear, and your devoted staff for doing the right thing on behalf of the people of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Mr. Speaker, Kentucky is a stronger, more prosperous, and a far healthier place because of the dedication and the work of our Governor Steve Beshear.

THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT MUST BE REAUTHORIZED

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on

the Every Student Succeeds Act, which will reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Mr. Speaker, this bill goes a long way to rectifying the problems that were created by No Child Left Behind. We have seen 14 years now of Federal encroachment on local schools, one-size-fits-all testing, and local school districts that are not allowed to apply local solutions to local problems.

Mr. Speaker, the version of ESEA that is coming to the floor later today will fix these problems. The bill will streamline the annual assessment process and will ensure that our teachers are not required to teach only the material that will be on these tests. It will remove the high stakes from these assessments and will ensure that school districts have the local control over the assessment process.

More importantly, the bill will allow States to develop their own academic content and achievement standards that are designed to suit the needs of their students. Teachers and administrators will be given the freedom to truly educate their students and will be able to innovate and develop real solutions to their problems without fear of a bureaucrat in Washington looking over their shoulder.

Mr. Speaker, though I rise in support of this bill, I must say that I am disappointed that the final version to come out of conference did not include the text of an amendment that I offered that was adopted in H.R. 5, the Student Success Act.

□ 1045

My amendment would have forbidden States from requiring school districts to divert Federal education dollars away from the classroom and into State pension funds to pay off unfunded liabilities of the past.

In my home State of Illinois, the State government is presently requiring school districts that choose to use Federal education dollars to pay teacher salaries to divert over one-third of their Federal education dollars to the State's Teachers' Retirement System to cover past financial mismanagement. This amounts to a Federal bailout of State pension programs at the expense of schools and education. Mr. Speaker, this only happens in Illinois.

So what does this mean for the 10th District of Illinois? In 2014, Wheeling Community Consolidated School District 21 had to send over \$140,000 to the State to cover past pension obligations. That is 35 percent of the \$400,000 of total Federal dollars that came to Wheeling that Wheeling spent on teachers. If Wheeling had only had to pay the normal pension cost, the current pension obligation, it would have had to have contributed \$32,000. That means that Wheeling was forced to divert over \$100,000 to the pension system to cover past pension obligations at the expense of teachers in the classroom. At \$40,000 per year, this would have enabled them to hire an additional 2½

teachers that could have been educating our children, reducing classroom sizes, and making each of our students receive the individual attention that they need to succeed.

In Waukegan, Illinois, this problem is even worse. Waukegan spent \$2.6 million in Federal education dollars on teachers and was forced to divert over \$900,000 annually to the State to cover past pension obligations. If the Dold amendment had been law, Waukegan would have had an additional \$700,000 to hire more teachers, or in the case of District 60, they would have been able to offer full-day kindergarten. That makes an enormous difference in children's lives—and parents' lives for that matter.

More tragically, because Illinois does not require the same kind of contribution when teacher salaries are paid with State or local dollars, this policy is taking away Federal education dollars from our neediest and most vulnerable children, precisely the students that the ESEA was intended to help.

Mr. Speaker, my amendment would have fixed this problem once and for all and would have ensured that education dollars intended for the students of Wheeling and Waukegan and everywhere else where Federal dollars can make a real difference in our children's lives would have actually gone to help these students.

I will continue to fight on this issue and will continue to work with my colleagues to make sure that the Federal dollars that are given to school districts are not diverted away from the neediest to cover up financial mistakes of the past.

Mr. Speaker, Every Student Succeeds Act is by no means a perfect bill, but it is a significant upgrade and a step forward that goes a long way toward fixing the problems posed by No Child Left Behind.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this bill and ensure that our children's getting the education they deserve is something that we can all count on.

WAR ON COAL

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, as we hear talk of bills on the floor and international climate meetings with the world community, I want to bring to my colleagues' attention and to you, Mr. Speaker, the real destruction that is going on in the fossil fuel areas of our Nation, one that I represent, the Illinois coal basin.

I want to start by quoting the mayor of a town named Galatia in two articles from the paper called The Southern. In a November 5 article, he basically says: "Without the coal mines, we are going to be in dire straits. That's all there is to it."

The mayor is referring to what we have come to the floor numerous times to talk about, and you actually heard