

the practice of currency manipulation. We also need to include provisions in our trade agreements. Those provisions included in those agreements would provide our trading partners with a strong deterrent for manipulating their currency in the first place. We also have to make sure that our trade obligations explicitly allow this approach to targeting currency manipulation.

So I believe there are efforts within our grasp that we can work to achieve, that the changes and the reforms that we can provide will enable us to breathe free and grow and enhance the opportunities of our manufacturing sector.

Now, we think back to the booming economy we had in the 1950s and 1960s. We think of all the post-World War II growth of this Nation. We think of the tethering of the American Dream. We think of the passion of immigrants who had come here to climb those ladders of economic opportunity. We think of the generations that were strengthened by those who made the journey. It was their dream to provide a better life for them and their children and their grandchildren, and they saw it happening within these mill towns, those epicenters of which I spoke, epicenters of invention and innovation, of creative genius that enabled us to be the best we could possibly be and where there was hope abounding in our communities.

We can bring back that spirit. We can call for justice, social and economic justice as it relates to workers, as it relates to a world scene where there is a thought for those in the middle-income community, the middle class of America, the working families of America, strengthened and empowered because we get it here in Washington, where we speak to forces like counter-forces, like currency manipulation that doesn't give us a fair shot, that creates an unlevel playing field, that will cost us dearly in jobs and in the growth of our economy.

So there is much work to be done. We need to make certain that as stewards of these agreements we are insisting that our strength be heard at the table, that we make certain that we are informed about issues like child labor laws, about the rights for collective bargaining, about environmental standards, about the need for public health and public safety to be addressed in the workplace and in the product line that is developed.

These are standards that are uniquely American at times, that should lift the world along with the people of this great country. We don't abandon those championing efforts that enabled us to be a stronger people, a safer people, building a stronger tomorrow. We don't abandon those principles. We build upon them. We share them with the other nations of the world.

As I mentioned to a group of labor individuals in my district recently, there are consequences galore if we continue down this path.

□ 1900

We are selling short the American worker. We are offshoring jobs that we can ill afford to ship away.

But it is beyond that. Not only does the American worker lose her job, not only does the American worker lose his hope, we then find economies around the world accepting the fact that their citizens are working for 75 cents an hour. Where is the justice to any of the workers around the world? This is an impact that has a ripple effect that pours forth in painful measure with insensitivity and gross, gross negative outcomes.

We can do better than that. We can be a country that will stand tall and know from the growth and progress that we have achieved through our halls of government, through the efforts of labor and unionized forces that came through labor and said, We are better than this. We need to share in the wealth of our economy.

We need to make certain that we respect our labor forces. The unionized efforts gave us sound benefits and sound salaries and good working conditions, acceptable standards. We are not going to ship that away. We are not going to allow for currency manipulation and the undoing of the American ideals, to be forsaken for the sake of a factor that has taken this global economy and produced these outcomes that are grossly unfair.

When we see a trade deficit in the trillions of dollars, when we understand that addressing currency manipulation can undo by hundreds of millions of dollars a deficit in a short order of 3 years, we can make a difference. We can be a force of change. We can be the voice of reason. We need to be that leader at the table.

Congress needs to be involved, invested in this opportunity. We need to make certain that the academics guide us here, that we pay attention to the data that are speaking to our senses.

We are rejecting all for which we fought. We are rejecting all for which labor painfully organized and achieved successful outcomes. If there is not justice for all in this process, it will not work.

But the American standard, the American appeal, the American hope that has been a beacon to people around the world should be that guiding force, should be the noble effort that allows all of us to understand that by committing to these issues of social and economic justice, we will have strengthened not only the American worker but workers around the world. An unlevel playing field simply does not work here. And offshoring jobs is the painful, gross neglect of the American Dream. The American Dream was one that found people playing by the rules, rolling up their sleeves, and expecting to taste success.

We can still build that aura within the halls of government. We can create those standards that determine a fair and just outcome. And we can speak

soulfully to the people who are counting on us in the given communities they call home across this great expanse called the United States of America. We have always been that higher standard. We have always been the people in search of a better tomorrow. We have always been a society indebted to justice.

Throughout our annals of history, stories replete of us making a difference by working our process called government, by making certain it empowers the individuals and families of this Nation in a way that simply speaks to what is right. We know it is right here.

There have been a number of folks in this House championing the effort of fair trade, talking about the inclusion of Congress in a way that allows for amendments and improvements to agreements and certainly an outspoken force that speaks to holding fast to those standards that speak to the wisdom that guides us, of being fair and respectful to those who labor, who labor steadfastly, who ask only to be treated as an equal partner in this process.

It is an honor to represent those voices that speak so profoundly well in the workplace, asking for that dignity of work, asking for just remuneration for the sweat equity that they pour forth in wanting to have just that better step forward for their children and their grandchildren as they grow to their tomorrows, filled with hope. We can provide hope. We can build change. And we can issue justice if we put our mind, heart, and souls to that effort. I suggest we can do it. It is within our grasp.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity and yield back the balance of my time.

CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORITY
VERSUS PRESIDENTIAL AUTHORITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. JOLLY) for 30 minutes.

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity tonight to address a very important matter regarding the role of the Congress. And I would associate myself with the remarks of my colleague from New York (Mr. TONKO) about the role that this body plays in trade but also the role that this body plays in foreign policy and matters of diplomacy.

Every American watches the news each day. We all see the same stories, be it ISIS, be it terror around the globe. We know that we, as a nation, are engaged against a threat that, left unchecked, could cause great harm to our homeland and to American interests abroad. We also have heard in recent news the conversation about the Prime Minister of Israel addressing our Nation.

We have seen the President's negotiations with Cuba, the President's negotiations with Iran, and it begs the question: What is the role of Congress in all of these matters, in these matters of foreign policy and foreign affairs?

So I appreciate the opportunity tonight to discuss a view of our side of the aisle and many in this Congress. I will be joined by my colleague from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS) shortly to specifically talk about the role that Congress provides in setting the direction of our Nation's foreign policy.

This body is a coequal branch. We are established under article I of the Constitution, just as the administration is established under article II. We are coequal branches.

This body, most every American knows, has the authority to declare war. This body does, this Congress does. We fund our diplomatic activities. We fund our military activities. We authorize the use of military force, as was affirmed by the President today in sending such a request to this body to ask for the constitutional affirmation of this body, of this Congress. And we do so routinely.

So when we come across events where sometimes people question why Congress would inject itself into matters of national security, into matters of foreign affairs, let's revisit why and the important role that Congress has served.

This body, this Congress rejected the President's negotiation of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 and 1920. This body rejected the President's negotiation of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in 1999. This body did that, reflecting the will of our constituents, of this Nation. This body, very importantly, investigated the Iran-Contra affair. This body investigated the intelligence activities related to 9/11. This body investigated the events of 2011 in Libya.

We have the authority of the purse as well, as spending originates in this body. We have used that authority to limit the transfer of detainees at Guantanamo, over the objection of the President.

We have used the constitutional authority of this body in matters of foreign aid and, at times, withholding foreign aid. Following the capture of Osama bin Laden and questions about Pakistan's role, this body responded by putting restrictions on that foreign aid. And, yes, this body provides billions to Israel as a matter of not only protecting the security of Israel but furthering our national security in the Middle East.

So it is appropriate then to raise questions very respectfully and in a way that reflects our constitutional responsibility of the President's decisions at times. We are one Nation. We are united in providing for the security of our country, but sometimes we have different ideas. And it is okay to raise questions on the President's decisions.

Consider the President's recent actions and the concerns of this body

over the negotiations to return Bowe Bergdahl that involved the release of five prisoners from Guantanamo, in contravention of a law passed by this Congress and signed by the President. He provided no notice of that.

We know that this President sent a secret letter to the Supreme Leader of Iran during a time of critical negotiations that many of us have concerns about and during a time when many of us have asked for additional sanctions on Iran, not fewer sanctions.

We know this President has attempted to negotiate with the Castro regime to normalize relations in Cuba.

We know that the President sent a message to Putin just before his last election, saying, If you just give me time and wait until after the election, I will have more flexibility. He delivered that message to the Russian President.

So it is okay that those of us in this body have raised those questions.

The President has the authority to do most of what I just said, although I object to his no notice in the Bowe Bergdahl case. But we also have the authority to provide oversight and to exert our role in this.

So how do we do that? We do that in three or four areas that are very ripe right now for conversation, for debate, and in a way that attracts the attention and the interest of our constituents, of the American people that send us here to represent them.

We saw today the President's request for an Authorization for Use of Military Force. I appreciate the President sending that request to this Congress. I believe we should have done that last September. I was one of a few Members of Congress who signed my name onto an Authorization for Use of Military Force that we introduced last Congress prior to the President sending his resolution to this body. I believe we had a constitutional responsibility to do that, as this body, to ask: Are we a nation at war? And if so, are we willing to incur the sacrifice necessary to win that war?

I am encouraged that the President today, during his press conference, said that by working with the Congress and by negotiating on the language that we can make this resolution even stronger. And I think we will see that. I hope we will see that in the coming weeks and the coming months.

The language in the Authorization for Use of Military Force that prohibits no enduring offensive ground troops I think causes much consternation for many in this body. Are we really going to pass a resolution that restricts the tools of our own warfare when it comes to providing for the national security of the United States?

The President will have his opportunity to make his case. This body will have our opportunity to make that case as well.

Limiting or sunsetting the authorization to 3 years I think is something that we should begin to talk about. It

is okay for us to have to revisit a responsible Authorization for Use of Military Force in 3 years so that we don't find ourselves with a President years from now relying on an authorization that can be 10, 11, or 12 years old. We need to have that debate in this body and represent our view of how we respond to ISIS because the President's view has created much concern.

We saw at the National Prayer Breakfast that he suggested that the foundation of our response to ISIS needed to start with our own humility, by looking at our own history.

I appreciate the academic conversation the President would like to have on that. But that sentiment, in itself, compromises our own national security, in my opinion, because it suggests that we first must look inward before responding to what is a pending national security threat, a threat to our homeland and a threat to our national interests.

We need to have a debate whether or not we believe that an air campaign is sufficient. For the President to suggest that no ground troops will be required, that somehow that is a way of providing for the safety of our men and women in uniform, ignores the very risk of those who will be engaging in a dangerous air campaign and will continue to do so every day. And what happens if we lose one of our pilots? What happens if one of our pilots is captured, like the Jordanian pilot that was captured and, as we all saw, the tragic end that he met? Are we, as a nation, prepared to respond and rescue? Are we going to put boots on the ground? Should we put boots on the ground? That is a debate we need to have.

None of us are advocating for an extended war. None of us are advocating for putting men and women in harm's way. But if we are going to engage, as a nation, with our partners to defeat a threat to the United States, we need to have an honest debate about how we do that and not start the debate by restricting how we intend to do that.

□ 1915

We also have a role in the future of Guantanamo. I have introduced legislation, H.R. 654, which would prevent the President of the United States from handing over our naval base at Guantanamo to the Cuban regime without congressional approval. This is very different from the debate over the future of the prison and very different from the debate over the transfer of detainees.

Mr. Speaker, this simply says that we, as the United States, have a naval station 90 miles off our shore, and when Raul Castro demands that we return that to the Cuban people and pay reparations to the Cuban Government as terms of negotiation, my legislation says, No, Mr. President, you may not do that without coming to this body to ask for authorization. Certainly, I would not lend my vote to that.

I was pleased to hear testimony in the other body, in the Senate, when the administration said that is not a matter they would consider, but as we have seen in the President's negotiations in the past, it gives us reason to pause.

My legislation would simply codify the restriction that says that the Guantanamo Naval Base may not be returned to the Cuban people without congressional approval.

Finally, we do have a role in inviting a foreign leader to address this body, Prime Minister Netanyahu. It is fully appropriate as a coequal branch of this government to invite and to ask for Netanyahu to address us about his vision of security in the region, his vision of peace in the region—his vision of security—and also his vision of the current negotiations with Iran.

No Member of this body should shy away from receiving an address from the Prime Minister of Israel. We should stand resolute—Republicans, Independents, and Democrats—and be here for that address and not insult the Prime Minister and the people of Israel by turning it into a political game of boycotting an address by the Prime Minister.

We should be here showing our support for the security of Israel, for the people of Israel, and, yes, for the Prime Minister's leadership. This is appropriate. We can disagree with the administration without being disagreeable.

As we engage in oversight, Mr. Speaker, it is important that we continue this dialogue, and we do, as the President very respectfully suggested, and I want to thank him again for the tone of his remarks today when he said he hopes the AUMF can be better by working with the Congress.

I would ask for the same of the administration when our Speaker steps out and invites Prime Minister Netanyahu because it represents the interests of this body when it comes to Israel and to the current negotiation with Iran.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be joined this evening to discuss this further by a fine colleague of mine in this body, Representative RODNEY DAVIS from Illinois.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Well, thank you to the gentleman from Florida for actually putting this Special Order together tonight and also for yielding me time.

You brought up a great number of issues that I think are very important to many of us, regardless of whether or not you represent 800,000 constituents in Florida or—like me—800,000 constituents in central and southwestern Illinois.

I will tell you, DAVID, that the other night, I was cleaning out one of my son's pockets in his jacket because I was throwing it into the laundry, and I pulled out a copy of the Constitution that he got at school.

I flipped through it, and I reread article I, article II, article III, and the Bill

of Rights. You learn something new each time. What you don't forget is that our forefathers who created this great institution understood that it took equal powers. It took equal branches of government to produce the freedoms that we have in America sometimes take for granted.

It is exactly what you said about let's work with each branch of government. We can disagree without being disagreeable. You address so many issues. I would like to actually talk back and forth on some of those.

Let's start with the invitation to Prime Minister Netanyahu. We have a tremendous disagreement on whether or not the United States should unilaterally enter into negotiations with the terrorist State of Iran.

I worry. I worry what it means for America and what it means for our closest ally in the Middle East, Israel, if Iran finally was given access to a functional nuclear weapon. What would they do with that? Whom would they provide that technology to? It is something in a geopolitical sense that we have to be concerned about in our position as Members of Congress.

These are issues that we have to put a check and balance on the administration to ensure that we are working towards what is the common goal for our allies.

I think that Prime Minister Netanyahu's being invited to this great institution to come here to address the United States Congress, to address 435 Members of this House and many others, to talk about how we are working together as allies, I don't think that is an insult.

Frankly, Mr. Speaker, I say: What took so long? Why did it take the Speaker of the House to put the invitation out? Why did the administration continue to block this? These are the types of issues that we as an equal branch of government have to address in this body. That is why we are happy to talk about many of the other issues.

You mentioned Guantanamo Bay. I am a proud cosponsor of your bill that is going to ensure that this administration cannot negotiate away the United States' ownership of Guantanamo Bay, regardless of whether or not the President is going to—which I think is a terrible policy—regardless of whether or not the President is going to clear out Guantanamo Bay of the terrorists who are there because they want to hurt Americans.

I think we need to ensure that there is a law of the land that does not allow this administration to negotiate away a very important base in Cuba that protects Americans.

Mr. Speaker, these are the types of issues, foreign policy issues—ISIS is one that I know we will be able to discuss tonight and others—but I am happy to begin a discussion on whatever it is you think is most important when it comes to America's foreign policy and our ability to be that oversight branch, that equal branch to the executive branch.

Mr. JOLLY. I thank my colleague. Let's, for a moment, stay on the topic of Prime Minister Netanyahu.

One of the reasons we take to the floor is to make sure that the voices are heard from all over the political spectrum. As the media and some in this body have gained the attention of the media by suggesting that the Prime Minister shouldn't attend, it is important for those of us who believe he should to take time to discuss why that is.

Most people know and understand—but some people don't—the significance of our partnership with Israel and what it means in one of the most volatile regions of the world.

This is a nation that has committed to democracy, to peace, to freedom, to representation, and to security; and they are doing so in an incredibly volatile region. All that they have asked of the United States over the years is that we stand with them in their own courage to promote peace, security, and freedom of their own people.

I would say, as I mentioned earlier, for those who have chosen not to attend, I certainly respect that decision, but I think it sends a message that is wrong to say not just to the people of Israel, but to the Prime Minister himself.

Not only is there a political message trying to be delivered by those that don't attend, but there is also this notion that, somehow, those of us in this body better understand the internal politics in Israel better than the elected leaders.

Why should we not trust that Prime Minister Netanyahu understands what is best for his nation? Why should we try to suggest that we know better than Prime Minister Netanyahu what is right for Israel and for the people of Israel? To suggest otherwise is demeaning both to the Prime Minister, as well as to the people of Israel.

I look forward to the Prime Minister's address, and I think this body, as we make decisions both about Iran sanctions but also about our aid to the people of Israel, I think this body has an opportunity to learn from the Prime Minister and to understand the issue better as we begin to make decisions.

I look forward to the Prime Minister's address to this body.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Well, like my colleague, Mr. JOLLY, I look forward to the Prime Minister's address, too. It is really beyond what I thought serving as a Member of Congress we would see here, and it is the sheer pettiness of the fact that the Speaker of the House invited the Prime Minister and many decided to say they are going to boycott this.

Do you know what—boycott it. If that is your idea of your freedom of speech, go ahead. We will fill the seats. We will make sure that Prime Minister Netanyahu understands that America stands with him and his nation as our greatest allies in the Middle East.

When that happens, he will come here, he will be received with a reception that is worthy of the Prime Minister of Israel, and I am just honored to be able to sit in this room and to hear why our bilateral relationship is of the utmost importance.

Mr. Speaker, I wish we didn't have this pettiness here in this Congress because I think the American people are sick and tired of the infighting. I think they are wanting us to govern together.

This is just one more example that goes out to the American people that tells them that people in Washington in this institution can't get along. I hate to say it, but they are wrong on many issues because we do get along, but on this one, it is so important that we show respect to our greatest ally.

Mr. Speaker, I notice we have been joined by our colleague from California (Mr. VALADAO), who I think wants to participate in this discussion on Prime Minister Netanyahu also.

Mr. JOLLY. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, a couple of years ago, I had the opportunity to go visit Israel and actually spend some time with Prime Minister Netanyahu. That was, for me, probably one of the most enlightening trips I have been on, to have the opportunity to actually see what they are experiencing there and to see how important our relationship is to the folks there in Israel, but also to us here in the U.S.

We learn so much from the technology that they use to protect their borders, to protect themselves from terrorists, and we see the situation that we have got going on with ISIS now today, and we need that relationship more than ever, something that can actually truly make a difference because we truly are under attack at all times.

We have got people around this world—and now, we are hearing today in committee, it was mentioned that there are a lot of people within our own borders today, so it truly is a scary time.

To have someone with the experience that Netanyahu has and to see what he has seen over the years and to bring that and share that with us here in our Chamber where we pass the laws, where we are here, sworn to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States, but also the people here, and that is our number one priority, and to have the opportunity to have him speak to us, I think, is an honor.

Mr. Speaker, I am looking forward to that opportunity. I think it is something that will help all of us here in Congress truly understand what we are up against and what needs to be done. I think it is something that most of us are smart enough to attend. There are a few that choose not to, but I think that is going to be a very small group of people.

Again, Mr. JOLLY, I appreciate the opportunity.

Mr. JOLLY. I appreciate the gentleman's comments.

It can't be lost in this conversation about the pending address from the Prime Minister. As we mentioned, the security of Israel in a very volatile region, it is a region that is the center of much of the presence of ISIS.

As we often see the political debate, the TV commentary, and the radio commentary about how we define ISIS, the fact is that if we are not willing to define our enemy, we will never defeat our enemy. We know that we face a threat, an organization that has declared war on us, and we don't get to choose the threats we face as a nation. We certainly wish we could. We only get to choose how we respond to those threats.

The President's submittal of an AUMF request today is the right one. This body, I think, can have a very respectful debate about the terms of how we confront ISIS, about the authority, the authorization that we want to provide this administration for how he engages.

I think the most critical thing we can do, though, is not tie the hands of our men and women in uniform and the leadership of our Department of Defense as they make decisions how to execute our campaign against this radical organization.

I yield to the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I am, again, so proud to be joined by my colleague from Florida and my colleague from California.

When we talk about ISIS, this is a true threat to Americans abroad. I have never in my lifetime seen such a savage organization who finds it entertaining to show the death of innocent civilians.

□ 1930

Let us also recognize that most of the civilians who have been killed by ISIS have been fellow Muslims. So it is not something that we here in America with our freedoms that we enjoy can comprehend. I think we have to do everything we can to eradicate them, to destroy them and ensure that they never get a foothold in any type of nation-state whatsoever because their plans will be to do one thing, and that is to kill Americans.

Part of our job as Members of Congress is to come here and make some pretty tough decisions. These are decisions that none of us, when we stood up to get sworn in in this institution, thought we would have to make, but they are decisions that the American people demand that we make. We are being demanded to ensure that America remains safe here in the homeland and Americans should remain safe abroad.

The President talks about a trajectory of peace. I don't know what he is looking at. It seems like a flat line of destruction to me. We have an opportunity now to put forth an Authorization for Use of Military Force, something I never wished that we would

vote on in this House, but we are forced to by the failures of the foreign policy coming out of this administration in dealing with ISIS.

I stood on this floor and I said I am willing to stand with the President, who told me this strategy of using air superiority and working with our allies on the ground was going to work. It is clearly not working. The last thing I wanted to do was stand here and offer up an opportunity for American Special Forces and ground forces to partner with allies to go in and defeat ISIS, but it may be the only chance we have.

And this Authorization for Use of Military Force, I like the fact that it may expire in 3 years. Let it be reauthorized. But the fact of the matter is we need the President to stand up and be the Commander in Chief. We can put any piece of paper in front of him and his administration that we want, but if he is not willing to do the job and be the Commander in Chief, to destroy, defeat, and ensure that America remains safe here and abroad, then he is not doing the job that he was elected to do.

We will do our job. We will pass an Authorization for Use of Military Force, and we will give the President the opportunity to fight ISIS, but we have to make sure that our men and women in the military are the ones who are put at the forefront of what matters most, and the only thing that we should consider is that the American military, our soldiers, our men and women who fight for our freedoms, should be given the opportunity to do what they are trained to do.

Let's not play politics with destroying ISIS. Let's actually allow our men and women in uniform to do just that. They can do it. They have done it throughout history, and that is exactly what we need to continue to do in this institution. Let's work together. Let's make this happen.

Mr. JOLLY. I want to associate myself with my colleague's remarks and simply close with this. It is important to revisit the context of how we brought this up tonight. We are one nation. The President, the Congress, we are united as Americans, as elected officials of this country, to protect the national security of the United States.

The point of tonight's Special Order is that just as the President exercises his article II authority, this body also has a responsibility to exercise our article I authority, and that is okay. That is why we have the greatest republic that has ever been on the face of this Earth. Because we can have these debates in a constructive way between a President with one view of how to respond, a Congress with another, but know every day that we as a nation, the President and this body, are resolved to eradicate the threat of ISIS from the face of this Earth. We will do that.

As I mentioned, just as the President asks us to consider an authorization to use military force, we must also ask

the President to understand our interest in how this war to defeat ISIS is executed. And on issues of Iran, Cuba, and others, we will work together. We will have our differences and disagreements, but we remain one United States resolved to protect the security of our interests.

I look forward to a very healthy debate on these issues in the coming months.

I yield to Mr. DAVIS.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. I thank the gentleman again for organizing this opportunity.

I just want to remind all of our fellow colleagues, it is a privilege to serve in this great institution. These decisions that we will make will not be easy, but the decisions we make will be judged in history as to what happens here and what the future holds. Let's make sure that we make our forefathers and those who follow us proud to be Members of Congress. Let's do the right thing.

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

BORDER SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I come before this body today, again, to talk about the very important issue of border security.

My district is Arizona's Second Congressional District. I represent about 85 miles of the southern border. We have border residents and ranchers who every day are dealing with transnational criminal organizations that are trafficking drugs and people and weapons and money through their property, putting their lives at risk, often having them have to make difficult decisions, potentially life-and-death decisions.

As we stand today, this administration has done nothing to secure our border. This is a national security threat. It is a public safety threat. The people of southern Arizona need to be heard, and that is why I am organizing some time to address this issue.

I appreciate one of my colleagues, the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO), joining this conversation. This is a serious issue. We do have a bill, Secure Our Borders First Act. I am a cosponsor of the bill, and I believe it is an important bill that should unite this body to move forward and

address this issue. I don't want to play politics with it.

I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO).

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative MCSALLY. I had an opportunity to go to your home State a couple of weeks ago and spend some time with you on the border. I have spent quite a bit of time here in Washington over the last 2 years talking about immigration reform. I do believe that we have to fix the problem. We have to address the situation we have with immigration in general. But something that I learned a lot about on that trip which I knew before, until I really got to experience and see for myself, I didn't realize how bad the situation on the border was and what our border agents face on a day-to-day basis, with people coming in with tools that I happened to use in my shop when I am building stuff, saws and torches and different types of equipment, just to get through the fence. When you see the situation we have got with the types of drugs and the types of people crossing the border on a daily basis, it is truly a situation that has to be resolved and looked at in a totally different way.

Chairman McCaul came up with a piece of legislation to address this, going along the whole border in a piece-by-piece manner. It looks at each part of the border and how it needs to be addressed. From that tour and the time I spent on the border, I got to see how important it was; from the California portion in San Diego and how people are getting across the border and the type of tunnels they are digging to the type of aircraft that people are flying, the drones that you can buy for a couple thousand bucks online; and even down to your part of the border where we got to see people cutting through the fence and actually making ramps and driving over barriers that weren't able to be cut; down to Texas to the Rio Grande when we traveled the river and saw what the situation was there, where people can hide and how narrow that area is.

The bill that was introduced helps secure the border because it looks at each portion of the border separately and individually and addresses it as a problem in itself. It puts technology in those places where it can truly make a difference. That border with this legislation can actually be secured—as much as we possibly can. Then we can move on with the rest of what has to be done. Obviously, fixing our guest worker programs and fixing our visa programs and the type of legal immigration that we welcome in this country because this country was built on immigrants. But we want to make sure that we secure the border first.

I am thrilled to be here and spend some time with you this evening talking about such an important issue. I appreciate the invitation.

Ms. MCSALLY. Congressman VALADAO, I appreciate you coming to

visit my district. Twenty-one Members of this body came to southern Arizona to see what these border residents and ranchers are dealing with on a daily basis, to include our chairman, Chairman McCaul. I really appreciated your willingness to come see firsthand and listen to the ranchers and border residents.

We have men and women in uniform in our communities that are doing the best they can. But the strategy that they have been given in our sector is just not working, and they need some better tools and they need a better strategy so that we can use intelligence-driven operations, we can use technology where it works, we can have barriers where they work. Ideally, we need to be detecting the illegal activity of the cartels well south so that we are able to then monitor and either deter the breaches or intercept them as soon as possible when they come over the border.

Some of the additions that I added into the bill were to create a rapid reaction force so that they quickly intercept, and directing the Border Patrol to be patrolling at the border to the maximum extent possible. Right now there is a multilayered approach in these rural areas. It is called a Defense in Depth strategy. It relies on taking sometimes, what they say, hours to days to intercept illegal activity. The problem with that is, during those hours to days, these cartels are transiting over private property.

Whereas in the past, sometimes, these ranchers, look, they have always had a humanitarian heart. If they saw individuals who were coming over illegally to find work, if they needed water, they would help them and then they would call border security. But now they don't know who they are. As the numbers have gone down, the cartel activity, the drug mules, the potential violence, the violent history of the individuals who are apprehended have gone up. So they don't know who it is that is crossing their property right now.

Rancher Rob Krentz, in 2010, went out to help someone, and that is the last we have heard of him. He was murdered on his own property. They still don't know who did that as he was out there responding.

We have stories of individuals in my district. You have heard some of them. We hear more every single day where, generally speaking, they are on alert. They usually don't go out of their homes unless they are armed, and they often don't go out unless it is in daylight hours. So it is impacting their lives and their livelihood, and they are constantly dealing with cut fences and loose cattle or killed cattle and all of the implications that come with these cartels that are trafficking across their property and around their homes, like break-ins and other things that come with that.

So I really appreciate your willingness to come down and see that firsthand.