

which we were very actively involved with.

Sadly, but unsurprisingly, it would also deny eligible children access to the Free or Reduced Price School Meals Program, and it would slash funding for some electronics benefits transfer.

□ 1915

I just have to say that as a young, single mother on public assistance and food stamps, I don't know what I would have done had my children not had school lunches. This was a bridge over troubled waters for me, and my children and I have to thank my government for that helping hand. But today, in 2016, this bill will roll back these programs, which means more hungry kids in our schools and in our neighborhoods.

That is why several of us are sending a letter to the Education and the Workforce Committee outlining our deep concerns with the changes to our child nutrition programs. I hope that everyone on our side of the aisle signs this important letter, and I hope that the majority will read it carefully. It lays out some of the basic problems in this bill. We want to make sure that everyone on the committee and this entire body understands the impact of what this will cause.

When we take away access to these meals, we jeopardize children's health, their educational attainment, and, really, their future. We know that children who have access to healthy meals are more likely to do well in school, have decreased behavioral problems, and come to class ready to learn. That is what we should want for all of our children.

For the children growing up in high-poverty neighborhoods and who lack equal access to healthy meals, these school meals really are a lifeline. We are not just talking about a few students. The numbers are clear. More than 15.3 million children are living in food-insecure households. Let me say that again. More than 15 million kids are at risk of going to bed hungry every night in America, the richest and most powerful country in the world.

We also know that childhood hunger is far from colorblind. Children of color are disproportionately affected by hunger every day. For example, in 2014, one in three African American children and one in four Latino children were food insecure. For children who live in rural communities, food insecurity is coupled with other barriers, like lack of access to transportation to get to summer feeding sites. More than 17 percent of rural households—that is 3.3 million households—are food insecure.

Child hunger and the lack of nutritious food is a problem that affects every child in every ZIP Code. It is endemic in our country, in rural, urban, and suburban schools. Every Member of Congress has constituents who are hungry. This should be a priority for all of us.

I have seen the impact of food insecurity in my own community in Oakland, California, where one in four children at the Oakland Unified School District do not have access to affordable, nutritious food. These families are forced to make impossible choices to feed their children, especially during the summer months when schools are closed. These families are making decisions every day between food and medicine, food and rent, or food and paying the electric bill.

Mr. Speaker, we need real solutions to these very real problems. Let me just mention my legislation, the Half in Ten Act, H.R. 258, that would develop a national strategy to cut poverty in half over the next decade. That is more than 23 million Americans lifted out of poverty and into the middle class in just the next 10 years.

This bill that we are talking about tonight goes just the opposite way. Surely, we can all recognize that ensuring healthy meals for American children is the first step in this ongoing War on Poverty. It should not be a partisan issue. Feeding hungry kids is a moral imperative.

So let's put our children first, and let's strengthen our child nutrition programs rather than cut them. Our children deserve the security of knowing where their next meal is coming from. That is just basic. It is a basic American value.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman SCOTT for his leadership and thank him for yielding.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ms. LEE for all of her hard work on the task force.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. CÁRDENAS), a Member who has been fighting for children as a member of the State legislature, a member of the Los Angeles City Council, and now is a Member of Congress.

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman SCOTT for working so hard and tirelessly to fight for those young little voices and those families that need food in their children's stomachs every single day. It is a tireless battle; and once again, today, we are trying to make people aware of the disingenuous, misguided efforts that are in this bill. I rise today to express concern over harmful provisions included in the so-called Improving Child Nutrition and Education Act of 2016.

In 2014, more than 17 million American households were at risk of going without having food, including 3.7 million households with American children. We should make every effort possible to help American children access the proper nutrition that is vital to their growth, development, and success in school and beyond.

The provisions outlined in this bill are doing just the opposite by tampering with programs that have been working well, such as the Community Eligibility Provision, the process that ensures that meals can be served to

American children in schools. The provisions in this bill will cause too many American children, especially low-income children, to lose access to these vital programs and to have healthier meals.

The Community Eligibility Provision allows high-poverty school districts to offer universal school meals to all students. This bill raises bureaucratic red tape. It will only lead to fewer schools qualifying for the program and more low-income American children going hungry every single day.

Why add burdensome paperwork on school districts and each and every family in them? Instead, Congress should focus on improving and expanding direct certification, an approach that has been shown to improve program integrity.

What this bill should be doing is addressing the barriers faced by eligible families who are currently not even accessing the benefits of the results of these programs because of the lack of awareness. This bill will freeze the progress that we have made on reducing the intake of salts for American children in their food diets. It would allow junk food to be an acceptable snack, which would undermine our children's health and their entire future.

We must do more to improve school nutrition, attack undernourishment, and combat hunger for millions of American children because, otherwise, we are robbing them of the opportunity to reach their full potential both physically and academically.

Once again, I want to thank my colleague from the great State of Virginia for all the wonderful work that he has been doing and for being so tireless in his effort to make sure that the voices of these families and these children are heard not only in the Education and the Workforce Committee, but beyond.

Thank you for bringing the attention of this to the floor. I am glad to be a partner in this effort.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. CÁRDENAS very much for his hard work, too.

Mr. Speaker, reauthorization is an opportunity to improve legislation. Unfortunately, the pending Republican bill reduces nutrition standards and kicks kids off the school meal programs. Instead, we should be improving the program and expanding the child nutrition and the school lunch programs.

I thank my colleagues for saying why this is so important.

I yield back the balance of my time.

IDEOLOGICAL EXTREMISM IS SPREADING ACROSS THE GLOBE

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

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, upon visiting some of our wounded

troops at Walter Reed Hospital, I entered a rehab area that was full of men and women who had wounds of varying severity. The place was really a place of tough love—men and women struggling with pain and debility, trying to walk again, recover, and learn new skills.

What struck me the most, perhaps, amidst all of this suffering, was the desire, the will, to keep working, to get well, and to maintain an attitude of strength in the face of great adversity.

Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of speaking with one officer. He had lost an arm and an eye, and he was throwing a ball, a simple little ball, back and forth with his attendant. Now, normally, for us, this is a simple task, but this activity was necessary to retrain his brain for a new type of coordination. He had lost the dominant eye and the dominant arm.

In spite of the many scars that he wore on his face and a really tough road to recovery, he had a great attitude—no bitterness, no anger, no resentments. He believed in his mission, and he believed in his duty. He was impressive and uplifting, and just to be near him was a great privilege, as well as the other men and women who have fought so vigorously and so hard to overcome their wounds at this particular place and throughout the country.

Mr. Speaker, keeping you safe depends upon the men and women who are willing to put themselves on the front line for our security. We do remain the strongest country in the world militarily and economically. Unfortunately, though, I cannot report that the world is growing any calmer or more stable or more secure. Ideological extremism is spreading across the globe and, most alarmingly, is manifested in ISIS' twisted Islamic ideology.

In the face of the barbaric onslaught in the Middle East, compounded by the Syrian dictator's war of attrition, Europe is now contending with its worst refugee crisis since World War II, and the Continent's leadership seems ill-equipped to understand their own plight.

Not long ago, Mr. Speaker, the great cities of Europe were secure places of cultural strength. Today, they are targets for ISIS and other terrorist organizations.

And, of course, we stand in solidarity with the citizens of Belgium as we all continue to deal with the shock of the indiscriminate slaughter of civilians in Brussels. Jihadists there orchestrated coordinating bombings at the Brussels airport and the city's metro station—suicide assaults that murdered 31 people in a grim replay of the horrifying attacks in Paris.

This maelstrom of violence is a consequence of reckless open border policies and naive assumptions about the potential for multicultural conversion to Western economic and political freedoms. Although these bombings, these

particular ones, in Brussels were probably in retaliation for the capture of the mastermind of the suicide strikes earlier in Paris, Brussels has long contended with a seedbed of warped Islamic aggression, particularly in its Molenbeek neighborhood.

The Middle East conflict and the resulting humanitarian catastrophe prompted some European leaders to embrace very well-intentioned but misguided immigration postures. Now, nations from Greece to Sweden are confronting capacity issues and deadly security risks. No immigration system can remain just and orderly without necessary and robust border protection measures.

It is not fair. It is not fair to the people who are there, who have set up the political systems that are welcoming others, and it is not fair to people who do need to flee the violence and reestablish themselves in other nations. It is simply not fair.

Contributing also to this problem is the decline of a European myth: a romanticized vision of cultural and political tradition. What is taking its place is a new narrative that says that particular countries, individual countries, decreasingly should matter. Supranational entities, like the European Union, are forging a new settlement of administrative conformity to deal with the pressures of globalization.

Originally, the European Union arose from fears of past nationalist movements, such as fascism, that ravaged and sacrificed the Continent on the altar of ruthless ideology. The European Union, importantly and purposefully, serves to check this dark past, while also appropriately facilitating commonalities in commerce, travel, and enhanced understanding. However, the limits of this type of bureaucratic arrangement are reached when identity and self-preservation are at stake.

Unfortunately, the very idea of Europe may be disintegrating.

□ 1930

So what to do?

To turn this around, the Continent should regain a healthy instinct of its respective nations that places an emphasis on the interests of peoples with shared culture, history, and political traditions. The Continent's vibrancy depends on sustaining the dynamism of longstanding local difference while maintaining proper pride in the ideals that bind and animate wider Western civilization.

Nothing exists in a vacuum. The lack of a bonding identity in Europe, complicated by clashing cultural values, has created the Molenbeek neighborhood in other major European cities as well. Self-isolating Muslim communities can help perpetuate an environment of mutual misunderstanding and distrust, breeding alienation, resentment, and hostility. Genuine multiculturalism is an important goal and should be upheld by us all, but it is difficult without enculturation among immigrant populations.

Thousands of Europeans have left the Continent for the battlegrounds of Syria and Iraq. These radicalized fighters, passport holders—hardened by war and dedicated to jihadist militancy—pose a security risk to their countries of origin in the West. Even some so-called Americans have joined the ranks of terrorist organizations that are metastasizing across the Middle East and North Africa. San Bernardino demonstrated to all of us that the United States is far from immune to the cancer of ISIS' expansion.

Now, Mr. Speaker, our Nation, for decades, has shouldered a great burden in confronting havoc throughout the world. We will continue to lead the fight against extremism, but we will not do so alone. A general assumption that we will maintain the majority of heavy lifting in combating regional terror, coupled with the lack of will amongst some of our allies, has created a status quo that is no longer sustainable.

As we recover from the shock of the bombings in Brussels, we must reclaim a central principal. Europe must fight. Complacency is no longer possible. The combined effects of a drifting European identity and a lack of appropriate enculturation among certain migrant populations, further compounded by this new migrant crisis, must be confronted with reason and resolve in order to keep Europe and the world safe. Only through this approach will Europe stabilize, regain a sense of vision, and remain a great and important source of a welcoming and cultural strength.

Mr. Speaker, as the world has focused on the death cult created by ISIS, our focus has drifted away from an equally grave threat: the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Although the Iran agreement has, understandably, dominated headlines on this issue of late, North Korea's dynastic and despotic leadership continues its provocations. The country's young, insecure, ego-driven ruler seeks to consolidate his power and standing through destabilizing bravado, and he is backing it up with nuclear weapons development. In a region already roiled by increased Chinese military posturing, particularly in the South China Sea, North Korea's ongoing threats linger as one of the most complicated international dilemmas.

The possibility of nuclear weapon devastation is one of the most serious threats to civilization, itself. Unfortunately, the gravity of this challenge has not received ongoing critical attention in this body as a first order of priority. New intellectual rigor, strategic projection, and next generation ownership are necessary for nuclear security in the 21st century.

Mr. Speaker, I recall an incident when I was in graduate school. A prominent philosophy professor was visiting the campus, and he was known for a particular expertise.

I asked him: Would you give me a concise summary of the philosophical argument for immortality?

He was very excited by my request, and he actually invited me to his lectures on the topic. I did consider this a great privilege as, again, he was a very renowned professor. He was very kind to eagerly invite me to his class, but I could not really manage the 4 hours necessary to sit through his lectures, so I politely declined.

He then looked at me, and said: Ah, you have asked me a question about immortality, but you do not have the time.

We cannot afford to make the same mistake here on nuclear security—*not* having the time. We are distracted by all types of considerations, but if we are to bring the probability of a nuclear catastrophe to as near zero as possible, we must make the time. Understanding how nuclear threats have evolved and how to resolve them most effectively is an urgent national priority.

Imagine, just for a moment, one of several scenarios. A terrorist organization collects enough radiological material to set off what is called a dirty bomb in the stadium, perhaps, of a major city. This would trigger widespread harm and panic. A smuggled package on a container ship, with no need for a sophisticated weapons delivery system, explodes in a major U.S. harbor, causing widespread destruction and a loss of life. Worse yet, a reckless nation-state actor, such as North Korea's autocratic strongman, launches a missile attack against Seoul or even Los Angeles. Each future scenario is alarmingly feasible. No one enjoys thinking about this, nor do I, but ignoring this problem only amplifies the ongoing threat.

Americans deserve the assurance that our best and brightest minds are fervently engaged in their defense. They should be able to trust that policymakers on both sides of the aisle are working together for innovative and sustainable solutions to nuclear security concerns. In this age of anxiety and sound bite foreign policy, constituents should know, should believe, should have trust that Congress is leading where it matters most.

The leaders who courageously helmed our formidable nuclear enterprise through World War II and the cold war have now passed the baton to a new generation of policymakers and scientists. Now, as our world grows more complex, the challenges of nuclear proliferation have multiplied. The binary concept of mutually assured destruction is no longer relevant in an increasingly unstable geopolitical environment. Nonstate actors play havoc with global treaties and normative rules, seeking to do horrifying harm. Rational responses to deterrence are no longer a guarantee.

Despite all of these challenges and the important issues that come before Congress, nuclear security, ironically,

seldom surfaces in our national conversation outside highly specialized forums. The problem is real. The United States and our allies face a stark deficiency: nuclear security as a multidimensional issue with no longstanding constituency supportive of initiatives in Congress. That constituency must be built. This is of grave concern to us all. The constituency must be built.

In light of this problem, the Nuclear Security Working Group in Congress was founded to advance this discussion and help prevent the unthinkable. While the analytical and tactical expertise rightly should remain embedded in the Department of Defense, in the Department of Energy, in the Department of State, and in other executive branch entities, Congress must create an agile policy environment in this age of globalization and swiftly advancing technologies. We also need to awaken citizen concern in order to give momentum and consideration of the time necessary in this body with so many other distractions. Unfortunately, there is very little. The need for broader involvement, I believe, particularly extends to the millennial generation, the coming stewards of our nuclear security.

The community of responsible nations has much work ahead to achieve an ideal nuclear security settlement. Advances in reprocessing technology, nuclear power, and weapons infrastructure, once the exclusive domain of the nation-state, now pose serious proliferation concerns. Although many countries, thankfully, have altogether renounced the pursuit of nuclear weapons, turbulent situations in the Middle East and elsewhere are worsening an already hazardous global nuclear dynamic. A new architecture for nuclear security demands an ongoing effort by the responsible nations of the world.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this fourth and final Nuclear Security Summit, hosted by President Obama recently in Washington, represented another important step in securing loose nuclear materials and in heightening collaboration. We need to sustain this in more international gatherings and multinational efforts to achieve an effective 21st century nuclear security strategy, one that prioritizes common ground on important strategic and nonproliferation priorities in a cooperative campaign to make our world safer.

Looking ahead, Mr. Speaker, in this regard, I anticipate an augmented role for the International Atomic Energy Agency, known as the IAEA, as a primary implementing agency of future verification initiatives. A revitalized spirit of unity, common purpose, and renewed dedication is essential to nuclear security in the 21st century, and we need robust platforms to do so, multilateral ones. Our challenge is that we cannot react to a nuclear crisis. We must act to prevent one—if we have the time.

Given the collapse of the nation-state order in the Middle East, as well as the

technological advances and the potential for highly destructive weaponry to evolve in short order, what will our national security challenges look like in the next 20 to 30 years? It is quite serious. The answer lies in as much a values proposition as a military one. On a fundamental level, the question is whether the world can embrace, enculturate, and institutionalize the belief in human dignity and, from there, build out the governing and economic systems consistent with protecting innocent persons. That is the key.

Again, Mr. Speaker, we owe so much to the young men and women who are willing to risk everything in military service to take this integrated approach to international security. Put simply, I believe in the three Ds: strong defense, smart diplomacy, and sustainable development. All are necessary components for international stability and, thereby, our own national security. Closer to home, in order to have a stable society here, we also depend upon economic security.

We need to reexamine some fundamental questions as to what is causing such anxiety in our American culture. Our security problems are compounded by globalization trends that have left millions of Americans in dire need and dire straits of financial vulnerability. I recently saw a presentation by a CEO of a major company. I thought we were getting ready for a PowerPoint with charts and graphs of financials. Instead, this CEO put a picture up of a father with his daughter, a bride on his arm, as they were walking down the aisle on her wedding day. He said this to us: Everyone is someone's daughter. Every person is someone's son.

The point was powerfully made. The understanding of work and the workplace are essential to human dignity and happiness.

I learned a little more about this company. During the financial crisis of 2008, the business lost about a third of its contracts. Reeling from the economic pressure, this CEO pulled all of his employees together and asked: Team, what are we going to do?

□ 1945

He had earned their trust. Because there was an interdependency in that workplace, because there were demands—they had to be profitable, they had to make efficiency gains in order to be competitive—because he created a culture of trust and interdependency, the entire company decided to take a 30-day furlough with no pay. No job was lost. By sharing in that sacrifice, no job was lost. No one person was laid off. Not one job either was moved overseas.

Contrast that, Mr. Speaker, with an Indianapolis-based company that recently announced they are relocating 1,400 jobs to Mexico.

The fallout from this move was captured on a video camera as worker outrage built during the condescending

speech of a company executive, who channeled corporate elitism in his explanation. Basically, he said: It is nothing personal. It is just business.

Seen here and elsewhere across our country, a dehumanizing, abstract, economic construct that elevates balance sheets and projected earnings over the needs of persons is not a sustainable economic model for well-being, happiness, and commitment.

The economy and our society are inextricably intertwined. When this works, it works well. When it doesn't, there are problems. Social fracture leads to economic decline. Economic decline leads to social fracture. Interdependency can fray into downward mobility and decreased earning power.

A market that fails to deliver for the many, improperly prioritizing only measurable efficiency gains, breaks down communities. Creative destruction should not eviscerate the social environments in which people work. More than the loss of one company, economic disruption creates aftershocks that further result in the decline of community.

While the theory that globalization, including so-called free trade agreements, reduces the cost of consumer goods does have truth, people are not only consumers.

A disordered economy that operates solely from the principle of profit maximization can devalue the rich texture of ecosystems that are built and shared by working families, local businesses, local institutions, and community heritage. Trust and commitment are immeasurables that do not show up on the balance sheet.

Government policy here also has to bear some blame. Our convoluted and burdensome Tax Code incentivizes companies to move overseas or retain their earnings there. Escalated healthcare costs don't help either. Beyond government policy, the harsh reality is that the philosophy and the purpose of the corporation has changed, prioritizing short-term earnings, quarterly profit statements, and the stock price over the long-term viability of the business itself and the people within it who grew the business in the first place.

Mix in a new class of aloof CEOs accountable for only spreadsheets and no wonder people in Indianapolis started shouting at the corporate spokesperson when he announced the jobs were moving to Mexico. It is just business.

Mr. Speaker, there is a better way forward. Take the example that I gave of the CEO who called his team together and said: Team, we have got a problem. We have got a big problem. What can we do about it?

The team shared in the sacrifice in order to keep the business viable, in order to maintain profitability, in order to protect the ecosystem built upon trust, shared commitment, and interdependency.

The better way forward is not a compromise. It is a commonsense con-

sensus that a proper balance between globalized business interests and the daily life of most Americans should cultivate a culture of work to benefit the business itself, employees, and customers. Injecting the value proposition that work should have meaning, that companies should strive to protect the persons under their employ, and that product development should be seen as a shared experience provides the very foundation for profitability and long-term survivability of the business itself with innovation and efficiency properly ordered. What is good for persons is good for business.

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

SOLUTION TO FLOODING IN HOUSTON, TEXAS

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the date was April 14, 1970. The mission was Apollo 13. The message was: Houston, we have a problem.

Mr. Speaker, that was a clarion call from a mission that was in trouble. Tonight I ring and sound this clarion call from the people of Houston, Texas, because we have some troubles. We have trouble that is related to floodwaters in Houston, Texas, that inundated our city and caused great harm and great damages.

Mr. Speaker, I am on a mission of mercy tonight, a mission of mercy on behalf of my constituents in Houston, but also on behalf of all of those in Houston and the immediate area.

I am on this mission of mercy, but I am not without a solution. We have a solution to the flooding problem in Houston, Texas, and that solution is H.R. 5025. It is a bill that will help to mitigate the flood damages. It will not eliminate the flood damages in Houston, Texas.

I am not sure that we can construct a system that will totally eliminate all flood damages in Houston, Texas, but I am sure that we can mitigate, that we can eliminate many, that we can do something about the magnitude of the problem.

I am absolutely confident, Mr. Speaker, that my mother was correct when she informed me that there will be times in life when you cannot do enough. No matter what you do, you won't be able to do enough. But she also went on to explain to me, Mr. Speaker, when you cannot do enough and more needs to be done, you have a duty to do all that you can.

I am here tonight to let this Congress know that we can do more to help in Houston, Texas. We can do more to mitigate the flood damages that we have in Houston, Texas.

Mr. Speaker, this bill, H.R. 5025, would accord \$311 million. This money would be for projects that have already

been approved that are related to flood control in Houston, projects that have not been completed.

This bill would authorize this funding up to 2026. This bill is needed in Houston, Texas, for many, many reasons. I shall share but a few, then I will yield to a colleague, and then I will say more.

This bill is needed because it would not only mitigate the flood damages, but it would also help us with jobs. For those who are interested in jobs, this bill would create 6,220 jobs. The people who acquire these jobs will pay taxes. These taxpayers will help us, in turn, by helping with some of our fire, our police, and schools.

There are many ways that these tax dollars will be used, including a good deal of them sent to Washington, D.C., to help others across the length and breadth of our great country.

This bill will save lives. I will say more about that, and my colleague may say something about this as well. But I think it is important for us to note now that this bill will have a meaningful, powerful, significant impact on Houston, Texas.

I am proud to tell you that this Congress has been helpful. We have already accorded for one project \$212 million, but we need \$34 million to complete the project. This is the Brays project in Houston, Texas. We need \$34 million more to complete it.

This project is in an area where we do get flooding, in the Meyerland area. This project would help prevent homes from being flooded and cars from being damaged. This is a great project.

We just need to finish the project. The project was authorized in 1990, and it is projected to be finished in 2021, Mr. Speaker. While I do want to make sure we complete it, I do think it is taking us a bit too long to complete the Brays project.

Mr. Speaker, the Golden Gate Bridge with all of its majesty only took 4 years, approximately, to complete. The Hoover Dam, a great monument to what we can do to channel water and turn that water into electrical power, only took 5 years to complete. For the Erie Canal, we didn't have the advances in technology that we have today; yet, the Erie Canal took 8 years to complete.

Mr. Speaker, I spoke of Apollo 13 just a moment ago. Well, it only took us 8 years, Mr. Speaker, to place a person on the Moon. Surely, Mr. Speaker, if we can place a person on the Moon in 8 years, we can complete these projects in less than 30 years.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored at this time to yield to my colleague, who is a cosponsor of this piece of legislation, who serves us well in the Congress of the United States on the Energy and Commerce Committee, a real stalwart when it comes to serving his constituents and standing up for the people of our city, our county, our State and indeed our country, the honorable GENE GREEN.