

and their bodies dumped because their families could not afford the ransom.

Twenty years ago, I chaired a human rights hearing in my subcommittee with a Chinese security official who testified that he and his other security agents were executing prisoners—with doctors, of course, there and ambulances—in order to steal their organs for transplant. Since then, this horrific practice has skyrocketed.

Recent evidence from researchers Ethan Gutmann and David Matas shows that organ transplants in China have increased almost exponentially, not decreased. There is a bizarre availability of organs in Chinese military hospitals and China's transplant apparatus that can often issue a tissue match and find an organ transplant within 2 weeks for any foreign tourist with cash.

This initiative by Mr. TROTT will require the State Department to do a more thorough analysis of trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal in China and elsewhere around the world, informing a strategy to stop this crime against humanity.

Any American, Mr. Speaker, traveling to China for an organ transplant in 2016 should now be on notice that they may be participating in human trafficking of a vulnerable person or of a prisoner. Americans must not turn a blind eye to the ambiguous origins of a proffered organ. H.R. 3694 will help ensure that Americans are certain that they are receiving transplants only in countries that prohibit and actively suppress organ harvesting from trafficking victims.

I thank the gentleman for his legislation.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to close.

Mr. Speaker, in recent years, the United States has made tremendous progress shining a light on poorly understood problems around the world and working to find solutions: human trafficking, the advancement of women and girls, the importance of protecting our oceans, and combating climate change. A generation ago, no one considered these foreign policy issues, but today we are prioritizing every single one of them.

That is what we are trying to do now with respect to organ trafficking. This legislation will give us a fuller understanding of this problem so that we can act in the most effective way possible. This is, again, a great bipartisan measure. I thank Mr. TROTT and Mr. DEUTCH and Chairman ROYCE. I am happy to support this measure.

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

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The scourge of illegal organ trafficking has been pretty well documented, and you heard, here, Congressman DAVID TROTT explain the fatwa that has now been put out by ISIS that not only excuses the effort to go after

Yazidis and Christians and others that they call apostates, but all captives are open to losing a kidney or forced organ transplant. The intention here is to make a market in this in the Middle East.

But it does not just occur there, within the boundaries of ISIS' caliphate. This is a crime that reportedly occurs in some 20 countries, in all regions of the world.

So I thank Mr. TROTT and Mr. DEUTCH for introducing this legislation. I also thank Mr. ENGEL, and I want to commend Sarah Blocher of the Committee on Foreign Affairs professional staff for years of excellent work on this issue and her assistance to the authors.

The STOP Organ Trafficking Act addresses a critical challenge to human rights, to our national security, to our public health, and it deserves our unanimous support.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3694, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### UNITED STATES-CARIBBEAN STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT ACT OF 2016

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4939) to increase engagement with the governments of the Caribbean region, the Caribbean diaspora community in the United States, and the private sector and civil society in both the United States and the Caribbean, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4939

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “United States-Caribbean Strategic Engagement Act of 2016”.

#### SEC. 2. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

Congress declares that it is the policy of the United States to increase engagement with the governments of the Caribbean region, the Caribbean diaspora community in the United States, and the private sector and civil society in both the United States and the Caribbean in a concerted effort to—

- (1) enhance diplomatic relations between the United States and the Caribbean region;
- (2) increase economic cooperation between the United States and the Caribbean region;
- (3) support regional economic, political, and security integration efforts in the Caribbean region;
- (4) encourage sustainable economic development and increased regional economic diversification and global competitiveness;
- (5) reduce levels of crime and violence, curb the trafficking of illicit drugs, strength-

en the rule of law, and improve citizen security;

(6) improve energy security by increasing access to diverse, reliable, affordable, and sustainable power;

(7) advance cooperation on democracy and human rights in the Caribbean region and at multilateral fora; and

(8) continue support for public health advances and cooperation on health concerns and threats to the Caribbean region.

#### SEC. 3. STRATEGY.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a multi-year strategy for United States engagement with the Caribbean region that—

(1) identifies Department of State and USAID efforts, in coordination with other executive branch agencies, to prioritize United States policy towards the Caribbean region;

(2) outlines an approach to broaden Department of State and USAID outreach to the Caribbean diaspora community in the United States to promote their involvement and participation in the economic development and citizen security of the Caribbean region;

(3) outlines an approach to partner with the governments of the Caribbean region to improve citizen security, reduce the trafficking of illicit drugs, strengthen the rule of law, and improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative;

(4) establishes a comprehensive, integrated, multi-year strategy to encourage the efforts of the Caribbean region to implement regional and national strategies that improve energy security by increasing access to diverse, reliable, affordable, and sustainable power, including significant renewable energy resources within the Caribbean region such as biomass, geothermal, hydropower, solar, tidal, waste-to-energy, and wind, and by taking advantage of the ongoing energy revolution in the United States;

(5) outlines an approach to improve diplomatic engagement with the governments of the Caribbean region, including with respect to key votes on human rights and democracy at the United Nations and the Organization of American States;

(6) develops an approach to assisting Caribbean countries in the diversification of their economies, the reduction of legal, technical, and administrative barriers that prevent the free flow of foreign direct investment and trade to and from each country and within the Caribbean region, and support for the training and employment of youth and citizens in marginalized communities; and

(7) reflects the input of other executive branch agencies, as appropriate.

#### SEC. 4. BRIEFINGS.

The Secretary of State shall provide annual briefings to the appropriate congressional committees that review Department of State efforts to implement the strategy for United States engagement with the Caribbean region in accordance with section 3.

#### SEC. 5. PROGRESS REPORT.

Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and biennially thereafter for the following four years, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on progress made toward implementing the strategy for United States engagement with the Caribbean region in accordance with section 3.

# SEC. 6. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REPORT ON CARIBBEAN BASIN SECURITY INITIATIVE.

Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains the following:

(1) An evaluation of the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) and the extent to which the CBSI has met Department of State and USAID benchmarks.

(2) An accounting of CBSI funding appropriated, obligated, and expended from fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2016.

(3) A breakdown of yearly CBSI assistance provided to each CBSI country.

(4) A description of how CBSI is coordinated with other security assistance programs in the Western Hemisphere, particularly the Merida Initiative and the Central America Regional Security Initiative, and the role of the Department of State's Senior Coordinator for the Citizen Security Initiatives in the Western Hemisphere in such coordination.

(5) A description of all United States security assistance provided to the Caribbean region, exclusive of assistance through CBSI.

(6) Recommendations for legislative and executive action to make CBSI more effective and efficient, as appropriate.

# SEC. 7. GAO REPORT ON DIPLOMATIC ENGAGEMENT IN THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN.

Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains the following:

(1) An evaluation of United States diplomatic outreach from the United States embassy in Barbados to the countries of Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent, and the Grenadines.

(2) A list of visits over the previous five years of personnel at the United States embassy in Barbados to the countries of Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent, and the Grenadines.

(3) A description of how personnel at the United States embassy in Barbados have engaged with government officials and civil society organizations in Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent, and the Grenadines over the previous five years.

(4) A description of how personnel at the United States embassy in Grenada have engaged with government officials and civil society organizations over the previous five years.

# SEC. 8. REPORTING COST OFFSET.

Paragraph (4) of section 601(c) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4001(c)) is amended in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking "the following:" and all that follows through "A workforce plan" and inserting "a workforce plan" and adjusting the margins accordingly.

# SEC. 9. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—The term "appropriate congressional committees" means the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

(2) **CARIBBEAN REGION.**—The term "Caribbean region" means the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative beneficiary countries.

(3) **SECURITY ASSISTANCE.**—The term "security assistance" has the meaning given such term in section 502B(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2304(d)).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

## GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material on this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill. This is the United States-Caribbean Strategic Engagement Act. It is authored by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), the committee's ranking member. As always, I appreciate him working closely with Chairman Emeritus ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN to ensure this legislation's swift passage. These two Members have been particularly committed to developments in our Southern Hemisphere.

For over a decade, Caribbean nations have received subsidized Venezuelan oil in exchange for their support of the authoritarian government of Hugo Chavez and now Nicolas Maduro. However, subsidized Venezuelan oil has done nothing to help the Caribbean address their need for a diversified energy strategy and instead has kept much of the region beholden to the Venezuelan strongmen.

With Venezuela's inflation rate expected to rise to 500 percent this year, fueled partially by the low price of oil, the nations of the Caribbean have seen a marked decrease in oil shipments. Meanwhile, years of authoritarian socialism are coming to a head in Venezuela, as the political and economic crisis there threatens almost certain implosion.

This presents an important responsibility here, a responsibility for the United States to finally develop a comprehensive strategy on how best to engage nations of the Caribbean diplomatically, how to help the region improve energy security, how to reduce violence and drug trafficking, and advance cooperation with regional governments on democracy and human rights in international organizations, particularly in the Organization of American States, as we know it, the OAS.

So this legislation, authored by ELIOT ENGEL, will require the State Department and USAID to develop that comprehensive and clear strategy on how best to engage the Caribbean region, and it also requires the Government Accountability Office to evaluate the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative so that we can be sure we are truly advancing our interests in the region using the best and most efficient approach.

During this time of competing priorities and limited resources, this bill

seeks to ensure that our government is not neglecting this key region so close to our shores; and, frankly, it is in our hemisphere, so we should not neglect it while developing a strategy that ensures the effectiveness of our diplomatic engagement with each Caribbean nation.

I once again thank the author, Ranking Member ENGEL, for his leadership and attention to the Western Hemisphere and thank ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN for her commitment as well, specifically to the Caribbean Basin.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time and yield the remainder of my time to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and ask unanimous consent that she be allowed to manage that time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank Chairman ROYCE and my good friend Mr. ENGEL for their continued leadership, both of these great leaders, their longstanding engagement to greater engagement with the Caribbean and for introducing this bill that we have before us today, H.R. 4939, the United States-Caribbean Strategic Engagement Act.

I am also pleased to be an original cosponsor and the Republican lead of Mr. ENGEL's legislation. I thank Mr. ENGEL. It is fitting that we bring this bill to the floor today, Mr. Speaker, during National Caribbean American Heritage Month.

As a Member from south Florida, I see firsthand the wonderful contributions that Caribbean Americans have made to our local communities. The Caribbean culture has had a great and lasting impact on our country and has helped bolster our society and has enriched our traditions.

But while we celebrate the contributions of the Caribbean American community to our country, we must also dedicate ourselves to doing more to enhance our relations with our neighbors. U.S. foreign policy in recent administrations—be they Republican or Democratic—have not strengthened our partnerships with the Caribbean in the right way. As the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), our chairman, pointed out, our influence and friendship with these nations has waned, allowing the negative influence of the dictatorships in Cuba and Venezuela to take root in the Caribbean.

Deepening our strategic relationship with the Caribbean represents an extraordinary opportunity to expand our economic ties, to cooperate on security issues, and to advance our values, our interests at institutions such as the OAS, the Organization of American States, and the U.N., the United Nations.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, this bill is so important. It pushes the State Department to prioritize our relations

with the Caribbean nations. It requires our State Department to develop a strategy to partner with our friends in the region on all issues, from counter-narcotics efforts, to energy security, to everything.

There is great potential for energy in the Caribbean, for example, but we must help nations break from their dependency on Venezuelan energy, especially as the Maduro regime is leading that nation to total chaos. We should help our neighbors take advantage of abundant and cheap natural gas and new, advanced, clean wind and solar technologies. In this way, we can help strengthen the economies of the region from the impact of the Venezuelan collapse—because the collapse is coming, Mr. Speaker—and take realistic steps toward reducing carbon emissions.

This engagement has the benefit of being positive and sound foreign policy, but it is also great for our domestic policy. This bill will broaden our outreach to the Caribbean diaspora community here in the United States, which has been so instrumental in helping to shape and influence our great American story, and they deserve recognition and greater collaboration.

I urge my colleagues to give their strong support for this bill. I thank Ranking Member ENGEL for his leadership, as well as Chairman ROYCE, on this important initiative.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill, which I was proud to introduce, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank our chairman, ED ROYCE, for bringing forward my legislation to ramp up our country's engagement with our Caribbean neighbors. I also want to thank our former chair, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, who joined me in offering this bill and who knows better than anyone the strategic importance of the Caribbean region.

We spend a great deal of time focusing on challenges and opportunities in faraway places, but it is important that we never lose sight of our interests closer to home. Indeed, we should be working to strengthen our ties with countries in the Caribbean. That is the aim of this bill, which would prioritize U.S.-Caribbean relations for years to come.

This bill would require the Secretary of State, along with the USAID Administrator, to devise a multiyear strategy for Caribbean engagement.

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We want to see how our diplomatic and development efforts are focused on the Caribbean, with particular attention to energy security, the rule of law, efforts to combat drug trafficking, and ways to enhance economic cooperation.

We also want to increase our engagement when it comes to regional issues by improving our diplomatic efforts with respect to key votes at the United Nations and the Organization of American States.

In my view, the best way to put together a new strategy toward the Caribbean is to tap into the large and vibrant Caribbean American community here in the United States. I did that for the 4 years that I was chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

So this bill underscores the importance of consulting with the Caribbean diaspora community, promoting their involvement in economic development, and civilian security in the Caribbean.

Finally, H.R. 4939 commissions two reports from the Government Accountability Office, or GAO—one which evaluates the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative and another which assesses U.S. diplomatic engagement in the eastern Caribbean.

I have long believed that we do a real disservice to our country by having no physical diplomatic presence in five of the countries in the eastern Caribbean: Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

I have long said it makes no sense for us to continue to conduct diplomacy on these islands from our embassy in Barbados. They say you can't conduct diplomacy from a bunker. It is also true that you cannot conduct diplomacy from hundreds of miles away.

I hope to work with the State Department to ensure that we establish a diplomatic presence in the eastern Caribbean as soon as possible. China has it. Venezuela has it. Others have it. We should have it.

It is especially appropriate that we are considering this bill in June, which is National Caribbean American Heritage Month. As the President said in his proclamation: "The bonds between the United States and the Caribbean remain strong. Both rooted in similar legacies—of trial and triumph, oppression and liberation—our narratives have advanced on a similar path of progress, driven forward by our shared dedication to fostering opportunity and forging a brighter future."

I couldn't agree more.

I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), a leader on the Caribbean and author of a resolution honoring Caribbean American Heritage Month.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, first, let me take a moment to offer my condolences and prayers to the families and victims of the horrific gun violence against the LGBT community in Orlando. These despicable acts have shattered the lives of so many people. Our response must be not only in words, but also in deeds and in action.

My congressional district has and will continue its outpouring of sym-

pathy and support for the people of Orlando, and we stand ready to assist in whatever way is needed.

Let me now take a moment to thank Chairman ROYCE and Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN. I also thank Congressman ENGEL for yielding and for his tremendous leadership on the Foreign Affairs Committee. I had the honor to serve on the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee of the Foreign Affairs Committee for several years when Mr. ENGEL was chair. We talked early on about the importance of the Caribbean as a region and how we must make it a priority in our foreign policy.

So today I want to thank both sides: our ranking member, Chairman ROYCE, Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, and especially Mr. ENGEL, for not just their words, but also their tremendous leadership, as demonstrated by this important bill. It has taken a while to get to this point, but thank goodness we are doing this in a bipartisan way. So I just want to thank them very much for that.

As a lead cosponsor, of course, I stand in strong support of H.R. 4939. The bill would enhance U.S.-Caribbean relationships by requiring the Secretary of State, in coordination with the administrator of USAID, to submit a multiyear strategy for U.S. engagement with our Caribbean neighbors to Congress.

I just want to, again, thank both sides. I remember when we had to work to really get the Caribbean to be included in all PEPFAR legislation, programs, and funding. So that was a major step in the right direction.

This is a huge step now in moving forward. This bill is very timely. It is a very important bill. As a long-time supporter of the Caribbean and a frequent visitor to the region—actually, my son attended school in Grenada.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. LEE. As I said, my son attended school in Grenada, and I am a frequent visitor to the region. So I am very proud to see us debate this today and, hopefully, pass the bill again on June 13.

Congress unanimously passed H. Con. Res. 71, which Mr. ENGEL and Ms. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN referenced. I authored that, actually, in February 2006, when President Bush was in office. He signed it. Since then, President Obama has issued a proclamation annually recognizing June as Caribbean American Heritage Month.

Caribbean Americans have contributed immensely to the fabric of the United States. So as we celebrate this month, we are reminded also of the relationship between the United States and our Caribbean neighbors. This bill does that and more.

H.R. 4939 strengthens and enhances ties between the U.S. and the Caribbean by promoting energy sustainability, diplomatic relations, and economic cooperation. Caribbean countries, unfortunately, have been neglected in our foreign policy. This bill brings a focus on making the Caribbean region and the West Indies a priority.

So, Mr. Speaker, now is the time for the United States to recommit our strong priorities with our Caribbean neighbors. We must revitalize and enhance our outreach to our Caribbean neighbors now and in the future. This bill does just that. I urge an "aye" vote.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE), a very valued member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. CICILLINE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, before I begin my remarks, I, too, extend my prayers and sympathy to the people of Orlando. My constituents, like all Americans, are brokenhearted at this monstrous act of violence visited upon a community gathered together to enjoy friendship and community and to celebrate. This act of cowardice has caused so much pain to the LGBT community in Orlando and to our community all across this country. I know I speak for everyone when I say we stand ready to do everything that we can to help this community heal and to keep our communities safe.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4939, the United States-Caribbean Strategic Engagement Act of 2016.

My home State of Rhode Island is home to many Caribbean Americans, particularly from the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and other countries in the region. It is critical to strengthen our relationship with these countries not just because of the national security interests we share, but also to support the interests of our constituents and their ties to this region.

Geographic proximity has ensured strong linkages between the United States and the Caribbean region. H.R. 4939 will further enhance this relationship. Our interests in the regions are diverse, including economic, political, and security concerns.

Despite its importance to the United States, the Caribbean often gets overlooked as we deal with concerns and threats from other regions of the world. Our Caribbean neighbors are important partners at the United Nations and the Organization of American States. Increasing engagements with the governments and the Caribbean diaspora in the United States, as well as the private sector and civil society in both the United States and the Caribbean, will be beneficial to everyone.

H.R. 4939 will enhance diplomatic relations, increase economic cooperation, support security integration efforts to help reduce violence and drug trafficking, advance cooperation on democ-

racy and human rights in the region and at multilateral fora, and enhance cooperation in combating public health threats.

I want to end by thanking Ranking Member ENGEL, Chairman ROYCE, and subcommittee chair ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, and all the sponsors of this important bill, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in April of 2009, I had the honor of joining President Obama in Trinidad and Tobago for the Summit of the Americas. That was one of his first trips abroad as President. I was chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee at the time.

At that time, the President said: "The energy, the dynamism, the diversity of the Caribbean people inspires us all, and are such an important part of what we share in common as a hemisphere."

Seven years later, those words continue to ring true. In that time, we have made a lot of progress. The Caribbean Basin Security Initiative and the Caribbean Energy Security Initiative have brought us closer to our Caribbean partners on a range of shared concerns. Let me say that Vice President BIDEN deserves a great deal of credit for this progress, but more needs to be done.

For example, this week, Secretary Kerry is in the Dominican Republic for the general assembly meeting of the OAS, the Organization of American States, which has its headquarters right here in Washington, D.C. We are confronting some serious issues at this meeting, including the crisis in Venezuela.

The Caribbean countries represented there will play a major role, and the more we work in partnership with these governments, the better. These may be small countries, but they pack a big punch in what is going on in our neighborhood. This legislation will keep us moving in the right direction when it comes to these partnerships.

I was very honored to introduce the bill, and I am honored that we have strong support on both sides of the aisle. I, again, want to thank Chairman ROYCE and Chairwoman Emeritus ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, both excellent members and real, stalwart support for this committee. This is another example of bipartisanship on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. I am very, very proud of that. So this will keep us moving in the right direction.

I urge a "yes" vote.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I thank, once again, Ranking Member ENGEL for his tremendous leadership and all of his efforts to promote stronger relationships with nations within our own hemisphere.

I have the distinct pleasure, as I have said, to represent south Florida in Con-

gress. We have many, many constituents in my district from the Caribbean. Part of what makes south Florida so unique is the contribution of the Caribbean diaspora.

What we have here during Caribbean American Heritage Month is an opportunity to strengthen the U.S.-Caribbean alliance and contribute in a meaningful and positive way to our neighbors.

We have been in a crisis mode, Mr. Speaker, focusing most of our attention on the many areas that, rightfully, demand our attention overseas, but it would be in both of our long-term interests, as well as our near-term interests, to develop mutually beneficial and strategic alliances close to home with the Caribbean nations.

Just think of all the economic opportunities that we can help in working with our neighbors to open up. We have a great opportunity with this bill to help them diversify their economies by tearing down burdensome barriers that are preventing them from taking advantage of direct foreign investment and trade. That can lead to greater growth, more stability for the Caribbean, for the diaspora, and for the United States as a whole.

So I urge my colleagues to support passage of this important bill. I look forward to continuing to work with Mr. ENGEL and Mr. ROYCE to develop even stronger ties to our neighbors in the hemisphere.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4939, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### EXPRESSING CONCERN REGARDING STATE-SANCTIONED ORGAN HARVESTING IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 343) expressing concern regarding persistent and credible reports of systematic, state-sanctioned organ harvesting from non-consenting prisoners of conscience in the People's Republic of China, including from large numbers of Falun Gong practitioners and members of other religious and ethnic minority groups, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows: