

In July the House passed H.R. 2646, our mental health reform act called the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act; but since September 1, the beginning of Suicide Prevention Month, 826 people have died by suicide. Since we passed the bill, 7,434 have died from suicide.

Let me tell you one quick story about a young man, a constituent by the name of Chuck Mahoney, who, while in college, suffered from depression. Despite his fraternity brothers going to the administrators and to his counselor, and despite Chuck telling his counselor that he thought he was going to die and there was no reason to live, no one spoke up. No one told the parents.

Sadly, young Chuck, who had been a student, who had been captain of his high school football team, a decorated student with great grades, took his own life, hanging himself with his dog's leash, a suicide that could have been prevented if he had seen people who really could treat suicide.

But so often what happens in this Nation, when someone cries out for suicide risk, there is no one there to help. Actually, as it turns out, mental illness is a contributing factor in 90 percent of suicides. When a person makes a decision, it usually happens in the first 5 minutes or, at the most, the first hour. There is no time for waiting lists.

We have a crisis shortage of psychiatrists and psychologists. We have too few hospital beds. We need something like 100,000 more crisis hospital beds. We have not reauthorized the Suicide Prevention Act in this Congress. We simply don't have enough to treat for a problem that is treatable.

When you add to this people who may do a drug overdose, 90 percent of people who are addicted do not get any treatment. Of the 100 out of 1,000 who try to get treatment, 37 can't find any treatment. Of those 63 left who get treatment, only 6 of them get treatment because we simply don't have enough people to treat. This is the mess we are in as a country, but we can do something about that—but it gets worse.

In addition to these suicide deaths, if you look at just the mental illness-related deaths in this country, since September 1, as of today, 6,713 have died of a mental illness-related death and 60,000 since we passed our bill in July.

The House did its job, but now the Senate needs to do their job. We hear rumors that the Senate is talking about passing the continuing resolution and then going home—going home while this sits on the table in the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that those millions of Americans who have a family member who has been lost to suicide or a chronic illness or a homicide or freezing on some park bench in some unknown part of America, that those families will speak up and let the Senate know: Do not go home and leave this unfinished business on the table. I

mean, after all, why campaign and say we could have done something but we didn't?

What we ought to be doing is looking at the passage in the Senate of H.R. 2646, which provides more psychiatric crisis hospital beds, more psychiatrists, more psychologists. It revises the HIPAA law that allows the compassionate communication between a doctor and a family member at very select times when someone is at high risk for their health or safety. It reauthorizes the Suicide Prevention Act. It does a host of other things, and all these things can happen only if it gets to the President's desk for a signature. But very little can happen if we maintain the status quo where people are left to die while Congress sits.

We did our job in the House. It took years, but when we passed this bill 422-2, Members of Congress, Members of the House of Representatives knew that they had passed a bill that could save lives, but only if we take action. If no action is taken, what do we do? What comfort is there to the families who are dying, who are suffering, saying we could have done something but we decided to wait?

The time for waiting is over. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that Members of the House and of the community at large will call their Senators and say the time for passage is now because where there is help there is hope.

THE PUERTO RICO CONTROL BOARD

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about the beautiful, enchanted island of Puerto Rico, the birthplace of my father and mother and my wife.

Yes, the colony of the United States in the Caribbean Sea where, in case you forgot, everyone is born a citizen and now even more of a colony of the United States now that Washington has appointed a Financial Oversight and Management Board or, as most people call it, the Control Board, la Junta de Control.

Seven members—four put forward by Republicans, three put forward by Democrats—were announced last week, and I was not pleasantly surprised. I have made it clear in this Congress and elsewhere that I oppose the PROMESA legislation that created the board that Congress passed before we left.

Now I look at the board, and I see a mix of people, some with ties to the former Tea Party Governor's regime, some with close ties to Wall Street, and most with experience examining the legal and administrative aspects of bankruptcy, not in governing an island of 3.5 million actual living, breathing human beings.

I was not surprised to see political insiders or those who are close to the bondholders. I assumed as much and

still assume, until proven otherwise, that most everyone on the Control Board or who lobbies and influences or helps the Control Board is doing the bidding of the bondholders who profit from Puerto Rico's debt and economic hard times.

The fact that four of the seven members are Puerto Rican doesn't make me feel any more optimistic. If you look at recent history in Puerto Rico, just having a majority of Puerto Ricans shouldn't give you much comfort. Wasn't it Puerto Ricans who beat and pepper-sprayed demonstrators at the university and at the legislature, who have gone after journalists and unions and lawyers in politically motivated attacks, who have put the needs of investors, big Wall Street fat cats, and political insiders ahead of the people, the environment, and the future of the island?

The Control Board and its members, no matter who they are, start with a deep ocean of mistrust from the Puerto Rican people who question why a new layer of opaque, undemocratic, colonial oversight and control is being imposed in secrecy.

That is why I challenged the appointees to the board to go the extra mile to make their deliberations and meetings and decisions as transparent as possible. Do not meet in secret just because Congress allowed you to. When they are governing the people of Puerto Rico, will they do so in Spanish, the language of the Puerto Rican people? Will they even meet on the island of Puerto Rico? Will they make available the logs of who they meet with, who tries to exert influence over them, what Wall Street executives are spinning them or treating them to expensive meals and giving them gifts, as authorized under PROMESA? Yes, they can take gifts.

When this Control Board is making decisions that close schools or hospitals, that threaten the environment, public institutions, and every aspect of society in Puerto Rico, will the Puerto Rican people even be given a minimum amount of information in their own language about who is influencing the seven members of the Control Board?

The Junta de Control must take the extra effort to tell the Puerto Rican people what their decisions mean, why they are being made, and how decisions were determined.

As Members of Congress who have essentially grabbed the reins of self-determination from the Puerto Rican people and handed them to this Control Board, are we going to be afforded the level of transparency that we need to determine if what is happening is what we want to happen?

I understand, Mr. Speaker, that some of our colleagues do not like to be reminded of policy issues that were already voted on, especially complicated policy issues that don't seem to impact them directly or people in their district. They just want to vote on them and forget. Well, I am not going to let

Congress forgot about Puerto Rico or the board that we have appointed to rule in secrecy over the people of Puerto Rico.

We cannot just set it and forget it like one of those super-duper wonder machines they sell on infomercials. Puerto Rico is ours. Its people are ours. Its land is ours. Its bays are ours. Its toxic landfills and lush forests, its schools and hospitals and health care clinics—these are all ours in the sense that we have been given a sacred duty to govern over Puerto Rico responsibly.

An unelected, unaccountable Control Board with no mechanism for oversight, with no commitment to transparency, with no promise of bilingualism or inclusion, stocked with insiders and people with questionable links to the very problems the board is supposed to resolve, this does not give me great confidence that this Congress will be alert when the people of Puerto Rico, our fellow citizens and, more importantly, our fellow human beings, are in need of help.

Tell the board, do not meet in secret, do not take the free gifts and dinners just because Congress allowed you to; serve the people of Puerto Rico.

□ 1015

URGING ACTION ON ZIKA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out against the paralysis in Congress over funding Zika virus eradication efforts.

I have been warning my colleagues in Congress for months that the Zika virus would severely impact our Nation, and especially south Florida, the gateway to the Americas. And while Washington has slumbered through the late summer, it has been a busy August in south Florida dealing with the fallout. It is because of Federal inaction that now Miami-Dade County will be spending \$10 million of our own budget to cover for some of the expenses in the fight against Zika.

Back in February, I cosponsored four bills to help start comprehensive preparations for the virus' arrival, including opening up funding sources for mosquito control, freeing the administration to reprogram unspent Ebola funds for fighting Zika, and incentivizing pharmaceutical companies to begin developing treatments and vaccines for Zika.

In March, I requested that \$177 million be made available specifically for aid to local mosquito control programs, extra funding for the CDC's Division of Vector-Borne Diseases, and new dollars for innovative mosquito control tool development.

In April, I voted in favor of using the FDA's Priority Review Voucher Program to incentivize Zika virus treatment development.

In May, I voted to give State and local authorities a temporary waiver providing more flexibility in using EPA-approved insecticides for mosquito control.

I also voted against an inadequate \$600 million Zika supplemental funding bill, joining 183 other Members, because public health experts contended that it would not be enough to deal with the expected impact of Zika in the U.S.

In June, I voted in favor of a \$1.1 billion Zika funding bill that passed the House but did not pass the Senate. Yesterday, the Senate again stopped any debate on Zika funding.

In response to a meager grant sum delivered to the State of Florida after the discovery of mosquito transmission in Wynwood, a section in the city of Miami, in early August, I led the entire Florida congressional delegation in a letter urging the CDC to deliver more funds to Florida, where they were most needed.

As a result of that letter and other efforts, the Obama administration announced that it would indeed reprogram another \$81 million for anti-Zika efforts. But now, the CDC Director has stated that the CDC has no more funds available to use for Zika interdiction and eradication.

We need a comprehensive response, Mr. Speaker, that limits the spread of this virus as quickly as possible. This is long overdue. I was ready to go back into an emergency session weeks and weeks ago to pass a comprehensive package, but despite my pleas, this House did not reconvene. Now the House is back in session, but to this point, no votes on a Zika funding bill are scheduled.

How much longer do south Floridians need to wait for the government to commit more resources to fighting Zika?

My constituents are tired and fed up with excuses and buck-passing. I am sick of Congress' partisan fighting and political grandstanding. I stand united with the hardworking residents and families of south Florida, and I will continue working on their behalf to demand that this Congress do its job and protect the American people.

Let's pass the President's request for \$1.1 billion to fight Zika and develop a vaccine—a clean bill, with no policy riders—and pass it before this virus spreads even wider throughout our great Nation.

Here we have a picture of an area of the district that is impacted already. We have other areas that are impacted. We have other areas in Florida. We have other areas throughout the United States. Let's stop Zika. We can do it. Let's pass the funding bill.

NATIONAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss our national security.

Our first obligation as Members of Congress is to keep the American people safe. That responsibility ultimately rests with our Commander in Chief.

We need a Commander in Chief who will support our troops and their families. We need a Commander in Chief who is going to build robust alliances. We need a Commander in Chief who is going to be tough with adversaries. We need a Commander in Chief who is going to be smart on foreign policy.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Republican nominee for President said that he would ask China to handle the problem of a nuclear North Korea. Now, I know that the Republican nominee for President has outsourced jobs to China. Now he is outsourcing national security to China.

He has insulted Gold Star families, Mr. Speaker. That is not supporting our troops and their families. He has announced that he would weaken our commitment to NATO. That is not building robust alliances. He has said that he has asked Russia to commit cyber espionage against the United States of America. That is not being tough with our adversaries. Outsourcing a nuclear-equipped North Korea to China is not being smart on foreign policy.

Mr. Speaker, the Republican nominee for President is dangerously unfit for command.

I understand that some don't have all the facts and may not be well-read. That is one thing. Not having the facts and not being well-read and being dangerous is a threat to the United States of America.

FUNDING FOR ZIKA VIRUS

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

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about Zika. I rise with about 100 mosquitoes straight from Florida—Aedes aegypti mosquitoes capable of carrying the Zika virus. This is the reason for the urgency. This is the reason for the fear.

These mosquitoes can travel only 150 feet, but through the assistance of a plane ticket and researchers at University of South Florida, they have made their way from Florida to the well of this House.

Now, they are not active carriers, but they could be. The University of South Florida is one of very few research facilities capable of responding. Through the efforts and leadership of Dr. Robert Novak at the College of Global Health, his team of medical public health and research professionals led an insectary to study control and containment and medical and public health solutions to combat, eradicate, and ultimately find a vaccine for Zika. But they can only do so with money.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to act. The politics of Zika have gone on far too long. The politics of Zika are wrong.

The President proposed a plan that was imperfect. It assumes a 2-year crisis, when, in fact, there might only be