

and the Republican Party is the abandonment of a half century of bipartisan foreign policy regarding Israel and our commitment to a two-state solution.

Israel has no greater friend in the world than the United States, but one of the ways to demonstrate friendship is to be clear when your friends are making mistakes. Settlement activity by Israel on the West Bank and the renewed destruction of Palestinian homes and confiscation of property are mistakes. The overwhelming majority of Israelis still favor a two-state solution, they just despair of it being possible. The steps the Netanyahu government is taking on that path make it more remote.

Donald Trump and the Republican Party he dominated at the Republican Convention abandoned the two-state solution. For the first time in a half century, the bipartisan commitment to a two-state solution has been stripped from the Republican Party platform.

This matters.

Donald Trump has empowered two of the most extreme voices, who have emboldened and defended settlement activity and undercut the necessary two-state solution, to manage his policy advice on Israel. This should be disturbing for everyone concerned about Middle East peace.

The world is a complicated and dangerous place. There are hints that Donald Trump is starting to learn about this complexity in fits and starts. Witness his statements after visiting with President Obama and his walking back some of his most extreme and definitive campaign promises.

It is important that the reality in the Middle East catches up sooner rather than later. A prime example is the Iranian nuclear agreement, one of the few things that China, Russia, Great Britain, France, Germany, and the United States all agreed upon. It is not perfect, and there are certainly Iranian leaders who are dangerous people, but this agreement was the best alternative and the only thing that all these parties could agree upon.

Now, it is easy to talk on the campaign trail about blowing it up; it is harder to do in reality when it is actually working as it was supposed to and, in fact, is supported even by an overwhelming majority of American Jewish voters.

We all have responsibility for a thoughtful foreign policy, and Democrats must stand firm to reject some of the reckless proposals from the Trump administration; but our Republican friends in Congress should not allow a half century of bipartisan foreign policy to become a casualty of some of the most extreme voices of American and Israeli politics.

The time to speak out is now. Everyone must find their voice. Failure to support a two-state solution and reject the misguided settlement efforts which would make that solution impossible is a prescription for more pain, unrest, and violence between Israelis and Pal-

estinians. Middle East peace should not be a casualty of the American election.

#### HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF FORMER CONGRESSMAN TOM LANTOS

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, Congressman Tom Lantos was a giant of a man, an inspiration to all of us who knew him, and greatly admired by his peers. Tom was a patriot, a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom who championed justice, human rights, and human dignity across the globe.

Tom Lantos was a Holocaust survivor, the only Holocaust survivor ever elected to serve in this esteemed institution. Coming to America as a penniless immigrant, Tom's life story is one of perseverance and fortitude, yet, a kinder, more loving man you would not ever find.

Tom was the embodiment of the American Dream, building a wonderful life for himself, for his wife, Annette, and their two daughters. He made it his life's work to see to it that the horrors that he had seen, the horrors that he had lived through, would never be brought upon others ever again.

His background as a survivor and a Member of Congress gave him a unique opportunity to forge an ever stronger relationship between the United States and our ally, the democratic Jewish State of Israel and to guarantee that the Jewish people will always have a homeland.

Now Tom's legacy and his memory are being honored on December 19 in Netanya, Israel, where a statue will be dedicated in his honor. I extend my most sincere and heartfelt words of admiration to Tom's family. I congratulate them all on this auspicious occasion.

Tom Lantos was an honorable gentleman, Mr. Speaker, and few are more deserving of such a great honor.

HONORING BROTHER KEVIN HANDIBODE, PRESIDENT OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS HIGH SCHOOL

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Brother Kevin, president of Christopher Columbus High School, for his 45 years of service to this wonderful institution and for his 60th anniversary as a Marist Brother this upcoming year.

Since arriving at Christopher Columbus High School in 1966, Brother Kevin has been an all-around champion for CCHS and its students while serving in many capacities, including teacher, dean of discipline, athletic director, varsity coach for over 18 years, developmental director, and principal.

His legendary reputation has carried him through many recognitions and accolades, including the respect and admiration of his peers, his coworkers, and our loving community. In 2008, for

his distinguished service to the church and devotion to the Catholic education system, Brother Kevin was bestowed the Cross, the highest medal that can be awarded by the Pope.

So, again, Brother Kevin, congratulations on this magnificent milestone. As the heart and soul of Columbus High School, you have been a leader, you have been a role model, but, more importantly, you have given countless students the ability to pursue their dreams and reach their full potential.

Go Explorers. Go Brother Kevin.

CELEBRATING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIGHPOINT ACADEMY

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great joy to recognize Highpoint Academy, a well-respected bilingual private school located in my community, on its 40th anniversary.

Since its founding in 1976, Highpoint Academy has provided generations of students with an excellent education in a positive and nurturing academic environment. This prestigious institution is a model of academic excellence, imagination, innovation, and creative thinking. I am proud that, over the last 40 years, the gifted educators at Highpoint Academy have helped develop successful students who have gone on to become leaders in our south Florida community and, indeed, throughout our Nation.

To Principal Alicia Casanova and the whole Highpoint Academy family, congratulations on this very special anniversary, and thank you for decades of outstanding educational contributions to our south Florida community.

WORLD AIDS DAY

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, today is a milestone in the history of the fight against AIDS because we are celebrating the 28th World AIDS Day. For sure, we must continue to build upon a bipartisan commitment to ending AIDS by the year 2030, both here in the U.S. and around the world.

I will remain deeply involved as the Republican co-chair of the Congressional HIV/AIDS Caucus because south Florida, my community, is ground zero for the next phase of the battle against HIV/AIDS.

Sadly, Florida is number one in the Nation for new HIV cases, and south Florida accounts for more than half of all new HIV cases in our State. Florida's growing struggle with HIV/AIDS mirrors a larger dynamic taking place across the South for which the region, as a whole, is not well-prepared. South Florida's issues, in particular, are exacerbated by the demographics of HIV, our magnetism as a tourist destination, and the international character of both our community and the AIDS epidemic.

Next year is a big year for the fight against HIV/AIDS. The AIDS community and the Congressional HIV/AIDS Caucus will remain committed to putting an end to AIDS by the year 2030.

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## PRESIDENT OBAMA'S LEGACY

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, 8 years ago, our Nation was in the midst of the Great Recession. It was the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression, unprecedented in both severity and duration. It was an economic tailspin that blindsided many, devastated millions, and robbed good people of their savings, their security, and their way of life. It was a disastrous combination of irresponsible lending, overly complex derivatives, and inadequate regulatory oversight that led to a near collapse of our financial system.

Over the course of this economic catastrophe, more than 5 million Americans lost the roof over their head, and another 9 million lost the paycheck they relied on to support themselves and their families. People were terrified for their futures, and for the first time in generations, it looked as if moms and dads might have it better off than their sons and daughters.

This chaos and despair extended far beyond economics. At the end of 2008, almost 16 percent of the population was uninsured. This meant that over 50 million Americans were crossing their fingers, holding their breath, and hoping to avoid any unpredictable, unanticipated, and uncontrollable health concerns that would turn their lives upside down. Simply being a woman or having asthma was enough for insurance companies to deny you quality care, and basic preventive and primary care services were hard to come by.

Thousands of brave men and women in uniform had been killed, and scores more were wounded in a long and polarizing war in Iraq. LGBT Americans had to keep their true identities hidden. Gay men and women who served their Nation in uniform and risked their lives in defense of our freedom had to stay quiet about whom they loved, and those who were open about their sexual orientation were not allowed to join their partner in marriage if they lived in one of the 48 States that prohibited same-sex marriage.

This was the state of our Nation. This is the America that President Obama inherited on January 20, 2009.

Things look a little different today, and I know that I speak for millions of Americans who are grateful for the past 8 years fueled by real change that made our economy stronger and our society much more just.

When President Obama took his oath of office, the economy was bleeding 800,000 jobs a month. Today, we have seen record private sector job growth marked by over 15 million new jobs over the past 80 months.

At the height of the recession in 2009, unemployment hit an alarming 10 percent; but, today, the unemployment rate is below 5 percent. Today, thanks to the Dodd-Frank Act, systemic risk

in our financial system has been significantly reduced, and our largest banking institutions are more transparent and accountable than they have been in decades.

Today, marriage equality is now the law of the land in all 50 States. Today, nearly 18 million previously uninsured Americans have gained coverage under the Affordable Care Act, resulting in the lowest uninsured rate in history. Today, men and women are charged the same price for health care. Americans can access preventive care services at no cost. Preexisting conditions don't bar individuals from treatment, and young people can stay on their parents' plan until they are 26.

Today, because of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which was the first piece of legislation signed by President Obama, women can more effectively challenge unequal pay practices.

Today, previously fraught relationships with many allied countries have been restored. Today, the combat mission in Iraq is over and tens of thousands of troops are back home with their families after years of war. Today, justice has been served, and Osama bin Laden is dead.

Today, our Nation has championed some of the most profound climate change initiatives in the world, like the Clean Power Plan and the Paris Accords, which will help protect our precious natural resources and defend our environment for generations to come.

It is up to us to decide if we want to move forward or back. Nearly a decade of progress is on the chopping block.

There is no doubt that everyone is still reeling from the long and divisive campaign season that culminated in an election that left millions of Americans scared once again.

The economic recovery and social victories we have seen during the Obama presidency have been substantial, but much more work remains to ensure that Americans have an equal opportunity to succeed; because even though today looks better than it did 8 years ago, what will tomorrow look like?

As for now, and as for me, I am proud to have served in the people's House under this President.

#### PAYING FOR INFRASTRUCTURE WITHOUT SOAKING THE TAXPAYER

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

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, President-elect Trump has many difficult tasks ahead—one of which is to promote long overdue infrastructure construction at a time when the national debt exceeds our entire economy and interest costs alone are eating us alive. Now, some have said that a rebounding economy resulting from tax reform can pay for it. Well, that may be, but it is not guaranteed, it cannot

be accurately forecasted, and we will need any new revenues to beef up our defenses and reduce our deficit—two other critical objectives of the new administration.

Others have proposed tax credits to leverage private capital for infrastructure improvements. But tax credits reduce revenue and widen the deficit. Worse, such public-private partnerships have proven a fertile breeding ground for corruption, crony capitalism, waste, and fraud; and as we learned during the Obama stimulus fiasco, massive government spending might stimulate government, but it does little to stimulate the economy when it is squandered for boondoggles like subsidizing Solyndra and paying cash for clunkers.

So how do we avoid mistakes of the past, control the deficit, protect taxpayers, and yet add \$1 trillion of new infrastructure in a way that helps the economy and not just lines the pockets of politically well-connected interests?

First, get government out of the way. Stop obstructing major infrastructure projects like the Keystone Pipeline. Keystone and many other projects like it across the country already have private capital ready to finance them. Keystone by itself would unleash an estimated \$8 billion of privately financed infrastructure construction, and when complete, would mean a half million barrels a day of Canadian crude oil entering U.S. markets.

In my district alone, one abusive official at the Sacramento office of the Army Corps of Engineers single-handedly blocked tens of millions of dollars of critical infrastructure construction desperately sought by local governments in the region. Multiply that across the country, and you can see how many infrastructure projects already are financed but cannot move forward because of Federal obstructionism.

Second, streamline radical regulations that have made many infrastructure projects cost-prohibitive. In my district, the little town of Foresthill gets its water from the Sugar Pine Reservoir, formed by a dam that has an 18-foot spillway, but no spillway gate. The town is trying to increase the reservoir's capacity by adding the missing gate. The gate will cost \$2 million, but environmental studies, environmental litigation, and U.S. Forest Service fees have inflated that cost to \$11 million. So this project has stalled. Multibillion dollar expansion of Shasta Dam is stalled for similar reasons. Once again, multiply this across the rest of the country.

Third, use revenue bonds to finance capital-intensive projects like dams and bridges. California built its iconic Golden Gate and Bay Bridges with loans from private investors—repaid by tolls that were charged only to the users of the bridges. The taxpayers were never on the hook for a dime, and the loans were paid back ahead of schedule.