

THE GOP TAX SCAM

(Mr. RYAN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, what a day in Washington, D.C. We have many Republicans in this town saying: What a great day it is for the American people; what a great Christmas for America.

The average family—63 percent in America—can't withstand a \$500 emergency. With this tax cut, Apple is going to get \$47 billion and Donald Trump's family is going to get \$1 billion. They are going to toss out a few crumbs to working class families who work 60, 70 hours a week, and the fat cats in Washington and Wall Street are going to run off with the whole pot of gold.

Whatever happened in this country where we said, To whom much is given, much is expected?

We need to challenge the wealthy corporations. They are sitting on \$4 trillion worth of cash. If they want to start a factory, buy a machine, or hire workers, they could do it now. They don't need to take it from the middle class.

PROJECT CASSANDRA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak on an issue that is just now beginning to gain momentum and traction. Already, this issue of great importance is bringing great alarm and concern, as well as focus. I speak specifically in regard to the Obama administration's apparent decision to sacrifice the opportunity to take down Hezbollah and bring terrorists to justice.

What most Americans know about Hezbollah is that it is an Iran-backed proxy militia based in Lebanon, which was responsible for a string of terrorist attacks against Americans in the 1980s, including the attack in 1983 of the Beirut barracks, which killed 241 American servicemembers.

Since that time, Hezbollah has openly attacked Israel. They have propped up regimes supported by Iran, like Bashar al-Assad in Syria. They are defined by their violence and human rights abuses.

But what most Americans are not aware of, Mr. Speaker, is that over the last 30 years, Hezbollah has evolved beyond its origins as Iran's attack dog in the Middle East and they now run one of the world's most expansive and dangerous multinational criminal networks in the world.

Hezbollah works directly with corrupt governments, like Venezuela and others, to create criminal networks across Latin America, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. They have literally moved tons—metric tons—of cocaine across the world, laundered money, and trafficked weapons and individuals. They are a critical part of a network responsible for the use of IEDs in the Middle East, which have killed literally thousands of American soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Hezbollah, Mr. Speaker, is a scourge not only in the Middle East, but throughout the entire world. The reason we know this—which has just, in recent days, started to become public—is because, in 2008, the DEA launched a campaign known as Project Cassandra, which amassed evidence over 8 years of investigation regarding Hezbollah's criminal activities. They used wiretaps, undercover operations, informants, and so forth to map Hezbollah's illicit networks with the help of some 30 different U.S. and foreign security agencies. These DEA agents traced the activities all the way to the inner circles of Hezbollah and its state sponsors in Iran.

But—and here is where all of this starts coming into play—when the time came to extradite and prosecute these terrorists, the Obama administration's Department of Justice and Department of State refused to move forward.

That is unthinkable to me. It is unthinkable to many people in our country.

The Justice Department refused to file criminal charges against suspects that were already in custody in Europe. The State Department refused to put meaningful pressure on allied countries to extradite Hezbollah leaders to the United States.

Why? Why did they refuse to get involved?

According to an Obama administration Treasury official, in her written testimony to the House Foreign Affairs Committee, investigations to Hezbollah were tapped down for fear of rocking the boat with Iran and jeopardizing the nuclear deal.

□ 1930

The nuclear deal is already deeply, deeply flawed in so many ways. The Iran nuclear deal apparently took precedence over crippling a foreign terrorist organization directly responsible for the deaths of American citizens and one of the world's largest drug and weapons trafficking networks.

Hezbollah is responsible for procuring parts for Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile program, the very program

that the nuclear deal was supposed to curtail. Hezbollah is supplying parts to them.

Instead of prosecuting the leadership of Hezbollah and shutting down Iran's weapons pipeline, the Obama administration legitimized Iran's nuclear program and let Hezbollah leadership slip through the cracks and let them totally off the hook.

After the conclusion of the Iran nuclear deal, the Obama administration shut down Project Cassandra. We lost all that we had gained in 8 years of investigations—all the information. We had them in our grasp, Mr. Speaker, after 8 years of investigation. We lost unprecedented insight into these global criminal networks.

Mr. Speaker, this is morally reprehensible. It is stunning that we had our previous administration and that administration's Justice Department and State Department evidently involved, engaged, and deliberately letting these criminals off the hook.

How in the world can our allies in the global war on terror trust us when we won't prosecute terrorists when we have the chance to do so?

How can our allies in Latin America trust us when we refuse to prosecute leaders of one of the world's largest drug trafficking networks?

I have a few colleagues here tonight who are going to address this issue as well. Before I introduce the first one, I want to bring up one more point.

Ali Fayad is a suspected leader in Hezbollah. He is an operative and a major weapons supplier. He has been indicted on charges of planning the murders of U.S. citizens, attempting to provide materiel support to a terrorist organization and attempting to acquire, transfer, and use antiaircraft missiles.

For nearly 2 years, this terrorist was held in custody in the Czech Republic. For 2 years, the Obama administration failed to provide enough pressure to the Czech Republic, our NATO ally. The Obama administration refused to put pressure to extradite that terrorist to the United States.

Ali Fayad now, as we speak here tonight, is a free man and alleged to be back in the business of arming militants in Syria. This is inexcusable.

Mr. Speaker, I want to personally thank those who served on Project Cassandra for their service to our Nation and for the work they did. I want them to know that what they did mattered.

I am appalled that the Obama administration did virtually nothing to stop Hezbollah's criminal activities. I think this warrants an investigation by the U.S. House of Representatives, and that is what this Special Order tonight is all about: getting to the bottom of what is yet another example of a swamp that stinks to high heaven that needs to be cleaned up and drained out.

We need an investigation into what happened in the Obama administration, the Department of Justice, and the Department of State in allowing these

terrorists and this terrorist network to get off the hook.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS), a good friend. He has been a leader in issues such as this, bringing to our attention both the highlighting of dangerous, harmful activity such as this tonight. He has been a great champion.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Georgia for yielding.

This is a very important topic. I am going to touch on this by beginning with this idea of the distinction between the current administration and its foreign policy as outlined in the recent statement from President Trump and that of the previous administration.

The distinction is very clear. The previous administration basically clung to an idea of neo-liberal institutionalism. That is to say, where there was a vacuum of power, we did not set the stage. America did not fill it. It remained a vacuum, with the idea being that an institution would fill that. Maybe the United Nations, maybe some other regional institution. But in doing so, we ceded over much of our sovereignty and failed to act to preserve and protect America's best interests.

The current administration has taken a more realistic point of view. They are realists. That is, America's interests will be first and paramount. We will see to it, we will foster alliances, and we will foster participation with our fellow nations to preserve America's best interests.

When America is strong, there is a greater chance for peace in the world. I believe that. That is the position of realists all the way back to Hans Morgenthau. Even neo-realists like Kenneth Waltz might agree.

One thing that we know is that this particular episode that unfolds is a scandalous episode that put America in greater danger, probably, and perhaps, in order to foster political gains by the previous administration.

One Treasury Department official who served in the Obama administration testified to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs that, under the Obama administration, these Hezbollah-related investigations were tamped down for fear of rocking the boat with Iran and jeopardizing the nuclear deal.

That becomes the heart and the rationale for how the previous administration handled a political decision instead of a foreign policy national security decision.

We know a number of things that took place, and this is why the House needs to conduct its own investigation: so we can know how this played out, why this played out, who is responsible, and we can resolve never to do this again.

We had Project Cassandra. This was a DEA campaign designed to expose a money laundering scheme in which Latin American drug-running was being funneled to Hezbollah.

Hezbollah is a pro-Iranian Lebanese militia and has been a foreign terrorist organization since 1987, and so designated. It fosters alliances with rogue nations such as North Korea, Iran, and is violently anti-Israel and anti-United States.

It has become a player in international cocaine trafficking—using the proceeds of that drug trafficking to purchase explosives, EFPs, which is the deadliest type of IED used against American soldiers in Iraq.

EFPs killed hundreds of American soldiers, and they were supplied by the Iranian Government and its Hezbollah allies. EFPs were literally ripping M1 Abrams tanks in half. It is a weapon that makes all the armor protection they have irrelevant. Mere threats of EFPs shut down all ground supply routes near American bases on the Iranian border.

The result: cut off the head or the financing of Hezbollah through these international cocaine distribution routes.

Project Cassandra was born in 2008. It found clear evidence that Hezbollah had grown from a Middle East-focused military and political organization into an international crime syndicate, likely collecting somewhere in the neighborhood of \$1 billion a year from drug and weapons trafficking, money laundering, and other criminal activities.

For 8 years, DEA agents conducted high-stakes investigations—dangerous investigations—using technology as well as undercover operations and informants. That type of capital is expensive and dangerous.

The result was to map these illicit drug networks. They did this with the help of 30 U.S. and foreign security agencies. They saw worldwide, far-flung international drug trafficking from South America to Africa, from Europe to the Middle East, and in the United States, where drug funds were funneled through an array of businesses, including used car lots.

What happened?

As we saw the previous administration's desire and design to leave a signature legacy foreign policy win, the negotiations for the Iran nuclear deal got going and were in place. Project Cassandra's agents say the Justice and Treasury Departments repeatedly hindered their attempts to pursue these investigations—the prosecutions, arrests, and financial sanctions against the key figures in this far-reaching drug scheme.

This was a policy decision. It was a systematic decision.

David Asher is quoted as saying: "They serially ripped apart this entire effort that was very well supported and resourced, and it was done from the top down."

They didn't bring criminal charges. They didn't continue to pursue these Hezbollah members or the banks that were laundering those billions in drug profits. Instead, they tore down the ap-

paratus that was working on apprehending the head of the snake.

Well, we are going to go on with this. We need to go on with this. We need to investigate this further. This type of political decision that impacts and actually works cross-wise to our very purpose in the Middle East must be stopped, and we must find out why that happened. Those who allowed our men and women to be put in harm's way for a political decision need to be held accountable.

So, Mr. Speaker, those who cling to the neo-liberal institutionalist mantra, who rely on multilateral institutions rather than putting America first, are the ones who produced this result.

We are going to find out more in the coming weeks. My request is that the leadership in Congress, in this House of Representatives, instigate and prosecute an investigation to get to the bottom of this very heinous and very wrongheaded and dangerous decision.

I thank the gentleman for allowing me to participate and for his lead on this tonight.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, this highlights the importance of the issue that we are dealing with and the need for an investigation.

Hundreds, even thousands, of lives have been put in danger, not to mention our own Nation's national security interests.

Next up is a tremendous leader, not only here in Congress, but in our military. He is a general who has done an outstanding job. I don't know that anyone understands the importance of the issue any more than my good friend.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY). I am honored to have him here addressing this issue.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE), my good friend. I thank him for bringing this issue to the attention of the Congress and for this Special Order.

When I was growing up, Mr. Speaker, I believed that my government would do all it could to stop crime from happening in the community I lived in, including drug use.

□ 1945

I have always been, my whole life, an ardent opponent of drug use. I have never used drugs, but yet I have seen the ravages and the devastation in the community I live in of this. You just knew in your heart that your government—the police, so on and so forth—were stopping those kind of things.

Then years later, as I grew up and was privileged to serve in uniform, I ended up going to Iraq. I got a briefing on this new type of weapon that was being used in Iraq called an EFP, an explosively formed penetrator, for which we had very little defense. There were other kinds of IEDs, whether they were used with a cell phone or a pressure plate or whatever, but these things were particularly grave because

we didn't have anything to stop them. We all knew, from the briefing, that they were coming from Iran.

And, of course, we thought, wearing the uniform, that our government would do everything it could to protect the servicemembers who were in harm's way and to protect our national security. That includes making sure that we got to the bottom of these EFPs, where they were coming from, and prosecuting and persecuting those who were providing them.

So imagine my surprise and my dismay just a few short days ago reading an article from a publication here in Washington, D.C., that outlined how our government, essentially, sanctioned not only the use of these EFPs from Iran in Iraq and Afghanistan, but, essentially, allowed for them to be paid for and enabled the paying for them.

There was this operation ongoing called Operation Cassandra to root out drugs coming into the United States being supplied by Hezbollah, a client of Iran. While this was ongoing, this nuclear agreement concern came into being. It was, apparently, so important that all of the work that was done in Operation Cassandra to stop these drugs from coming into the United States, that had to stop because we didn't want to irritate, we didn't want to disrespect, we didn't want to insult the Iranians when they were so close to getting a nuclear deal.

So we said, well, all these people have been working on this for years—this Operation Cassandra—to identify these people from Iran who were using this operation of selling drugs, illicitly moving stolen cars, and laundering money to then sell drugs into the United States and Europe, but also to use that money that they got from selling the drugs and the used cars to make these EFPs, to send them to Iraq, to send them to Afghanistan to kill American soldiers. That all had to stop because, heaven forbid, we can't offend Iran. We can't offend Iran.

Now, I will tell you this, Mr. Speaker. Nuclear war is a grave issue and it is worth a lot. If we have to stop nuclear war and give up some things to do that, I get it, I get it completely. There are no second chances with nuclear war. Once the bomb goes off, it is over. So if you have to give a little bit to get something on that, that is something even I could understand, even though I find some of it objectionable.

Where I come into conflict is this, Mr. Speaker. There is no question, at this point, whether Iran will have a nuclear weapon. There is no reason to be testing ballistic missiles except to deliver a nuclear weapon. They are not delivering leaflets, Mr. Speaker. They are going to deliver a nuclear weapon with that, which is why they are testing it.

There is no reason to have centrifuges. There is no reason to enrich to the level that Iran is except to create a nuclear weapon. We don't need that to have a nuclear power plant, which is what Iran says it wants to do.

And, of course, we all know, since the Ayatollah took over and took American hostages back in the day that Iran is a known liar. That is what they do. They lie. They obfuscate. They just say one thing and do another. It is not a question of if they will have a nuclear weapon, Mr. Speaker; it is a question of when.

So what we did here was we said, look, let's not offend the Iranians. Even though they are killing Americans on the battlefield, and even though they are killing Americans in your hometown by selling drugs to them—and the two are working towards each other; they are selling drugs and using that money to buy the articles of war, the implements of war that are killing Americans—it is okay. We are going to allow that to happen as long as we delay Iran from having a nuclear weapon for 15 years. That is exactly what it looks like.

Now, I didn't do the investigative reporting. It is, I think, 14,000 words, so it is pretty in-depth. But I will tell you this. It is being discredited out there. These are a couple of rogue employees who just disagreed with the policy.

Mr. Speaker, the Drug Enforcement Agency agent on the case, who has over 20 years of government experience tracking the financing of terror networks, said this of the leader of Hezbollah:

I had no clue who he was, but this guy was sending money into Iraq to kill American soldiers.

The point is he had 20 years on the job. This wasn't some piker who just showed up on the job at Treasury and said: "Hey, track this money and see what you can find." This is a guy who did this for a living for 20 years, and he ran into Hezbollah. He ran into Hezbollah, based on his investigation.

And then they tracked him. They tracked the money. They tracked the drugs—not just a little bit, tons—tons of drugs coming into the United States, literally at a time when we have 60,000 Americans dying, annually, of drug overdose. That is more people than we lost in Vietnam, Mr. Speaker, in the whole time of Vietnam. A year, that is how many are dying in America based on drug overdose.

These people tracked it. They tracked the weapons on the other side, and they were told to stand down. They went to get these guys. They had one in custody in Prague. He was arrested. The United States wanted him extradited and prosecuted.

Do you know where he is right now, Mr. Speaker? He is back on the battlefield because we let him go.

So not only did Iran get to sell drugs in the United States and kill American citizens in your hometown, but they used that money to then make EFPs to kill the soldiers from your hometown who went to defend America's freedom.

And, oh, by the way, in less than 15 years now, you can expect Iran to be a nuclear armed power.

Mr. Speaker, if nothing else, if absolutely nothing else happens here from

this, we need to have hearings on this in both the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Oversight and Government Reform Committee to make sure that this never ever can happen again, that we don't trade the safety of the lives of American servicemembers overseas and American citizens at home for a bad deal overseas of something that we are never really going to be able to reconcile with, which is a nuclear-armed Iran.

We are going to have very few options at stopping them, like we do with North Korea right now. That is where we are headed. We will not only have North Korea to deal with, but we will also have a nuclear-armed Iran.

That circumstance can never happen again, which is why hearings are so critical, so that we get to the truth, so that we get to the bottom of this, so that there are no skeletons in the closet, Mr. Speaker, so we understand who did what for why, so we can rationalize was this worth it or was this just political expedience. We need to know that so that we learn from that, so that we never make those mistakes again.

Mr. Speaker, again, I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE). I appreciate his interest in this topic, as I am, and bringing it to the floor.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman so much. I just think it is critically important that in a Special Order such as this we have someone who has been there, on the front line, who knows exactly from the perspective of a soldier defending our country what has been taking place. I appreciate his expertise and his willingness to talk about it here this evening.

Another colleague who is going to address the seriousness of the issue this evening is KEN BUCK from Colorado, a good friend and another leader on this issue and many others like this. The American people deserve to know what happened. The dots are coming into play. The dots are being connected. We need to finish connecting those dots to find out what went on and let the American people know.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK).

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague, Representative Jody Hice, for the opportunity to speak this evening on such an important issue.

We are here today to discuss the recent revelations that the Obama administration, in their pursuit of the Iran deal, blocked important efforts by U.S. law enforcement officials to fight the terrorist organization Hezbollah.

The past administration's treatment of Iran reveals an imprudent and negligent approach to American foreign policy that must never be repeated. We see in their actions, at best, an incompetence born of a lack of clarity and information and, at worst, an administration determined to create a false foreign policy legacy so that America's

best interests were thrown to the way-side.

In a recent report from Politico mentioned by some of my colleagues already, we have learned that the Obama administration allegedly blocked efforts by U.S. law enforcement officials to fight Hezbollah's transnational drug and weapons trafficking operations.

Hezbollah, Iran's terrorist proxy organization, has also become one of the world's most powerful and dangerous criminal organizations, receiving over \$1 billion every year from their illicit activities. We have learned that, through an expansive criminal trafficking network, they funnel cocaine throughout the Middle East, Europe, Africa, Latin America, and the United States.

It has also come to light that Hezbollah launders millions of dollars through schemes involving used car purchases in the United States, and, ultimately, the money earned through these activities can be used for violent terrorist activities aimed at spreading fear and pain throughout the world.

Politico quoted the following from a confidential DEA report on Hezbollah's criminal activities: Hezbollah "has leveraged relationships with corrupt foreign government officials and transnational criminal actors . . . creating a network that can be utilized to move metric ton quantities of cocaine, launder drug proceeds on a global scale, and procure weapons and precursors for explosives."

It "has at its disposal one of the most capable networks of actors coalescing elements of transnational organized crime with terrorism in the world."

The DEA's acting deputy administrator in 2016 stated that Hezbollah's criminal operations "provide a revenue and weapons stream for an international terrorist organization responsible for devastating terror attacks around the world."

Certainly, an organization like that deserves America's utmost scrutiny, and for years, the men and women of the Drug Enforcement Administration's Project Cassandra poured their lives into investigating Hezbollah's criminal activities. These agents tracked financial transactions, cultivated sources, and trailed operatives. But, in several cases, when the DEA asked for prosecutions, arrests, or sanctions, President Obama's Department of Justice delayed or denied their requests. The State Department also reportedly declined to demand the extradition of important suspects who could have aided the investigation and spearheaded the downfall of this international operation.

Unfortunately, thanks to multiple sources involved in the matter now coming forward, we have learned that the Obama administration likely stalled the Hezbollah investigations and prosecutions in order to keep Iran happy and nuclear deal talks on the table. If the DEA rocked the boat by

arresting and charging key members of Hezbollah's drug and weapons trafficking operations, then Iran might walk away from the negotiating table.

This thinking reveals a fundamental blindness to reality. Hezbollah is funded by Iran. Hezbollah is Iran. While negotiating with Iran, the former administration turned a blind eye to Hezbollah's extensive criminal activities that were only worsening the drug crisis here in the United States and feeding weapons to terrorists in the Middle East region.

American foreign policy can be pragmatic, but this was not pragmatism. This was foolishness. U.S. foreign policymakers traded an end to Iran's nuclear program for the protection of Iran's terrorist program. And even then, we can't even trust Iran to abide by the agreement meant to end their nuclear program.

So we are left with a bad deal. I have said it many times before. But now we know the deal is even worse than we suspected. Aside from just delivering pallets of cash to Iran, aside from just freeing billions in frozen assets, aside from just lifting important sanctions, we are also giving a transnational criminal organization and terrorist network free rein over the world.

We are here today to affirm to the world that Iran and its affiliated terrorist organization, Hezbollah, are enemies of the free world.

We should never negotiate with terrorists. I urge President Trump and America's law enforcement community to once again turn its attention to Hezbollah. This terrorist organization has spread its evil influence throughout the world, and we have a duty to fight it.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the gentleman from Georgia, for this opportunity today, and I thank him for bringing this issue up and shining some light on this important subject.

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative BUCK in his leadership on this, as well.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to say, not only to Mr. BUCK, but to all of the participants in our discussion this evening, a big thank you for coming and being a part of this.

As more information is beginning to come to light, I am convinced that we are just at the tip of the iceberg of gaining information as to what has taken place here that has jeopardized our national security. I believe it is incumbent upon Congress at this time to fulfill the obligation that we have to exercise oversight over the executive branch and follow through with a thorough investigation of the Obama administration's refusal—absolute refusal—to follow through on the work that was done by the DEA.

□ 2000

We had these terrorists in our grasp, Mr. Speaker, and we let them go. How could this happen? The American people deserve to know why, and we need to get to the bottom of this.

That is why tonight we are calling for an investigation into all aspects of this Hezbollah scandal, regardless of where it leads us: to the very top of the Obama administration, the Secretary of State, the previous Department of Justice, wherever it may lead. We need to get to the bottom of this, and we are calling for an investigation.

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

ROBERT MUELLER SMEAR CAMPAIGN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to be organizing this special hour on behalf of the minority.

We are going to be talking tonight about the growing smear campaign against Robert Mueller, the special counsel investigating contacts between Russians interfering in our Presidential election in 2016 and Americans. What we have seen over the last several weeks is a rising tide of criticism of Mr. Mueller in attempts to undermine and sabotage the special counsel investigation.

We are going to be talking about all the different components of this attack, and we are going to be asking the question: Why?

Why suddenly is Mr. Mueller, who was once a hero to our friends across the aisle, a decorated Vietnam war veteran, former Director of the FBI, former U.S. Attorney for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the State of California, a celebrated law enforcement figure, and a registered Republican—why suddenly has he come under withering attack by everyone from our colleagues across the aisle in the House, to Republicans in the Senate, to people in the White House, to FOX News? Why has the whole rightwing propaganda machine turned on Mr. Mueller in the special counsel investigation suddenly? And what is it that we can do to try to prevent an assault on the special counsel in an effort to dismantle the special counsel investigation?

To begin tonight, I am going to call on a colleague from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS), who is an extraordinary freshman class Member in the House of Representatives representing the people of Florida. She was the chief of police in Orlando, Florida, before she came to Congress; so she has exceptional law enforcement experience and a whole career in law enforcement.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS.)

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Maryland. I thank him for his leadership on this issue and shining a light on this very important issue tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to speak about the promise of America: that