

CLEAN POWER PLAN

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, 3 years ago, the Obama administration took a very positive and important step towards curbing greenhouse gas emissions by initiating the Clean Power Plan, the first-ever national limit on carbon pollution from power plants. The plan was devised to give States the option to tailor how they would reduce carbon pollution, following benchmarks set by the Federal Government.

For years, States, local governments, businesses, and universities have been making progress towards a low-carbon future, both in anticipation of full implementation of the Clean Power Plan and spurred on by a variety of other forces. Now, the Trump administration has vowed to unravel the Clean Power Plan, but the momentum will not stop because of this reckless act.

Donald Trump and Scott Pruitt cannot repeal engineering, science, or economics. Their attempts would only harm the economy and our citizens, mirroring us in the past to serve the interests of Big Coal.

The case for action in reducing carbon pollution is compelling. The Clean Power Plan encourages steps to reduce the dangerous extent of accelerating climate disruption and attendant extreme weather events.

Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria are only the latest example of those events. Now, millions of acres in the West are exploding in wildfires. More frequent, more intense, and more dangerous forest fires are the reality now, spurred by climate disruption.

Out-of-control wildfire has touched Oregon's beloved Columbia River Gorge, and the latest instances are in California wine country, taking lives, destroying property, and damaging crops.

Regardless of your view on climate change, the Clean Power Plan is a very important step for the United States. It stands on firm legal ground. The Supreme Court has ruled on three separate occasions that the EPA has the authority and the responsibility to protect our families from carbon pollution.

Cleaner energy and a cleaner environment under the Clean Power Plan would improve the lives of working Americans. By 2030, it would prevent 90,000 asthma attacks, 300,000 days missed from work and school, and 3,600 premature deaths every year.

Instead of protecting human health, particularly those in communities most impacted by carbon pollution, Trump and Pruitt are seeking to tilt the energy playing field back in favor of Big Coal.

Make no mistake: without subsidies and regulatory favoritism, most old, dirty, coal plants would have been shut down years ago if they had been re-

quired to meet carbon pollution and air quality standards, as they should have been.

Trump and Pruitt are making a big mistake when they assault the Clean Air Act and the Clean Power Plan. They are on weak legal ground, and they are on the wrong side of science, economics, the environment, and common sense.

The Clean Power Plan will not be easily unraveled. There is a process to unwind it, similar to what it took to put it in place. It will take a lot of hard work—and evidence that Pruitt doesn't have—to repeal it and prevent the EPA from regulating carbon emissions.

The plan has powerful allies. I am proud to stand with the environmental community, my fellow Democrats in Congress, many government and trade groups, citizens who care, and a number of businesses. Mars is the latest company to announce that they are going to follow through on their carbon reduction plan.

We will continue this fight for a low-carbon, healthier, more economical future. We will protect alternative energy and honor the commitments we have made to the wind and solar industries. We will continue to reduce emissions from our transportation sector by not rolling back fuel efficiency standards.

We will work with the agriculture sector, which makes up 9 percent of the total greenhouse gas emissions. A strong farm bill can reduce emissions and enhance productivity through low-carbon protections.

Ultimately, Trump and Pruitt cannot repeal science, engineering, or economics. I am proud to be part of this effort to ensure that the United States moves forward to exercise leadership in a low-carbon future to fight climate change and global weather disruption.

PROTECTING OUR SENIOR CITIZENS

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask for my colleagues' support for the Senior Citizen Protection Act, which I introduced along with my friend, Congressman BRAD SCHNEIDER.

Seniors are valued members of our society, and we must do everything we can to ensure that they can live with dignity and without fear of being abused by those entrusted to care for them.

This bipartisan bill seeks to achieve that goal by creating a national registry for those convicted of elder abuse that will be accessible to senior care providers and families before they make a decision on whom they hire as a caregiver for their loved ones. This national database will bring together local and State registries in order to prevent abusers from continuing to in-

flict suffering on senior citizens by simply relocating from one community to another.

I urge my colleagues to join Mr. SCHNEIDER and me in support of this measure that will help ensure that our parents, grandparents, and loved ones are looked after by professional caregivers who will give them the treatment and respect they deserve.

CARING FOR SENIORS DURING NATURAL DISASTERS

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to cosponsor the Protecting Seniors During Disasters Act, which I introduced with my colleague, Congresswoman LOIS FRANKEL of Florida.

The horrific deaths of 14 seniors in a Florida nursing home facility in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma made it abundantly clear that more must be done to protect seniors during and after natural disasters.

In times of emergency, many senior citizens find themselves disconnected from caregivers and without the treatments and resources that they so desperately need. Our bill seeks to reconnect seniors by requiring that Federal agencies assess how their emergency response efforts impact the elderly. It also calls for the implementation of standards to better protect and care for senior citizens and nursing home residents across our Nation during and after emergency situations.

This is a commonsense, bipartisan legislative initiative that aims to save the lives of many senior citizens and helps ensure that the tragedy that took place in south Florida will not happen again. I urge my colleagues to join us in support of this lifesaving measure.

BUILDING A NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN LATINO

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, as we continue to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month and the many contributions of our vibrant community throughout our country, I would like to bring attention to a bill that I have sponsored that would permanently showcase the history and stories of American Latinos.

H.R. 2911, the National Museum of the American Latino Act, will establish a world-class educational institution on The National Mall for the millions of visitors who come to our Nation's capital every year eager to learn about American history.

Latinos have served our great country in every war dating back to before the Revolutionary War and continue to proudly serve in our military. They are small-business owners, job creators, TV stars, athletes, and public servants.

An initiative over 20 years in the making, this museum would be a visual representation of the difficulties that Latinos have overcome leaving their home countries, whether to flee an oppressive communist regime in my native homeland of Cuba, or Venezuela, or for the opportunity to partake in the American Dream, as well as the

story of Hispanics who have made the U.S. their home for many generations.

As the first Hispanic woman elected to the U.S. Congress, I am proud to invite my colleagues to join me in this endeavor and cosponsor H.R. 2911, the National Museum of the American Latino Act.

ASSISTANCE FOR PUERTO RICO

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, it has been 3 weeks since the eye of Hurricane Maria crossed over Puerto Rico. It has been 3 weeks, and there are still parts of the island that have not had contact with FEMA yet—3 weeks. For most people, that has meant no power, and most still don't have running water.

Hospitals and clinics were hit hard, as The New York Times reports. The daughter of one man who died because he couldn't receive oxygen treatment told the paper: "Because of the electricity situation, a lot of people died and are still dying."

Forty percent of the island still lacks running water because of the blackout, which still affects 85 percent of the island. As a result, many people are bathing in streams and receiving water from huge tanks, which is never a good idea.

This is after 3 weeks in the most powerful nation on Earth. This is unacceptable.

Our response to Hurricane Maria and the people of Puerto Rico is a national and international embarrassment and a tragedy. They are our own citizens in our own Caribbean colonies of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, and we have not helped them all that we can.

I spoke to Chicago firefighters yesterday who have been in Puerto Rico for about a week, and they tell me it is worse than we are being told.

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They told me yesterday that they are still making contact in towns where people come up to them and say, "Thank God, it is FEMA; you are finally here," only to be told, "No, we are not FEMA; we are from Chicago; we are firefighters," and they embrace and cry with gratitude.

Last week, a group of my colleagues and I got together. We represent large Puerto Rican communities here on the mainland in Connecticut, New York, Massachusetts, Illinois, Ohio, and Florida. All of us have been contacted by our constituents who are in desperate need to get their loved ones back and out of Puerto Rico.

After 3 weeks, they have run out of patience and are not interested in excuses in our congressional district. They want their parents, they want their Tia with cancer, and they want their cousins on dialysis off the island, period, now. They want a plane ticket to get the hell out.

Our communities are ready. Lorain, Ohio; Hartford; Boston; Orlando; New

York; Chicago; we are all ready, but the problem is transportation. If you have money, connections, or internet access, then you probably can find a flight out.

I know this because I was in Puerto Rico 2 weeks ago, and I saw the Land Rovers, the Jaguars, parked at the private airports in San Juan, because if you have the money, you have already put your loved ones on a flight out of Dodge.

The individuals from FEMA have been doing a great job, given the constraints, but I think now FEMA and the military resources should focus on the task of evacuating the elderly, the sick, and the vulnerable from the island.

Look, this is the way FEMA works. They say: Well, we only take on tasks that the Governor asks us to take on, and the Governor is not likely to go to FEMA to ask them to get thousands and thousands of his constituents off the island.

Number one, it is a difficult request for any local official to make. Captains of industry and leaders on the island want to make sure that there are Puerto Rican workers there to rebuild, and of course, to continue to buy their products. I get that. But at the same time, those same captains of industry and political leaders, guess what, I bet you most of them have already got their loved ones off the island.

Number two, we know the Governor has to be extremely careful how he asks for anything because we all know the President doesn't take criticism very well or even a hint of criticism. The Governor doesn't want to get blackballed by the President who might go off on a Twitter rant at any moment unless he is praised and stroked every step of the way.

But our Puerto Rican constituents don't vote for the Governor of Puerto Rico. They vote for us, for DELAULO, for CROWLEY, for MCGOVERN, for ESPAILLAT, for MARCY KAPTUR, and they want us to help them get their families out of danger's way. They are demanding help getting their family members out, and I think FEMA and the U.S. military can do the job. They just need the orders from the people in charge.

Let's be clear: if anyone wants to leave Puerto Rico, they should have our help in doing so. For thousands, it is a question of life and death and survival. That is what is needed to help Puerto Rico. We don't need the President tossing paper towels to storm victims like he was tossing a ball to a dog or maybe tossing peanuts to squirrels in the park. We need airplanes, ships, and helicopters to get the people the hell out; otherwise, it will be worse than let them eat cake; it is let them die.

CELEBRATING THE WORK OF TERESA LEWIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from

North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the work of a very wonderful constituent of the Fifth District of North Carolina, Teresa Lewis.

Every September, we celebrate American Business Women's Day in order to recognize the many different backgrounds and diverse occupations of American businesswomen. However, it is my belief that we should celebrate American businesswomen like Teresa Lewis every day.

Teresa's success was born out of determination and the desire to provide a better life for her family. In 1986, Teresa founded WorkForce Carolina, a professional staffing service that includes recruitment, interview completion, and skills assessment.

As CEO of WorkForce Carolina, Teresa has employed thousands of people, and her company has served as a boon to the North Carolina economy.

Most importantly, Teresa serves as a role model to all women and men in our country. I commend Teresa Lewis on all of her many accomplishments and thank her for all she does for the community.

CRITICAL TIME OF LIFE AND DEATH FOR PUERTO RICO AND VIRGIN ISLANDS

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

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, this is a critical time of life and death for millions of U.S. citizens on the island of Puerto Rico and also in the Virgin Islands.

The efforts to rebuild will be great, and we each have a critical role to play to help these families recover following the aftermath of these catastrophic storms.

We have witnessed so much devastation this hurricane season, and the impact has been particularly destructive and wreaked havoc. It has left millions of U.S. families without shelter, electricity, and their lives in ruin.

We all have a part to play in the recovery efforts and must answer the calls to provide relief and aid in the immense rebuilding efforts that will take place to assist all of them who have been affected.

The amount of help and heart I have seen in my home State of New York, including a recent effort of Uptown United this weekend, and from constituents of mine like Lin-Manuel Miranda, and even from children willing to crack open their piggybanks has been overwhelming.

If the Federal Government could have matched that compassion, then Puerto Rico would be well on its way to recovery.

Last night, the House Appropriations Committee released a \$36.5 billion disaster relief package: \$5 billion of that will go directly to Puerto Rico; \$14 billion for FEMA's disaster fund; and \$16