

Accordingly, my bill will express the view of Congress that the DNI and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, given their importance to national security, should have a standing invitation to attend all PC meetings.

I invite my colleagues to support this legislation which seeks to protect the NSC from political interference, and to ensure that the President receives the best possible advice from his national security experts—experts who will recommend actions because they are in the best interest of the American people and not because they are politically expedient.

FAREWELL TO SCOTT GRAVES

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I just came back from the organizing committee meeting with my good friend from California for the House Agriculture Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to work with this gentleman and all of the folks who serve on that committee that really provides policy to our Nation's agriculture industry.

It is about making sure that Americans have access to affordable, high quality, and safe food. I actually look at the Agriculture Committee as well as having a dual mission of making sure that the rural economies of our Nation are robust or successful.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to say thank you and farewell to Scott Graves, staff director of the House Agriculture Committee, an individual who served well for many years.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, there is a right way to do business here in the House, and Scott Graves has understood what it takes to manage the Agriculture Committee, the chairman's personal affairs and agenda. But he also has found time to help out members of this committee from both sides of the aisle.

Knowing is one thing; execution is everything.

I have always been impressed with the way we have been able to work on the committee in a bipartisan manner for the good of agriculture, and 320 million Americans have benefited from safety, innovation, and forward thinking of the agriculture industry.

Under Scott's leadership, he made this look easy. Now, as he embarks upon the next step in his career, I wish Scott Graves all the best, his wife, his little boy, and his little one to be born later this year.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has a slogan on every road sign entering the State, and the sign reads, "You've got a friend in Pennsylvania." Well, Scott, you don't have to drive far, but realize this holds true for me and all of my staff, you've got a friend in Pennsylvania.

SNAP HELPS LIFT PEOPLE OUT OF POVERTY

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Agriculture Subcommittee on Nutrition for the 115th Congress, I am confident that we must work to ensure that the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program known as SNAP is meeting the needs of those that it is intended to serve.

The House Agriculture Committee hearings have highlighted how nutrition matters and the specific ways that vulnerable populations are well served by a strong, sound, and reliable food program.

SNAP serves a diverse population who share a common need for nutritional support beyond what is available based on personal means, family support, and community resources.

Now, according to a 2015 USDA report, 42.7 percent of SNAP recipients are children, while single parent households are more susceptible to food insecurity, especially those who are single mothers. Two-parent families also struggle, at times, to put food on the table.

Children whose households face food insecurity, face both negative developmental and health consequences.

A child's future success goes beyond what any single government program can or should achieve. SNAP is not the only means of breaking the cycle of poverty, but it certainly plays a key role in increasing food security for children.

Mr. Speaker, for me, SNAP is not merely a food program but a pathway that works to lift people out of poverty. It is a tool for the better health and development of our children who deserve no less.

ALI FAMILY AND EXECUTIVE ORDER

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to a 12-year-old girl Emon Ali, who is stuck in Djibouti. Emon and her father, Ahmed Ali, who is an American citizen, are in Djibouti because of President Trump's flawed executive order to ban travel to the United States.

The Ali family is like many immigrant families throughout our country, including my own, who came to the United States in hopes of achieving the American Dream.

As Americans, we know that the Statue of Liberty is a symbol of freedom and new beginnings for immigrants past and present, and it is a symbol around the entire world for the values that America holds.

Since the founding of our country, immigrants from all over the world have been coming to the United States to make a better life for themselves and their families, or to escape persecution.

Mr. Ali and his wife immigrated to the United States and earned their U.S.

citizenships in hopes of achieving that American Dream.

They had been making a living in my district and are supporting their two daughters in Los Banos, California. But they have also been living in sadness and heartbreak because their 12-year-old daughter, Emon, was born in Yemen before the civil war.

For 6 years, the Ali family has been working through the appropriate channels to get their daughter a visa so she can gain U.S. citizenship and be reunited with her family legally.

On January 26, after years of going through a thorough vetting process, Emon finally received her immigrant visa—after 6 years. You could call that extreme vetting.

One day later, on the 27th, President Trump turned the Ali family's and hundreds of other families' lives upside down by signing an executive order to implement a travel ban to prohibit refugees and others from coming to the United States. That is not the American way.

Hours after this executive order was signed, Emon and her father went to the airport in Djibouti, passed through security, and, when boarding the plane, Emon was told by the airline that she could not board because of the recently signed executive order.

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The immigrant visa issued to Emon would have given her status as a lawful permanent resident upon entering the U.S. And since she is 12 years old and both of her parents are U.S. citizens, Emon would have immediately been eligible to file for U.S. citizenship.

President Trump's executive order is preventing this legal process from taking place and is putting Emon and her father in harm's way while they wait in Djibouti.

In the past 48 hours, the Trump administration has been defending this executive order, saying it is not a travel ban or a ban on refugees. So I would like to ask the President: How is this executive order not a ban on refugees or individuals who have been legally approved to enter the United States? It certainly is a ban for Emon. And how is keeping this 12-year-old girl out of the United States from joining her family making America safer? It is not making Americans safer.

Extreme vetting was in place during both the Bush and Obama administrations. We just didn't call it that by name.

This travel ban is flawed, both in its lack of adherence to American values and its technical execution, which is banning Emon from coming here, and it could possibly be ruled unconstitutional.

A bipartisan group of national security experts agree that the executive order does not make Americans safer and could potentially put our country at greater risk for terrorist attacks. I agree with them.

Since September 11, 2001, we have focused a bipartisan effort to improve

American security for Americans both at home and abroad, and by and large, it has been very successful.

It is our first constitutional duty to ensure the national defense and the safety of Americans, but I think President Trump's executive order is doing the opposite. The executive order will create a rallying cry for Islamic extremists around the world to say that America is now engaged in a war against the religion of Islam. No good can come from that. It is clear that this executive order is putting Emon and her father in harm's way in Djibouti.

So, Mr. President, Secretary Kelly, I appeal to your compassion and to your common sense. This 12-year-old girl, Emon, has been extremely vetted for 6 years or whatever you would like to call it. She is not a threat to our country. Let her join her American family.

My staff and I are working diligently through the appropriate channels with the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State to bring Mr. Ali and his daughter home as soon as possible.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are advised to direct their remarks to the Chair and not to the President.

RECTIFICATION FOR MERRICK GARLAND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in April of 1963, literary history was made when Dr. King published his letter from the Birmingham jail.

In that letter, Mr. Speaker, Dr. King proclaimed: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." Mr. Speaker, these words were true then and they are true today. Injustice anywhere is still a threat to justice everywhere.

And, Mr. Speaker, when the Republican leadership decided to hold up Merrick Garland, they did more than hold up a nominee. They did more than prevent him from being heard. They did more than approve him such that he could become a Justice on the Supreme Court. They did more than prevent President Obama from having the opportunity to appoint a nominee to the Supreme Court, Mr. Speaker.

When they held up Merrick Garland, they hijacked justice. They hijacked justice and prevented the American people from having the opportunity to hear of the credentials of Merrick Garland so that he could receive just consideration. They didn't have to approve him, but they should have in the sense of justice. They should have given him the opportunity to be heard.

They hijacked justice. When you hijack justice, this type of injustice cannot go unchecked. We cannot allow the legitimization of that hijacking to take place today.

If we move forward with the nominee being proposed by the Republican lead-

ership by the President of the United States, this would be an effort not only to legitimize, it would legitimize the process that they employed to hijack justice.

I refuse to stand with those who would hijack justice. The American people refuse to stand with those who would hijack justice. The American people are demanding that a just system be in place.

The only way a just system can be in place is for what happened to Merrick Garland to be rectified. This is not retaliation that I am speaking of. This is not retaliation. This is rectification.

There has to be rectification for what happened to Merrick Garland, and rectification requires that the Senate take up Merrick Garland. I believe the American people want the Senate to take up Merrick Garland so that he, too, can receive justice; so that this country can receive justice; so that the American people can receive justice; so that they can hear about Merrick Garland's credentials.

Yes, the current nominee has great credentials, but so does Merrick Garland. There are many adjectives that can be used to describe the current nominee, but there are many great adjectives that can be utilized to describe Merrick Garland.

Merrick Garland deserves his day. Without his day, we cannot go forward in a just way. So I encourage the American people to do that which is just; contact those who have a voice in this and say to them: Do not approve any nominee until there is justice for Merrick Garland and justice for the American people, justice for what occurred when they hijacked a nominee to the Supreme Court, hijacked a nomination, hijacked an opportunity. Hijacking cannot be tolerated.

Dr. King was right; injustice anywhere is still a threat to justice everywhere. But he also went on to say immediately thereafter that life is an "inseparable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."

This hijacking that took place last year is going to impact all in this country indirectly because every person in this country will be subjected to the rulings of a Supreme Court with a nominee that will have an asterisk by his name because his opportunity exists as a result of a hijacking that took place.

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere, and we ought to realize that this injustice cannot be tolerated and must be rectified. It is not retaliation. It is rectification.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the Senate.

DO NOT DESTROY THE AMERICAN DREAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from

Connecticut (Ms. DELAUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to share a story that has weighed heavy on my heart.

The President speaks about keeping America safe. He speaks about building a wall. He speaks about deporting undocumented immigrants. His rhetoric of hate and fear is causing millions of families unspeakable pain. This is happening in every community across our country and it is happening in my community.

I want to share a letter I received from one of my office's most dedicated interns one week after the election. This young man was such a positive force in my office. He took on tasks with a smile. He had an insatiable appetite for learning about our government. He was one of the finest interns our office has ever seen.

I was proud to have him to be one of the first people that our constituents interacted with when they contacted our office. But a week after the election, this young man, Sergio, went home. He left me this letter, which I will read to you in its entirety because Sergio tells his own story better than I ever could:

"Dear Representative DeLauro:

"I was honored to intern in your Washington office and learn more about the government of the United States, and more specifically responding to constituents' concerns. Walking through the long tunnels that connect the congressional buildings to the Capitol I began to envision myself working in the District of Columbia upon graduation. But like for many people, the election results have forced me to take a different path.

"After the Presidential election, all the stability that had allowed my family and me to become part of the American life was turned into fear and doubt about our future. Not only has the President-elect vowed to deport millions of undocumented immigrants, but he also promised to remove the DACA program. For this reason, I had to return to New Haven and assist my family as we figure out which decisions are the best to take moving forward. Thus, I am sorry to inform you that I will no longer be able to continue my internship in your Washington, D.C. office.

"I want to express that while I am in constant fear questioning whether I will be able to complete my undergraduate degree, or if my U.S.-citizen sister will be separated from us, I am not giving in. My best memory working in your office was running into an old employer who came to the office for a Capitol tour. Reflecting on the aspirations I had working as a busser to get myself through high school, I remember your persona always providing me with hope. That hope has grown exponentially as I reminisce on the times you walked into the office and greeted all your interns with such gratitude and enthusiasm.

"With infinite gratitude, Sergio."