

Ana River Wash Plan Land Exchange Act. This legislation directs the Bureau of Land Management, BLM, to exchange land with the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District, the District, in San Bernardino, CA, as part of a regional land management plan.

The bill is the culmination of years of collaboration between numerous Federal and State agencies, private industry, and municipalities representing mining, flood control, water supply and wildlife conservation, among other interests.

Included among the supporters of this land exchange are county of San Bernardino; city of Redlands; city of Highland; San Bernardino Water Conservation District; San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District; East Valley Water District; Endangered Habitats League; CEMEX Construction Materials Pacific; Robertson's Ready Mix and Inland Action

In 1993, representatives from this diverse group formed the Wash Committee to address mining issues in the upper Santa Ana River wash area.

The role of the committee subsequently expanded in 1997 to consider the broad range of land uses in the area, including natural resource conservation.

The Wash Committee developed a strategy that focused best uses for more comprehensive planning and not on private property boundaries that would segment the area. The result is a forthcoming Land Management and Habitat Conservation Plan expected to cover 4,500 acres.

This land exchange will take place in a designated region within the Santa Ana Wash, at the junction of the Santa Ana River and Mill Creek.

Currently, land within the Santa Ana Wash is owned by both the District and BLM.

The land parcels owned by the district are currently used for recharging the local groundwater aquifer through more than 77 basins and also provide critical Riversidian sage scrub habitat for a number of State and federally listed species. In addition, under this plan, new land would be set aside for conservation purposes near land already managed by BLM.

The exchange of land between the district and BLM will connect a current patchwork of separately owned land parcels into a consolidated open space for conservation purposes and will optimize the efficiency of mining operations and water conservation efforts.

The land transfer resulting from this legislation will lead to increased habitat protection, improved connectivity in the wildlife corridor, expanded groundwater recharge for water supply, and the future establishment of public access and trails.

Additionally, the legislation will allow the continued use of land and mineral resources while maintaining the biological and hydrological re-

sources of the area in an environmentally sensitive manner.

I want to applaud diverse members of the Wash Committee that worked together, including the cities of Highland and Redlands, East Valley Water District, the County of San Bernardino, Robertson's Ready Mix, CEMEX, the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, and the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District, along with the Federal, State and local stakeholders, for their continued efforts on the Wash Plan.

This group has demonstrated that, while it takes significant time, funding, and cooperation, it is possible to simultaneously protect the environment and support local jobs, business, and community interests.

I would also like to thank my colleagues, Representatives PAUL COOK and PETE AGUILAR, for introducing similar legislation in the House.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass the Santa Ana River Wash Plan Land Exchange Act.

#### SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 60—DESIGNATING MAY 5, 2017, AS THE “NATIONAL DAY OF AWARENESS FOR MISSING AND MURDERED NATIVE WOMEN AND GIRLS”

Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. TESTER, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. UDALL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 60

Whereas, according to a study commissioned by the Department of Justice, in some tribal communities, American Indian women face murder rates that are more than 10 times the national average murder rate;

Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, homicide was the third-leading cause of death among American Indian and Alaska Native women between 10 and 24 years of age and the fifth-leading cause of death for American Indian and Alaska Native women between 25 and 34 years of age;

Whereas little data exist on the number of missing American Indian and Alaska Native women in the United States;

Whereas, on July 5, 2013, Hanna Harris, a member of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe, was reported missing by her family in Lame Deer, Montana;

Whereas the body of Hanna Harris was found 5 days after she went missing;

Whereas Hanna Harris was determined to have been raped and murdered, and the individuals accused of committing those crimes were convicted;

Whereas the case of Hanna Harris is an example of many similar cases; and

Whereas Hanna Harris was born on May 5, 1992: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) designates May 5, 2017, as the “National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Native Women and Girls”; and

(2) calls on the people of the United States and interested groups—

(A) to commemorate the lives of missing and murdered American Indian and Alaska

Native women whose cases are documented and undocumented in public records and the media; and

(B) to demonstrate solidarity with the families of victims in light of those tragedies.

#### ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2017

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, February 14; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session as under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator RUBIO.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Florida.

#### VENEZUELA

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I come here this evening to speak on the issue of human rights in Venezuela and developments today in regard to all these issues. It is part of the broader effort my office has undertaken for a while now. It is the hashtag “Expression NOT Oppression” campaign.

Every week we come here to the floor of the Senate when in session and highlight political prisoners and dissidents whose lives are being destroyed by oppressive regimes around the world.

Today, I will be highlighting the case of Leopoldo Lopez, a Venezuelan opposition leader who, 3 years ago this week, led peaceful demonstrations against the regime of Nicolas Maduro, and he was thrown in jail for it.

I am honored that this week we will be visited here in Washington by Lilian Tintori, Leopoldo's wife and the mother of their two children. She is an incredibly brave woman who does not rest as she continues advocating for her husband's release and the release of all political prisoners and continues to fight for a free and democratic Venezuela. So I want to recognize her as she visits Washington this week to ask for our government's continued help.

Before I get into Leopoldo's case, I want to take a few moments to talk about what is happening in our own Western Hemisphere and in Venezuela specifically.

For decades, the Western Hemisphere has been neglected by our foreign policy—sadly, by administrations of both

parties. As we see all over the world, when America fails to lead and engage on the world stage, bad actors emerge and they grow emboldened, while our enemies and adversaries rush to fill the void. We see democracy under assault and with it, an assault on the universal, God-given rights and dignity of citizens throughout this region.

Despite the one-sided concessions of the past 2 years, Castro's Cuba remains as repressive as ever. In Nicaragua, Daniel Ortega ran for and won an unconstitutional third term, with his wife as the Vice President. Of course, we are growing increasingly familiar with the economic, social, and political disaster in Venezuela, which I shall elaborate on shortly.

By the way, I am also concerned about the impact of ongoing, rampant corruption in the region, which will undermine democratic governments and their institutions.

There is another major issue plaguing the region and threatening the security of the United States, and that is rising insecurity stemming from narco-terrorist drug cartels. In recent years, we have seen the worst of them—the FARC in Colombia—brought to their knees and to the negotiating table by the Colombian Government's efforts. But Mexico and other countries throughout Central America continue to be threatened by organizations such as these.

A third problem in the region is the lack of economic opportunity. It is simply in America's interest to have more prosperous neighbors, people to sell to and trade with. Ultimately, if people can't earn enough money to feed their families and live in a safe neighborhood, they will either pick up and leave by any means necessary, including illegal immigration, or they will join drug gangs.

I know that too often there is a tendency to overlook what is happening in our own region. Some might say: I have enough problems here at home to worry about what is going on in other countries. But I hope that everyone remembers that all of this I have described and am about to talk about ultimately has direct consequences on us here in the United States and on our people. When you have a breakdown in any of these areas, people in these countries look to leave. The first place they often look to is the freest and the most prosperous country in the region—in the world—the United States of America. Because it also happens to be relatively close, that creates immigration pressures on our borders and on our communities.

When economies aren't functioning, it means American workers and entrepreneurs have fewer customers abroad to sell products and services to. And when you have all of this instability, vacuums are created that foreign enemies or adversaries like North Korea, Iran, China, and Russia seek to fill, not to mention terrorist organizations. It allows for the rise of tyrants and au-

thoritarians like Castro and Chavez, Maduro, Ortega, Morales, Correa, and others.

Today in Venezuela, all these problems have come together to bring this country—one of the richest countries in the world in terms of resources—to the verge of becoming a failed state, and today the people of that proud country are living a nightmare.

Not that long ago, Venezuela was a vibrant democracy. It had strong democratic and independent institutions. It had free and fair elections. But today in Venezuela, democracy and human rights are under assault. The country is ruled by an incompetent strongman—a criminal, a human rights abuser, someone who has perverted every independent institution in the country, and is incompetent, whether it is the judiciary, the military, intelligence, or the media—in order to entrench himself and his cronies in power.

Here in the United States, when we have disagreements, people use different rules at their disposal to prolong debates and slow things down. We are aware of that here in the Senate. In Venezuela, when people have disagreements, especially with the government, they just try to stop debates completely. For example, after the opposition party in Venezuela miraculously won the last legislative election—despite every effort by the Maduro government to steal that election—the Venezuelan state police then blocked the new members of the Parliament from going to work.

Imagine for a moment 2, 4 years ago, 2012, when President Obama was elected, if he had ordered—in 2014, when Republicans took control of the Senate, imagine if at that time the President had ordered the police to stand at the door of the Chamber and not allow Senators from the Republican Party to enter the Chamber. That is what happened in Venezuela. Then that same government in Venezuela ordered their hacks on the kangaroo supreme court to invalidate laws passed by the National Assembly to free political prisoners.

Venezuela also has a drug cartel problem. In fact, there are officials in the highest levels of the Venezuelan Government who have even been linked to drug cartels. Among them is the former head of the National Assembly, Diosdado Cabello, and the Vice President of that country, Tareck El Aissami. I will talk about him in a moment.

We also learned last week—and I came to the floor to discuss the CNN report confirming what my office had been gathering for a while. By the way, that is going to be airing tonight on CNN, the second part of that series. We learned that organized crime syndicates in Venezuela, with the tacit approval of the Government of Venezuela, of Maduro, are running counterfeit passport rings, with counterfeit Venezuelan passports being sold to terror-

ists and to individuals with links to terrorism.

But it is Venezuela's economy that is perhaps the saddest story of all. The failures of Chavez-style socialism in Venezuela led to misery for people there of all ages. Not that long ago, Venezuela was a relatively rich economy. It is a rich country blessed with oil and other natural resources, and it has long had a well-educated population and vibrant middle class. But under Hugo Chavez and Nicolas Maduro, Venezuela has been crumbling. Caracas, the capital of Venezuela, has become the murder capital of the world. It is one of the most dangerous cities on the planet. Venezuela is defaulting on its loans. In fact, it will owe about \$6 billion in April. They will not be able to make those payments. In Venezuela, the grocery shelves are bare—a rich country, and they are completely bare. Everyday products, like toilet paper, are scarce, as is food. The people of Venezuela are literally starving, so much so that a recent Miami Herald article from last week detailed how people have turned to hunting and eating flamingos for food. By now, many of us have seen the images of newborn babies being put in cardboard boxes at the hospital because these hospitals can no longer afford cribs.

So it comes as no surprise that the Venezuelan people, living in misery like this—robbed of their dignity and aspiring for more than this disaster—would choose to speak up. They began to do so in full force 3 years ago this week. That is when Venezuelan students took to the streets to protest the violence and the scarcity of basic necessities due to the negligent, incompetent policies enacted by the Maduro regime. What began as a student protest soon became something bigger. It became a movement.

Government thugs responded to this movement with violence, and the peaceful demonstrations came to look like a combat zone: 43 people dead, 600 people injured, and approximately 3,400 people detained. Among those detained was Leopoldo Lopez, a Venezuelan opposition leader. The government of Maduro outrageously accused him of being responsible for all of this violence, and they threw him in jail and he has been there ever since. It has been about 1,100 days. To put that number into context, Washington Post reporter Jason Rezaian was held prisoner by the Iranian regime for 544 days. The Iranian hostage crisis of 1979 lasted 444 days. In September 2015, Leopoldo Lopez was sentenced to 13 years, 9 months, 7 days, and 12 hours for his participation in the protests. In jail he has suffered physical and psychological torture.

He is the father of two young children, and he is married to Lilian Tintori. He was the mayor of Chacao, and the leader of Popular Will or Voluntad Popular political party. He will be a critical part of building a

freer, more democratic, and more prosperous Venezuela, but for now, sadly, he languishes in prison.

He is not alone either. In Venezuela today, there are at least 108 political prisoners. Like Leopoldo, they each have a lot to contribute to make Venezuela a better place, but the Venezuelan Government is robbing them of their freedom, and it is robbing their families of the memories every child and spouse deserves to create with their father, husband, and loved ones.

All these political prisoners should be free. I have encouraged, publicly and privately, our new Secretary of State and the administration to make the freedom of these political prisoners their cause and to make it a priority. I know we are trying to work through our top-level Cabinet nominations here in the Senate, but we need to get people in place in other key roles throughout the administration; for example, our next Ambassador to the Organization of American States, where the United States needs to recommit to making its voice heard in that forum as a voice for democracy and human rights and for holding Venezuela's regime accountable for violations of the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

I am also pleased that today the administration announced a new round of sanctions against a key Venezuelan official. Specifically, Venezuela's Executive Vice President Tareck Zaidan El Aissami Maddah, El Aissami, as I talked about him earlier, and Venezuelan national Samark Jose Lopez Bello were sanctioned under the Kingpin Act for international narcotics trafficking.

Aissami's primary front man was Samark Jose Lopez Bello, whom I just discussed. He was designated for providing material assistance, financial support or goods and services, and support of international narcotics trafficking activities and acting for or on behalf of El Aissami. Five U.S. companies owned or controlled by Lopez Bello have been blocked as part of today's action.

All five of them are located in my home State of Florida. In fact, all five of them have mailing addresses in South Florida where I live. Among the properties seized: A U.S.-registered aircraft with the tail number N200VR. It has been identified as block property owned or controlled by PSA Holdings, LLC, controlled by Lopez Bello and by El Aissami, with funds that were able to get by conducting prohibited transactions dealing with drug traffickers.

It is an outrage that the Vice President of a country in our hemisphere not only is a narcotrafficker but is also in the business of selling passports and travel documents to people with links to terrorism.

For years now, I have been talking about how Venezuelan regime officials were committing crimes in Venezuela,

stealing from the people of Venezuela, and then they spend their riches living in the lap of luxury in my hometown of Miami. These announcements today further confirmed how true this is and the extent to which corrupt regime officials have been allowed to freely travel and prance around free U.S. soil with impunity.

I am hopeful this is only the beginning of the sanctions today, to make sure the Maduro regime feels pressured to cease its illicit activities, to free all of its political prisoners, to tolerate dissent, and respect the will of the Venezuelan people who voted to abandon the disastrous past of Chavez and Maduro.

I am hopeful this is only the beginning of making sure the Maduro regime feels pressure to cease its illicit activities and everything it is doing that has placed Venezuela on this disastrous path.

We in this country are a blessed people, to have a vibrant democracy that serves as an example to the world. With those blessings come the responsibility of speaking out when we see others yearning to be free but repressed by their government. In recent years, this body, the Senate, has spoken unanimously in support of the Venezuelan people's aspirations, and we have spoken unanimously against the Maduro regime's brutality.

Today I come to the Senate to renew that support. To Leopoldo Lopez, all of Venezuela's political prisoners, and all in Venezuela who are fighting for a better life, we stand with you, and we will continue doing everything in our power to make sure your cause is supported by this Congress and by this administration.

#### TRIBUTE TO TIM TEBOW

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, finally, on a separate topic, I did want to take this moment to recognize someone I am proud to represent in the Senate. He is a fellow Floridian and a constituent by the name of Tim Tebow. By now, a lot of people know I am proud to be a University of Florida alum. So as a proud Gator fan, I have been rooting for Tim Tebow since he first stepped foot on campus in 2006.

He went on to win two national championships, becoming the first sophomore to win the Heisman Trophy, and in the process he rewrote the record books. When I was the Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, we hosted the Gators championship team. One of my favorite memories of my time in State government was catching a pass from Tim Tebow—No. 15—on the floor of the Florida House. It was not a great pass, but I caught it. The rules are a little different in the Senate. I wish it were OK to throw passes in here, but it was a great pleasure to be able to do that.

From the moment Tim arrived in Gainesville, we football fans saw that he was as good as advertised on the field, but we also started learning that as good a football player as he is, he is an even more extraordinary human being off the field.

He is a man to much has been given, whether it was the chance to be born to two great parents, an incredible support network, and of course God. He has been given much, and he has given back even more. We saw this once again this past Friday, when the Tim Tebow Foundation held its Night to Shine Initiative, an annual prom for special needs students from all over the world.

All told, 375 churches participated as Night to Shine hosts in all 50 States, 11 countries, and on 6 continents. There were 150,000 volunteers, and 75,000 special needs students were the guests of honor at events across the world. I encourage those of you here today or watching this or watching this in the future to Google search Night to Shine, to visit Tim Tebow's Facebook page, or to see the hashtag "Night to Shine" on Twitter. There you will see all of the photos that have been shared from Friday night's events. You will see 75,000 young people with special needs having the time of their lives. You will see volunteers and teachers and especially parents overcome with joy and emotion at the sight of their children feeling as loved, as important, and as special as each and every one of them truly is.

Personally, I was very moved. So I wanted to take a few minutes this evening to recognize Tim Tebow, the Tebow Foundation, the churches and the volunteers who participated, and all of the incredible students and parents who inspire us every day. I know I speak on behalf of the entire Gator Nation—I should say the entire State of Florida—in saying that we are proud of Tim. We are even prouder of all he has done and continues to do.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 8:20 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, February 14, 2017, at 10 a.m.

#### CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate February 13, 2017:

##### DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

STEVEN T. MNUCHIN, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

##### DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

DAVID J. SHULKIN, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.