

continue to be, a critical part of the United States' bilateral engagement with Sudan.

In the United States, the protection of the basic rights and freedoms of our citizens is fundamental to who we are as a nation. The Bill of Rights in the U.S. Constitution—our foundational legal document—sets forth protections for individual liberties and prohibitions on government power in these realms, including freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of assembly. These are among our most cherished rights as Americans, and the protection of human rights and the dignity of the individual has served as a key basis of U.S. foreign policy throughout our history.

This history has shown that U.S. partnerships around the world are strongest and most durable with countries that take the necessary steps to protect the same basic human rights and freedoms that are central in the United States.

In the years ahead, one measure of the strength of the U.S.-Sudanese relationship will be improvements in Sudan's respect for human rights and, in particular, religious freedom. Indeed, one of the reasons I am speaking to you today—at the Al-Neelain Mosque, with Sudanese Muslim and Christian leaders—is to emphasize that the United States cares deeply about religious freedom in Sudan.

By taking steps to enhance protections for religious freedom, the Government will make the entire country more stable and secure.

Interfaith understanding, respect, and the protection of religious freedom and other human rights are bulwarks against extremism. Religious tolerance is a building block of peace and security and is the mark of responsible governance. The treatment of members of religious minorities is often the ultimate indicator of a government's commitment to these values.

When governments favor a specific religious, ethnic, or sectarian group over others, violent radicalism thrives. We also know that governments that sponsor or condone violence against their own people are far more likely to see violent extremism growing in their country.

But by protecting every person's human rights, society is more just, more free, and more stable for everyone.

For these reasons, we urge the Government of Sudan to protect basic freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, association, religion, and movement. The United States calls on Sudan to protect political opposition members, human rights defenders, civil society groups, and the media. We also urge the government to hold accountable all who are responsible for human rights abuses.

On the issue of religious freedom, the United States has continued to designate Sudan as a 'Country of Particular Concern.'

The State Department's annual International Religious Freedom Report noted instances of the arrest, detention, and intimidation of religious leaders, and the denial of permits for the construction of new churches; restrictions on non-Muslim religious groups from entering the country; and the censorship of religious material.

During my discussions with senior leaders over the last six months, we have welcomed the Sudanese Government's expressed desire to take steps to overcome its designation as a Country of Particular Concern. However, for that to occur, we must see concrete and demonstrable progress through better policies and improved laws.

We have communicated these steps to the Sudanese Government through a proposed 'Action Plan,' which we hope Sudan will approve and enact. As an immediate confidence-building measure, we have suggested

that the Government convene a roundtable with members of religious minority groups about property registration issues, as certain government officials have cited registration issues as the rationale for the demolitions of places of worship. The Government of Sudan, including the Federal States, should also immediately suspend demolitions of places of worship, including churches and mosques.

President Trump, Vice President Pence, and Secretary Tillerson have made clear that the protection and promotion of religious freedom is a foreign policy priority of the Administration. As we move forward in our relationship, the United States will not ignore violations of human rights, including the right to religious freedom.

The United States is ready and willing to assist in these efforts.

To that end, we will explore opportunities to work with religious leaders who build bridges through tolerance and interfaith understanding to counter extremism—like those leaders with me here today—while we bring in new voices to further conversations about accountability and inclusive governance.

The United States will also review our people-to-people programs, such as the Young African Leaders Initiative and International Visitor Leadership Program, to identify ways to maximize partnerships and exchanges with the people of Sudan. I am pleased to see so many alumni here this morning as a testament to the success of these programs.

Indeed, we believe that any country-to-country relationship begins on the individual level. We are committed to finding more avenues for Sudanese religious and youth leaders to advance interfaith efforts for peace.

#### OTHER PRIORITIES FOR THE U.S.-SUDAN RELATIONSHIP

Before I conclude, I also want to touch on a few other important aspects of the U.S.-Sudan relationship.

We recognize that there are ongoing impediments, including certain commercial and financial restrictions, on the bilateral relationship between our countries and a lack of normalized diplomatic relations. Further strengthening of our bilateral relationship will require a renewed commitment by the Government of Sudan on other policies beyond religious freedom.

In particular, while restraint and a cessation of attacks in conflict areas is a positive step forward, we now expect the Sudanese government to move closer to a permanent ceasefire that will create an opening for a truly inclusive political dialogue in Darfur and the Two Areas.

The armed opposition must of course also denounce hostilities and make a commitment to a negotiated peace. All parties who have signed the African Union roadmap must live up to their commitment to engage in dialogue toward a resolution of the conflicts and a comprehensive and inclusive political process, and those who have yet to join the process must do so, as there is no other path to peace and improving the conditions of the people living in the conflict areas. As a first step, the opposition should accept the U.S. proposal to facilitate humanitarian aid in conflict areas across lines to help those who are suffering the most.

Moving forward, we also encourage the Government to improve cooperation with UNAMID—the AU-UN Hybrid Mission in Darfur. UNAMID protects civilians, facilitates humanitarian assistance, and mediates conflict at the local and national level in Darfur.

This mission—which the United States strongly supports—will continue to be instrumental to Sudan's future and greater

collaboration with the UN is a win-win proposition for the people of Sudan.

Violence, war, and ongoing instability are holding Sudan back from a future with great potential. Conflict has affected millions. Hundreds of thousands of Sudanese have been displaced and killed. It is time for a path to reconciliation and peace. Your country's prosperity and the security of future generations depend on it.

The United States calls on all parties to take this opportunity to define a way forward that will help all of Sudan's people.

Finally, the United States is also looking for the Sudanese Government to help counter international security threats. In that regard, I very much appreciate and applaud Sudan's public statements condemning North Korean provocations, and Sudan's full commitment to compliance with the UN Security Council Resolutions regarding North Korea. Finally, the statements yesterday by the Government of Sudan affirming that it will cut off all ties with North Korea is most welcome.

#### CONCLUSION

Let me conclude by noting that I am deeply encouraged by the interactions I have had with the Government and with civil society representatives during my visit here. The religious leaders with whom I met earlier today are a deep source of inspiration.

Indeed, there are challenges that lie ahead, but we should all have reason for hope and optimism about the growing engagement between our two countries.

Thank you for your hospitality and kindness. I look forward to many more opportunities to further our goals of a more peaceful and prosperous Sudan—a Sudan that respects the rights of persons of every faith.

#### LABORERS INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NORTH AMERICA LOCAL 81 100TH ANNIVERSARY

#### HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 22, 2018

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect and admiration that I recognize Laborers International Union of North America Local 81 as the organization celebrates its 100th anniversary. A century of dedication, hard work, and perseverance is certainly an amazing accomplishment, and the leaders and members of Local 81 are to be commended. In honor of this milestone, a 100th anniversary ceremony will take place on Thursday, January 25, 2018, at the Local 81 Union Hall in Valparaiso, Indiana.

Laborers Local 81 was founded in 1918 in Gary, Indiana. In the early days, union members and leaders helped to build the foundation for the future success of the organization. Prior to the late 1950's and early 1960's, union members worked without receiving health insurance, retirement benefits, or pension benefits. Many of these individuals banded together, went on strike, and fought for these benefits, thus allowing today's members to obtain these benefits for themselves and their families. Under the leadership of Laborers International Union of North America General President Terry O'Sullivan, as well as Local 81 President and Business Manager, Mike Campbell, Local 81 looks forward to advancement and success over the next 100 years, striving to "stay united in justice, honor, and strength."

Laborers Local 81 represents some of the hardest workers in Northwest Indiana. They are the men and women who help construct our roads, bridges, and buildings. They install waterlines, sewer lines, and gas lines. They work to remove hazardous waste and pour concrete, among many other important jobs. They help to build America every day, and I am truly grateful for their service.

Northwest Indiana has a rich history of excellence in its craftsmanship and loyalty by its tradesmen. Local 81 is an outstanding example of these qualities. The leaders and members of Local 81 have demonstrated their loyalty to their union and the Northwest Indiana community through their hard work and tireless dedication.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating the honorable leaders and members of Laborers Local 81, as well as all of the hard working union men and women throughout the United States. For their outstanding commitment to their trade and to improving their communities, these outstanding individuals are worthy of the highest praise.

IN HONOR OF RON AND KATHLEEN  
McPHEE'S RECOGNITION AS OUT-  
STANDING VOLUNTEERS OF THE  
YEAR BY THE COLORADO-WYO-  
MING CHAPTER OF THE NA-  
TIONAL MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS  
SOCIETY

### HON. LIZ CHENEY

OF WYOMING

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, January 22, 2018*

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my congratulations to Ron and Kathleen McPhee on being selected as the Outstanding Volunteers of the Year by the Colorado-Wyoming chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. This outstanding accomplishment is a sign of their commitment to our community and to our great state.

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society is a nation-wide non-profit with the goal of creating a world free of MS and providing resources for those suffering from it and their families. Ron and Kathleen have been supporting and participating in the organization as the Johnson County ambassadors for three years, inspired by their daughter, who has been fighting MS for 20 years. They have become particularly involved in the Bike MS Bighorn County Classic, where they recruit volunteers and serve lunch to participants. I thank them for their dedication and many contributions to the organization and to helping the many people suffering from MS across Wyoming and the country.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my congratulations to Ron and Kathleen McPhee. They deserve to be extremely proud of this accomplishment.

### HONORING THE 2017 McClymonds HIGH SCHOOL WARRIORS

### HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, January 22, 2018*

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to honor the McClymonds High School Warriors football team, which recently won its second straight state championship, becoming the first Oakland high school to accomplish such a feat.

McClymonds High in West Oakland, known as "Mac", has a proud history of academic and athletic excellence going back generations. Luminaries such as MLB all-star Curt Flood, hall of famer Frank Robinson, and NBA legend Bill Russell all attended McClymonds before going on to achieve greatness in their respective sports.

Last year, the McClymonds Warriors football team became the first high school team in Oakland's history to win a state championship, when they prevailed over La Jolla Country Day School in the State's 5A division finals.

This year it was certainly the return of the Mac, as the Warriors continued their dominance, remaining undefeated during the regular season. In fact, the team has been undefeated in Oakland Athletic League games dating back to 2009.

Following the regular season, the Warriors met Visalia's Golden West High School Trailblazers in the state Division 5AA football championship, and prevailed in an impressive 42-12 victory to earn their second statewide championship in back-to-back years.

The team is led by Coach Mike Peters, who has fostered in his athletes a commitment to excellence and a strong desire to succeed both on the field and in their studies.

I commend Coach Peters and his staff for their efforts to promote the development of the McClymonds Warriors football team. I also want to thank all of the team's family and friends for providing unwavering support of these wonderful student athletes.

Lastly, I want to recognize the members of the 2017 McClymonds Warriors football team, and let them know how proud we are of what they have accomplished:

Emoreea Fountain; Columbus Lewis; Albert Mitchell; Jamar Julien; Charles Alberty; Ja'vanz Dornners; K'aun Green; Angelo Edgerly; Gary Alexander, Jr.; Dwayne Washington; Semaj Sims; Cory Hayes; Edward Woods; Da'veonne Sanders; Day'marr Johnson; Peter Diaz; Monte Smith; D'Shun White; Damon Gardner, Jr.; Montrell Smith; Kelvin Dunn, Jr.; Earl Hollimon; Islee Cassidy; James Willoughby; Huruma Zulu; Ramone Sanders; Mark Hocking; Yaheem Brown; Amani Trigg-Wright; Usama Alomaisi; Andrew Diamond; Jaylen Williams; Charles Joseph; Ramone Kelly; Rashawn Jackson; Xavier Sanders.

Congratulations to the McClymonds High School Warriors 2017 Football Champions. You have made Oakland proud.

### INTRODUCTION OF THE LOW-WAGE FEDERAL CONTRACTOR EM- PLOYEE BACK PAY ACT OF 2018

### HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, January 22, 2018*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the Low-Wage Federal Contractor Employee Back Pay Act of 2018 to grant back pay to federally-contracted retail, food, custodial and security service workers who are furloughed during a federal government shutdown this fiscal year (fiscal year 2018). This bill applies to all three branches of the federal government. After the 2013 government shutdown, federal workers received back pay, but not federal contract workers. While I believe that all federal employees and federal contract workers should receive back pay after a shutdown, we know that we cannot get Congress to make whole all who are hurt by a shutdown. My bill focuses specifically on low-wage federal contract workers, some of whom work here on the Capitol grounds providing Members of Congress and congressional staff with daily services, because these are the workers most likely to be irretrievably hurt by lost wages during a shutdown.

Many federal contract workers earn little more than the minimum wage and receive few, if any, benefits. While some are unionized with a little better wage, all are the lowest-paid workers in the federal government and should not be punished because Congress has failed to do its job to keep the government functioning. Congress, historically, has provided back pay to federal employees, who often work in the same buildings as these low-wage contract workers, furloughed during government shutdowns—but not low-wage contract workers. However, both groups of workers deserve to be made whole after these shutdowns. I recognize, of course, that contract workers are employees of contractors, but the distinction between federal workers and, at least, the lowest-paid contract workers, who, for example, keep buildings clean, fails when it comes to a deliberate government shutdown. Unlike many other contractors, those who employ low-wage service workers have little latitude to help make up for lost wages. Low-wage, federally-contracted service workers can least afford the loss of pay during a shutdown and should not have to go to work every day while everyone else in their federal buildings likely received back pay.

The nation's capital is the high-profile home of the federal government's complicity with contractors who pay low wages through leases and contracts with federal agencies. At least this legislation would provide some parity to their low-wage federal contract workers.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

### HONORING GARY MIZONO

### HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, January 22, 2018*

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Gary Mizono, a doctor who has