

should adequately fund our troops and the Nation's military? Can we not at least agree that we shouldn't be playing political games with our military men and women? We can save the political theater for another day.

EXTEND FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH CLINICS

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

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call upon my colleagues to set up and extend funding for community health clinics.

Community health centers are a vital resource for millions of Americans, providing more coverage at a lower cost. These healthcare providers serve our underserved communities. In rural districts like mine on the central coast of California, they are sometimes the only healthcare provider close enough for patients to receive immediate or long-term care. They provide prenatal care, annual checkups, and lifesaving screenings.

In my district, there are nine federally funded health centers serving approximately 190,000 patients from Santa Cruz to Seaside and from the Salinas Valley to San Benito County. They have dedicated staff that serve the unique and multilingual and multicultural needs of the patients in my district. Without proper funding, these vital community health centers may be forced to reduce their hours of operation, lay off staff, or even close their doors.

We must support our community health centers not just on the central coast of California, but across this Nation. These clinics, their patients, and the people we serve deserve our support. I ask Congress to support our community health clinics.

SUPPORT THE SOS ACT

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, as a father and a grandfather, I know firsthand how important it is that our Nation's children have a safe environment to grow and learn. That is why, this week, I introduced the bipartisan SOS Act.

My bill makes panic buttons available to local school systems. Response time is vitally important during emergency situations. The SOS Act provides a lifesaving technology to contact first responders immediately when an incident takes place in our schools.

Mr. Speaker, I am looking forward to building support for this commonsense bill to protect our children in the days and weeks ahead.

VICTORIA MUELLER IS A BRAVE YOUNG LADY

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a brave young lady from my district. She lives in Johnston City, Illinois. Her name is Victoria Mueller.

She is class president. She is an A student. She plays in three sports, including football. She is a member of countless school clubs and activities.

Two weeks ago, I called Victoria to let her know that she had received our nomination, as well as DICK DURBIN had called her to let her know about his nomination, for the U.S. Naval Academy.

Unfortunately, her answer was: I am sorry. I can't accept that at this time. You see, in October, I had an accident in a car and my arm was damaged severely and severed.

She has gone through a number of surgeries, but here is what she promised. She will recover from the accident; she will continue to work hard; and she will be receiving that letter and getting that nomination next year.

Her strength, her courage is something that I wanted to make sure that I brought up before this House and before this Nation as truly an inspiration, and it should be an inspiration to all of us.

I am truly inspired by Victoria's strength, her grit, and I wish her the best in her recovery. We will be praying for her.

Victoria, southern Illinois is proud of you, and this Nation is proud of you.

MARCH FOR LIFE

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak about the fact that tomorrow is the March for Life.

As a Member of this body and as a member of the body in the State of Illinois, I have always stood proud to stand up for the rights of the unborn.

We are working on and will vote to eliminate taxpayer-funded abortion through the Hyde amendment and everything as well as that goes, but also cosponsoring the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act, which is being voted on this week.

This is an issue that quite often brings controversy, Mr. Speaker. Each one of us on this floor—and no matter what our position is, I am sure there are reasons why we hold to those beliefs. Mine are my faith, but they are also experiences that I have had in life, especially when we start talking about the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act.

Fifteen years ago, Mr. Speaker, I was present when my twin granddaughters were born. They were 25½ weeks. We were hoping they would make it to 26. We lost Ellianna in the womb. Losing her caused labor to start, and then Hallie was born. We held Hallie while Hallie passed.

Now, according to some laws that are in this Nation, you should be able to abort a child at that age. Well, I can tell you that you have never held one at that age. We can sit and say: Oh, well, I don't agree with abortion.

But let me tell you something else that has taken place. I think we have a responsibility to take care of those young women who have children who might not be at the best time in their life and issues that come up.

And let me also say this. I want to talk about a group that was formed called Tender Mercies that ministers to women who have lost a child, have aborted a child, had miscarriages, all of these issues. And why do I want to talk about that? Because my daughter runs that not-for-profit to take care of the mental and physical needs that occur after something like that occurs.

It is important that we as members of the United States Congress understand that, when we stand for life, not only do we stand for life, but we also stand for those people who are in those situations, to help them through those times. We are a nation that cares. We are, as many times as we argue back and forth on this floor. Mr. Speaker, I pray that everyone on this floor on both sides of the aisle remembers that.

I thank the people who are walking tomorrow to stand for the right to life.

PASS THE DREAM ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR). The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the 800,000 DREAMers, including the 200,000 from my home State of California.

Mr. Speaker, these young people are terrified about what will become of them if Congress doesn't live up to its promise to protect them.

There is a way to resolve this. There is a way. Congress can pass the Dream Act, which restores protection for the DREAMers. The act provides for undocumented American students who graduate from American high schools, who are of good moral character, have arrived in the United States as children, and have been in the country continuously for 4 years the opportunity to earn conditional permanent residency for 8 years.

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That seems absolutely fair to me, and I think to so many others. Now, during that time, the student must pursue higher education, serve in the military, or work lawfully for at least 3 years.

Students who meet these conditions are granted permanent residency and the ability to one day become U.S. citizens. This is not a handout. This is not a grab by unworthy people. These are very high standards, and I think standards that U.S. citizens should meet day in and day out and don't always meet these standards, most frankly.

This is bipartisan legislation. It is supported by the faith community across our country, by businesses, by law enforcement, and by 82 percent of the American people. I think that that passes a very high standard, a very high test, and I am confident that, if the Speaker of the House would allow a vote on this legislation, it would pass today if it were brought to the floor of the House for a vote.

These 800,000 young men and women are not just court cases or statistics. Each of them has a spark of divinity in them. They are young men and young women who have obtained driver's licenses. They have work permits. They have pursued higher education. They are contributing their talents, their heart and soul, to this country.

Many say: Tell them to go home. They are home. This is the only country they know. This is the country that they love. They are serving in our military. In my congressional district, Silicon Valley, where all Members of Congress want to go and visit and see what innovation is happening, what innovation is bringing about, the majority of those geniuses who are producing this innovation are immigrants to our country.

I stand here as a first-generation American. And if the tenor of some in Congress—not all—but some in Congress—certainly the White House—were in charge when my parents were children, that boat would have had to have made a U-turn. They would not have been welcome in America because they weren't from Norway. They were from the Middle East. Yet, today, their daughter stands here on the floor of the House to address the House and the people of our Nation.

Our Nation, from its beginnings, was built by immigrants. I stand here today to say I love immigrants. They are the backbone of each generation and really the blood that flows through the veins of America. If you put a clamp on that vein, you stop the heart of America from beating.

Shortly after President Trump terminated the DACA program, Pope Francis said: "To all people"—of the United States—"I ask: take care of the migrant who is a promise of life for the future."

Please follow his words, Mr. Speaker and Members of the House, and we will be a better nation because of it.

REBECCA'S STORY OF SLAVERY

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Rebecca grew up in a small town in southern Oregon. She was on the honor roll, and she played varsity sports. She graduated high school early and immediately enrolled in Oregon State University. However, when her daughter was born, she had to withdraw to find a job.

Like many single moms, Rebecca struggled to make ends meet. But when she met a man she described as "Prince Charming," she thought things were finally turning around for her. He was kind, and caring, and offered to take care of her and her baby daughter. With expensive gifts and trips, he treated her to a lifestyle that she had never dreamed of. So when he asked her and her daughter to move in with him, Rebecca thought she had hit the

jackpot. But her dream quickly became another nightmare.

When she arrived in Las Vegas at his home, she found several other women and children already living there. This man then told her that now she would be forced to have sex with men for money. When she refused, he beat her up, hitting her over and over again.

Fearing for her life and the life of her child, Rebecca complied. So for the next 6 years, Rebecca was forced to have sex with countless strangers many times a day. Any time she stepped out of line, he beat her up. She had her face broken in five different places. Her trafficker even went so far as to tattoo his name on her back. Yes, branded her like cattle. She was nothing but a piece of property to him.

After her fourth attempt to escape, her trafficker told her that he would start selling her young daughter for sex if she didn't comply and submit. Feeling utterly hopeless, Rebecca tried to commit suicide two times. She thought that ending her life was preferable to living in the hell that she had to endure every day.

Finally, Federal agents raided her home and captured the trafficker. But, Mr. Speaker, he eventually took a plea deal and only served 1 year in prison for slavery. Meanwhile, Rebecca was left to deal with a lifetime of pain and trauma. As a former judge, Mr. Speaker, I believe the sentence was too light for a slave trader. No human being should ever have to endure what Rebecca and other trafficking victims like her have gone through.

Despite the system failing to provide justice against her trafficker, Rebecca has found a way to turn her darkness into light. Since becoming a survivor, she started the Rebecca Bender Initiative. This program provides training for those who have the opportunity to be intercepted and intervene with victims who are often being trafficked.

In this Human Trafficking Awareness Month, I want to commend Rebecca on her resilience and focus on providing support and compassion to the victims of trafficking. As co-chair of the Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus, along with my friend JIM COSTA from California, we are dedicated to ensuring that victims and survivors know that we as a nation will stand with them.

Traffickers, buyers, and sellers must be prosecuted and sent to the jailhouse. And with the help of local, State, and Federal law enforcement, we are going to stop the sale of our children and our adult women on the marketplace of sex slavery.

Mr. Speaker, the 13th Amendment abolished slavery in the United States, but it is still taking place, and it is time that we defeat this scourge on our community. Justice demands this, and justice is what we do.

And that is just the way it is.

FEDERAL INVOLVEMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IS NEEDED

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about our need to invest in America, to invest in our future. Sound infrastructure is literally and figuratively the foundation of our Nation's economy. But, for quite some time, we in Washington have not provided the critical funding for our infrastructure projects that our communities around the country need.

We must stop living off the investments that our parents and grandparents made generations ago and, instead, start intelligently investing in our infrastructure again. The American Society of Civil Engineers estimates that, to update our infrastructure system, we need to make an investment of over \$1 trillion. And, of course, the President has talked about such a bipartisan package.

One key to intelligent investment is the Federal Government matching infrastructure funds for State and local governments. This is needed, and it has been historic to, in fact, make these projects a reality.

As we see from our history, infrastructure projects in this country move forward most effectively when we have a combination of local, State, and Federal dollars to invest. Across the country, State and local governments are raising funds to repair and improve infrastructure, often making tough political choices for raising taxes or making difficult decisions when required to do so.

This is happening both in red and blue States alike. In all three of the counties in my district, Merced, Madera, and Fresno Counties, they have voted to increase their local sales tax by a half cent in order to pay for essential transportation projects, including road repairs and construction of new road systems and highways.

Last year, the California State Legislature and the Governor enacted a bill to increase the State gas tax and vehicle fees to pay for bridges, roads, and other transportation improvement projects over the next 10 years.

Currently, these are tough decisions, tough political decisions, but the policy implications, notwithstanding the political risks, are worth it. Our State and local leaders in California have taken these risks. It is the right thing to do. It takes dollars to fill potholes. That is the bottom line. To repair bridges and improve road systems, it takes dollars. It is not magic.

And now the Federal Government needs to step up and face the challenge head on. We need to be responsible in our Nation's Capital. I have been working hard for years to improve the infrastructure in California's San Joaquin Valley, both in the statehouse and now here in Congress, and we have made