

So when I looked through these numbers, they don't at all paint the picture that I am hearing from these Members of Congress among Democrats or Republicans on what a DACA recipient really is and what the typical profile would be of these DACA recipients.

It is true that many of them did, according to the records, come in at a fairly young age. I actually thought that would be higher than it turned out to be. There are around 135,000 of these 817,000 who were brought in at prime gang age recruitment. The oldest one now is about 37 years old. So I presume some of them are grandparents by now.

The rule of law is hanging in the balance. It is our job to keep our oath of office, and that is to preserve, protect, and defend this Constitution of the United States, and that means defend the rule of law. If we allow it to be sacrificed here because our hearts or our politics overrule our heads, then this country will rue the day, and none of us who votes on this issue here will live to see the day that the rule of law is restored again.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

CONSERVATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL) for 14½ minutes.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, as I begin, I and many others have been outraged by the President's zero-tolerance policy, so it is so therapeutic for me to stand before you today and talk about a program that brings us together rather than divides us. Today I rise to celebrate the successes of the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The LWCF is a highly successful conservation program, and it enjoys great bipartisan support. It was created in 1964. It was a bipartisan commitment to safeguard our natural areas, to safeguard our water resources, and to protect and enhance our cultural heritage. We also wanted to be able to provide for recreational opportunities for all Americans.

It was a simple idea. It said: Use the resources from the depletion of one resource, which was offshore oil and gas, to support the conservation of another precious resource, our land and water.

Over its 50-year history, with no cost to taxpayers, it has provided critical access to public lands for hunting, fishing, biking, hiking, climbing, paddling, and many other outdoor activities that Americans enjoy. It has protected critical watersheds, ecosystems that provide for clean, safe drinking water, and has protected the habitat for our wildlife. Finally, it has provided protection and access for cultural and historic sites across our Nation.

Fifty percent of it goes to local and State grants, which help to build and preserve local and State parks, trails, and wildlife areas. Fifty percent in my

State we have used for habitat conservation programs and the Forest Legacy Program. The other 50 percent goes to support access and conservation in and around our U.S. public land.

So, for example, in my district or near my district, really near my district, we have places like the Channel Islands National Park, Joshua Tree National Park, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, and Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge. They all benefit from the Land and Water.

I would like to say that where we are is that we have a bill now. We finally must deal with the reauthorization, and we have a bill, H.R. 502, that reauthorizes the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and it has the support of 35 Republicans and 194 Democrats. Mr. Speaker, it must be reauthorized before September 30. I ask that you bring it to the floor of the House because it will have overwhelming support.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. KILMER).

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today just to join my colleagues in urging the House to reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund before it expires this September.

I think former Senator "Scoop" Jackson said it best when he introduced the legislation to create this fund nearly a half century ago. He said Americans "go to the open areas." The LWCF is what helps ensure we have open areas in our community where the next generation can gather.

People in my neck of the woods have 600 more open areas to go to in Washington State thanks to the Land and Water Conservation Fund's \$600 million investment in our region. The Land and Water Conservation Fund has helped build parks in places like Tacoma and has helped protect forestland in Kitsap and Mason Counties, without a cost to taxpayers.

Folks come to our region to visit unique places supported by the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and then they stick around to spend some money at our local shops and restaurants. So by investing in the Land and Water Conservation Fund, Congress supports jobs and small businesses. This is good for our economy.

Congress gets a lot for their money when they invest in the Land and Water Conservation Fund. This money helps communities attract private dollars from multiple sources to accomplish big goals. It is the glue that holds these big projects together.

I would like to highlight a couple of the projects that have had a big impact in my neck of the woods.

The South Puget Sound Coastal Forest Legacy Project is a partnership between The Trust for Public Land and Green Diamond Resources Company that will help protect nearly 10,000 acres of working forestlands along the Hood Canal. Keeping this land off-lim-

its to development will help maintain working forest jobs and recreational access to Mason County trails. It will also protect, roughly, 1,400 acres of shellfish beds that serve more than 20 shellfish companies and 2,000 recreational and Tribal harvesters.

The Salt Creek Recreation Area is another great example of what local communities can achieve thanks to support from the LWCF. I grew up just down the road from Salt Creek, so I can tell you firsthand what a difference this park has made for our region. In fact, I took my kiddos there for an amazing day last summer. From the tide pools and sandy beaches to the panoramic views, it is no wonder this park has become a key driver of our growing recreational economy. That project would not have become a reality without the relatively small—just \$250,000—but vital investment from the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

But the LWCF isn't just about creating opportunity in rural communities; it supports recreational opportunities in urban areas as well. Take the Kandle Park and Pool in Tacoma.

Less than a decade ago, this park was just an empty field with a dilapidated playground; but thanks to support from the LWCF, this park hosts a modern aquatics facility and sports fields that provide a safe, fun, and screen-free place for kids to spend their time.

So in my Washington, what I consider the better Washington, we have seen firsthand that the LWCF grows jobs, supports rural economies, and connects our urban communities to the outdoors.

So that is what is on the line. At a time when we are starving for bipartisanship in this place, look no further than H.R. 502. Mr. Speaker, 229 Members, Democrats and Republicans, have cosponsored this. We have 100 days to get it done. I hope that we get this done.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT).

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from California for yielding.

When I think of California and I think of conservation, I think of John Muir, the father of our national forests and the founder of the Sierra Club. We have a lot to be proud of in California in John Muir. His final resting place was there.

But when I think of conservation, I also think of a wonderful Pennsylvanian conservationist by the name of Gifford Pinchot. Gifford Pinchot was a noted Republican and Progressive conservationist to make Pennsylvania proud. He was the Governor of Pennsylvania twice. He was the first Chief of the United States Forest Service. Above all, he was a pioneer in the American conservation movement. It makes me proud to be from northeastern Pennsylvania where for many, many years Gifford Pinchot lived.

Mr. Speaker, the Land and Water Conservation Fund's authorization expires on September 30. This vital program, which has broad bipartisan and bicameral support, should be made permanent and should be fully funded.

I am proud to support H.R. 502, which permanently authorizes the Land and Water Conservation Fund. It has bipartisan support from 231 cosponsors in the House. Over 30 Republican House Members recently wrote to leadership expressing their support for reauthorizing the Land and Water Conservation Fund this year.

LWCF plays an instrumental role in preserving and protecting our precious drinking water, safeguarding our natural resources, and providing pristine outdoor recreational spaces to millions of Americans, all while creating jobs and supporting local economies.

Stakeholders work together to leverage LWCF funding with other State, local, and private funds to make the most out of every LWCF dollar spent. Without these Federal funds sparking the investment, we would never amass the resources needed to protect critical tracts of land.

LWCF funds are almost always the critical piece of a puzzle that allows precious land to be forever protected and preserved. It is the funds from offshore gas and oil revenue that provide the funding for LWCF, not taxpayer dollars.

We all benefit greatly from the LWCF and the lands that it protects. The outdoor recreation economy generates \$1 trillion per year and supports 7.6 million American jobs. In my district alone, outdoor recreation accounts for well over \$1 billion a year. It is a sector that also annually generates \$65.3 billion in Federal tax revenue and \$59.2 billion in State and local tax revenue.

Our Federal investment in these historic, cultural, and recreational landmarks and wildlife habitats generates a substantial return to the American taxpayer.

As we speak, LWCF is making a dramatic difference in my own district. We have worked for years to find the funds to take advantage of a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to purchase and preserve a beautiful piece of land in the Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge. LWCF helped leverage funding from State, local, and private sources, but without LWCF, this land would have been lost forever. I worked very hard in the Appropriations Committee to make sure the LWCF had enough money to acquire the full 2,931 acres in Cherry Valley.

But we shouldn't have to work this hard for every LWCF dollar. We should be dedicating more money and permanently reauthorizing the LWCF to complete more projects like Cherry Valley.

From historic battlefields like Gettysburg to the very home of Gifford Pinchot—Grey Towers National Historic Site in Milford, Pennsylvania—

LWCF is providing critical funding to protect our most important lands. It has wide-ranging bipartisan support, and it is past time that we permanently reauthorize LWCF and give it the robust funding that it so richly deserves.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from the State of Virginia (Mr. MCEACHIN).

Mr. MCEACHIN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to associate myself with the comments of my colleagues about the importance of our Nation's premier outdoor recreation and conservation program, the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Over the past five decades, LWCF has helped protect our Nation's most treasured places, including many in my congressional district like the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge and both the Richmond and Petersburg National Battlefields.

As we know, authorization of LWCF is set to expire in 100 short days. That is why the timing of this Special Order hour is so critical. If Congress does not reauthorize LWCF, we will lose one of our most powerful tools for protecting our Nation's natural, historical, and cultural landmarks. If that happens, every State and district in our country will feel the damaging consequences.

That outcome is unacceptable, which is why I am proud to cosponsor H.R. 502, which is Ranking Member GRIJALVA's legislation to permanently reauthorize LWCF. I also support robust funding for LWCF in the appropriations bills.

For my constituents, preserving our lands and waters is personal. Virginia's Fourth Congressional District is home to many beautiful public lands and waters, along with many other sites that still need to be protected.

□ 2145

Earlier this month, I toured the beautiful James River National Wildlife Refuge with local nonprofits to highlight the need to reauthorize the LWCF. My tour reminded me that there is no place quite like the James, but my district is far from unique. Across our district, LWCF has helped conserve precious ecosystems that wildlife, people, and local economies needed to survive.

While preserving these lands is the right thing to do, it also makes good business sense. In fact, outdoor recreation generates billions of dollars for the Commonwealth's economy.

The same dynamic applies across the country. That is why I intend to keep up the fight to reauthorize the LWCF. It helps communities protect the places they love, and we owe it to our children and our children's children to keep this tool in place.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

This week marks 100 days until the expiration of the Land and Water Conservation Fund authorization.

The LWCF has assisted New York State in many, many ways over its 50 years to protect some of New York's most special places and ensure recreational access for hunting, fishing, and other outdoor activities.

Both the House and Senate have currently introduced bipartisan bills to permanently reauthorize the LWCF. I am a proud cosponsor of the House bill, H.R. 502, and I urge the House leadership to bring it up for a vote.

Some examples of special places in New York's 20th Congressional District include Thatcher Park in Albany, Frear Park development in Troy, the bike-hike trail in Glenville, Schenectady, Niskayuna, Peebles Island, Congress Park in Saratoga, and Mohawk Mills Park in Amsterdam.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

IMMIGRATION ISSUES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) until 10 p.m.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it has been an interesting week.

We were told when we were starting the week that we were going to be taking up a couple of immigration bills. Before we could even get that started, we were met with a firestorm of absolute outrage about children being separated from their parents.

Well, anybody who is a parent doesn't want that to happen, even though, as a felony judge in Texas, I know. I watched it happened constantly. It happens every day in our country. It is heartbreaking, but it happens every day all over the country when any person in the United States commits a crime and is taken to jail.

I watched it happen over and over in my courtroom. Your heart breaks for their children. You can't let the children go to jail with the parent. Sometimes there is somebody else to take care of them. Sometimes it is Child Protective Services. But it is still heartbreaking. That is what we have seen on the border.

We have a President and Attorney General trying to follow their oath and enforce the law. But it is heartbreaking when you see some of these pictures like the first one here. When I saw that, my heart broke for this beautiful little boy in a blue shirt—actually, I think this is a separate picture, and these are two others—initially, just seeing this, where it looks like he is in a cage.

You feel bad that Jeff Sessions as Attorney General and President Trump are the ones in office when this is going on. But then we find out actually he is a child of one of the protesters that is protesting the Trump administration. He is not really incarcerated. This was completely trumped up, so to speak, by the media and by the groups that are trying to do everything they can since