

Americans. Meanwhile, overall rates of violent crime in the United States have declined significantly over the past 25 years, falling 49 percent from 1993 to 2017. And violent crime rates in the country's 30 largest cities have decreased on average by 2.7 percent in 2018 alone, further undermining any suggestion that recent crime trends currently warrant the declaration of a national emergency.

6. *There is no human or drug trafficking emergency that can be addressed by a wall at the southern border.* The administration has claimed that the presence of human and drug trafficking at the border justifies its emergency declaration. But there is no evidence of any such sudden crisis at the southern border that necessitates a reprogramming of appropriations to build a border wall.

a. The overwhelming majority of opioids that enter the United States across a land border are carried through legal ports of entry in personal or commercial vehicles, not smuggled through unauthorized border crossings. A border wall would not stop these drugs from entering the United States. Nor would a wall stop drugs from entering via other routes, including smuggling tunnels, which circumvent such physical barriers as fences and walls, and international mail (which is how high-purity fentanyl, for example, is usually shipped from China directly to the United States).

b. Likewise, illegal crossings at the southern border are not the principal source of human trafficking victims. About two-thirds of human trafficking victims served by nonprofit organizations that receive funding from the relevant Department of Justice office are U.S. citizens, and even among non-citizens, most trafficking victims usually arrive in the country on valid visas. None of these instances of trafficking could be addressed by a border wall. And the three states with the highest per capita trafficking reporting rates are not even located along the southern border.

7. *This proclamation will only exacerbate the humanitarian concerns that do exist at the southern border.* There are real humanitarian concerns at the border, but they largely result from the current administration's own deliberate policies towards migrants. For example, the administration has used a "metering" policy to turn away families fleeing extreme violence and persecution in their home countries, forcing them to wait indefinitely at the border to present their asylum cases, and has adopted a number of other punitive steps to restrict those seeking asylum at the southern border. These actions have forced asylum-seekers to live on the streets or in makeshift shelters and tent cities with abysmal living conditions, and limited access to basic sanitation has caused outbreaks of disease and death. This state of affairs is a consequence of choices this administration has made, and erecting a wall will do nothing to ease the suffering of these people.

8. *Redirecting funds for the claimed "national emergency" will undermine U.S. national security and foreign policy interests.* In the face of a nonexistent threat, redirecting funds for the construction of a wall along the southern border will undermine national security by needlessly pulling resources from Department of Defense programs that are responsible for keeping our troops and our country safe and running effectively.

a. Repurposing funds from the defense construction budget will drain money from critical defense infrastructure projects, possibly including improvement of military hospitals, construction of roads, and renovation of on-base housing. And the proclamation will likely continue to divert those armed forces already deployed at the southern border from their usual training activities or missions, affecting troop readiness.

b. In addition, the administration's unilateral, provocative actions are heightening tensions with our neighbors to the south, at a moment when we need their help to address a range of Western Hemisphere concerns. These actions are placing friendly governments to the south under impossible pressures and driving partners away. They have especially strained our diplomatic relationship with Mexico, a relationship that is vital to regional efforts ranging from critical intelligence and law enforcement partnerships to cooperative efforts to address the growing tensions with Venezuela. Additionally, the proclamation could well lead to the degradation of the natural environment in a manner that could only contribute to long-term socioeconomic and security challenges.

c. Finally, by declaring a national emergency for domestic political reasons with no compelling reason or justification from his senior intelligence and law enforcement officials, the President has further eroded his credibility with foreign leaders, both friend and foe. Should a genuine foreign crisis erupt, this lack of credibility will materially weaken this administration's ability to marshal allies to support the United States, and will embolden adversaries to oppose us.

9. *The situation at the border does not require the use of the armed forces, and a wall is unnecessary to support the use of the armed forces.* We understand that the administration is also claiming that the situation at the southern border "requires use of the armed forces," and that a wall is "necessary to support such use" of the armed forces. These claims are implausible.

a. Historically, our country has deployed National Guard troops at the border solely to assist the Border Patrol when there was an extremely high number of apprehensions, together with a particularly low number of Border Patrol agents. But currently, even with retention and recruitment challenges, the Border Patrol is at historically high staffing and funding levels, and apprehensions—measured in both absolute and per agent terms—are near historic lows.

b. Furthermore, the composition of southern border crossings has shifted such that families and unaccompanied minors now account for the majority of immigrants seeking entry at the southern border; these individuals do not present a threat that would need to be countered with military force.

c. Just last month, when asked what the military is doing at the border that couldn't be done by the Department of Homeland Security if it had the funding for it, a top-level defense official responded, "[n]one of the capabilities that we are providing [at the southern border] are combat capabilities. It's not a war zone along the border." Finally, it is implausible that hundreds of miles of wall across the southern border are somehow necessary to support the use of armed forces. We are aware of no military- or security-related rationale that could remotely justify such an endeavor.

10. *There is no basis for circumventing the appropriations process with a declaration of a national emergency at the southern border.* We do not deny that our nation faces real immigration and national security challenges. But as the foregoing demonstrates, these challenges demand a thoughtful, evidence-based strategy, not a manufactured crisis that rests on falsehoods and fearmongering. In a briefing before the Senate Intelligence Committee on January 29, 2019, less than one month before the Presidential Proclamation, the Directors of the CIA, DNI, FBI, and NSA testified about numerous serious current threats to U.S. national security, but none of the officials identified a security crisis at the U.S.-Mexico border. In a briefing before the House Armed Services Committee the next day,

Pentagon officials acknowledged that the 2018 National Defense Strategy does not identify the southern border as a security threat. Leading legislators with access to classified information and the President's own statements have strongly suggested, if not confirmed, that there is no evidence supporting the administration's claims of an emergency. And it is reported that the President made the decision to circumvent the appropriations process and reprogram money without the Acting Secretary of Defense having even started to consider where the funds might come from, suggesting an absence of consultation and internal deliberations that in our experience are necessary and expected before taking a decision of this magnitude.

11. For all of the foregoing reasons, in our professional opinion, there is no factual basis for the declaration of a national emergency for the purpose of circumventing the appropriations process and reprogramming billions of dollars in funding to construct a wall at the southern border, as directed by the Presidential Proclamation of February 15, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

Signed,

Madeleine K. Albright, Jeremy B. Bash, John B. Bellinger III, Daniel Benjamin, Antony Blinken, John O. Brennan, R. Nicholas Burns, William J. Burns, Johnnie Carson, James Clapper.

David S. Cohen, Eliot A. Cohen, Ryan Crocker, Thomas Donilon, Jen Easterly, Nancy Ely-Raphel, Daniel P. Erikson, John D. Feeley, Daniel F. Feldman, Jonathan Finer.

Jendayi Frazer, Suzy George, Phil Gordon, Chuck Hagel, Avril D. Haines, Luke Hartig, Heather A. Higginbottom, Roberta Jacobson, Gil Kerlikowske, John F. Kerry.

Prem Kumar, John E. McLaughlin, Lisa O. Monaco, Janet Napolitano, James D. Nealon, James C. O'Brien, Matthew G. Olsen, Leon E. Panetta, Anne W. Patterson, Thomas R. Pickering.

Amy Pope, Samantha J. Power, Jeffrey Prescott, Nicholas Rasmussen, Alan Charles Raul, Dan Restrepo, Susan E. Rice, Anne C. Richard, Eric P. Schwartz, Andrew J. Shapiro.

Wendy R. Sherman, Vikram Singh, Dana Shell Smith, Jeffrey H. Smith, Jake Sullivan, Strobe Talbott, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Arturo A. Valenzuela.

TRIBUTE TO TOM FONTANA

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I would like to offer my congratulations to Tom Fontana, special assistant to the CEO for the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, CVC, on his retirement after 30 years of Federal service.

Tom began his career at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1988. He was responsible for communications for one of the Corps' largest projects, the renovation of the Pentagon in the 1990s. He eventually joined the U.S. Department of Defense, where he continued working to successfully completing the project. Tom was at the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, when a plane hijacked by terrorist crashed into the building.

While Tom had just accepted a position with the Architect of the Capitol, AOC, to manage communications for the construction phase of the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, due to the tragedy, he remained in his position at the Pentagon to lend assistance before assuming his role with the CVC in 2001.

Throughout the construction of the CVC, Tom provided countless tours and briefings to Members of Congress, including leadership and their staff. Given his depth of knowledge, responsiveness, and evenhandedness through that challenging time, Tom earned great respect from the Members of Congress and the media in Washington.

In 2008, Tom subsequently assumed the role of director of communications and marketing for the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center. Under Tom's leadership, the CVC communications division expanded from providing the basics of a startup operation, to providing a wide range of communications to help visitors learn about the Capitol and workings of Congress. He has always looked for ways to take advantage of new technologies to engage visitors, students in particular, about Congress's history. Under his leadership, the first AOC apps were developed, and one of them received a national award for its innovation.

For many Members of Congress, dignitaries, AOC, and CVC staff, Tom is the authoritative voice on the Capitol Visitor Center. He is widely respected for his unique knowledge about the Capitol building and grounds. From presenting inspiring tours to engaging visitors who are simply seeking directions, he personifies an experience all visitors expect when they come to the U.S. Capitol. Tom is an ambassador for the CVC, the Capitol, and Congress without equal.

Tom has also been an incredible asset to me and my office throughout his leadership at the CVC. Every year, I host a unique dinner on Capitol Hill for governmental leaders from all over the continent of Africa, including heads of state, legislators, and cabinet members. Ambassadors and guests who are key leaders in Africa also attend, along with several U.S. legislators. Prior to the dinner, we provide the guests with a tour of the Capitol to learn more about our Capitol building and the workings of Congress. Throughout all of the years I have held the tour and dinner, Tom has gone above and beyond what was required to make our guests feel welcome and to ensure that everything runs smoothly. His role in the success of our event has become so essential that, several years ago, we began inviting Tom to the dinner not only to support it, but to take part in it.

Tom leaves big shoes to fill. My Senate colleagues and I appreciate Tom's hard work and commitment to our Capitol and country. He will be missed, but I wish him all the best in his retirement.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING SERGEANT RAMBO

• Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, today, with a heavy heart, I wish to pay tribute to Sergeant Rambo N557, a

medically retired military working dog—MWD—who dedicated his life to the Marine Corps and raising awareness for his fellow retired working dogs. Sadly, Sergeant Rambo passed away earlier this month. He will be remembered for his loving spirit and lifetime of service.

Sergeant Rambo served as an explosive detection MWD based out of MCCS Cherry Point, NC, from January 6, 2011, to April 11, 2012. Throughout his Active Duty, Sergeant Rambo completed 620 stateside searches, two official stateside missions, and about 1,000 hours of training. Unfortunately, a left shoulder injury prevented him from deploying. Nonetheless, he served valiantly alongside his handler, protecting their base and the community until retirement.

Connecticut native Lisa Phillips, who served in the U.S. Army as a veterinary technician, adopted Sergeant Rambo after his retirement. Despite needing an amputation because of his earlier injury, he remained committed to serving his Nation.

Well loved by people of all ages and capacities, Sergeant Rambo visited summer youth groups and local nursing homes, connecting with and bringing hope to children with special needs and elderly people suffering from dementia. His joyful and empathetic personality allowed him to bond with people across the Nation.

Sergeant Rambo also used his experiences to highlight animal welfare, military, and veteran issues. He became the mascot for Alamo Honor Flight, accompanying World War II veterans to Washington, DC, and for Gizmo's Gift, a nonprofit that supports people who have adopted retired working dogs by offering free medical care and other necessary financial support. He and Lisa attended press events with me, helping gain backing for the Canine Members of the Armed Forces Act, which sought to improve care for MWDs once their Active Duty ends by streamlining the adoption process and establishing a national non-profit to cover the veterinary costs associated with retired working dogs. Several provisions of that act have become law.

In 2015, the American Humane Association named Sergeant Rambo the Military Dog of the Year. He and Lisa used this platform to give a TEDx Talk the next year about MWDs and Gizmo's Gift. Then, in March 2017, they testified before the Connecticut General Assembly about a bill to establish K-9 Veterans Day in our State.

My wife Cynthia and I extend our deepest sympathies to Lisa during this difficult time. We know without a doubt that Sergeant Rambo's legacy will leave a positive impact on the lives he touched and causes he championed for years to come.●

RECOGNIZING MAGELLAN TRANSPORT LOGISTICS

• Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I wish to honor and commend one of the dedi-

cated and hard-working small businesses that does so much for the State of Florida. As chairman of the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize a small business that exemplifies the unique American entrepreneurial spirit. Today, it is my distinct pleasure to name Magellan Transport Logistics, of Jacksonville, FL, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

Founded in 2006, Magellan Transport Logistics is a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business dedicated to providing its customers with a wide range of transportation needs. Tom Piatak founded Magellan Transport Logistics based on many of the same qualities that he learned while serving in the U.S. Army. A graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, Tom instills into the company the values he learned from West Point, as well as from his service as a combat engineer during Operation Desert Storm.

Today, Tom serves as chief executive officer and chairman of Magellan. Under his guidance, the company has quickly become a leader in supporting the vast transportation needs of its clients. Tom and his team have gained much of their success by recruiting some of the most talented leaders and logistics professionals in the industry. By instituting four core values of entrepreneurship, ownership mentality, innovation, and transparency within the company, Magellan has created a positive culture that has translated into rapid growth and success. In March of 2018, Magellan announced the acquisition of a 47,000-square-foot warehouse and the hiring of 100 employees over the next 5 years, furthering its investment in the Jacksonville community.

Magellan is known for its dedication to its employees and as a pillar of the Jacksonville community. The company offers complete logistics and transportation services, both local and international, by truck or airplane, while also providing warehousing services and supply chain management. Magellan has built strong relationships with its clients by embracing the "no man left behind" principle that Tom learned during his time serving our country in the U.S. Army.

As a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business, Magellan is committed to hiring veterans and participating in community service events to benefit America's veterans. This past December, Magellan sponsored 20 wreaths for National Wreaths Across America Day, as well as assisted with unloading and placing the memorial wreaths on the graves of fallen servicemembers. Magellan actively supports the Wounded Warrior Project, and their commitment to veterans in their community is a testament to the company's values.

In addition to their continued service to our Nation's veterans, Magellan has also aided the community in disaster relief efforts. Following Hurricane Michael in the fall of 2018, Magellan