

this Congress. I thank and applaud my colleagues for coming together on behalf of our Nation's defense, which is especially important in a time of disillusionment and seeming dysfunction for the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

REMEMBERING WILLIAM MODEN

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I rise today to honor an officer of the Colorado State Patrol whose watch tragically came to an end earlier this month when he was killed in the line of duty.

On June 14, 2019, Trooper William Moden was responding to an accident that occurred on I-70 in Deer Trail, CO. He was doing what he did every day—responding to an incident and giving a helping hand to Coloradans in need. He was assisting the passengers of a vehicle who were involved in a crash—one of whom was an 18-month-old child—when he was struck by a passing vehicle.

Like too many of our Nation's law enforcement officers, Trooper Moden gave his life while protecting and serving others.

William Moden was 37 years old and had served in the Colorado State Patrol for 12 years. His fellow troopers remember him as someone whose uniform was always perfect and whose boots were always polished. There is no doubt for any of them that he was meant to serve and that he did so with the utmost honor and dignity.

While Trooper Moden carried out his duties with seriousness, his friends and loved ones remember him as someone with a tremendous sense of humor. At a memorial service held last week, he was described as having an infectious laugh—a laugh that was usually the loudest in the room. Many at the service remembered the time he put on a dog's shock collar just to see how it felt and to make others laugh. These are the kinds of memories his loved ones will remember forever.

Just as he answered when his Coloradans called, his friends and family say he was someone who could always be counted on. He was reliable, dependable, and they often described him as their “knight in shining armor”—someone who is always there to provide care and comfort. The chief of the Colorado State Patrol, Colonel Matt Packard, described William Moden as “the true personification of what it means to be a Colorado State Trooper.”

At the memorial service last week, Trooper Moden was awarded the title of “Master Trooper”—a rank given only to those who show great leadership and character. To those who knew him, William completely exemplified these characteristics and is certainly deserving of this high honor.

We know we can never pay the debt of gratitude owed to people like William Moden, who risk their lives every

day to ensure their communities are safe. The best we can offer is to never forget and to continue to celebrate the lives of those who sacrifice everything.

I know my Senate colleagues will join me in mourning the loss of Trooper Moden and all those who have given their lives in defending the thin blue line.

So for the second time this year, I come to the floor of the U.S. Senate and remember the words of LTC Dave Grossman, who said, “American law enforcement is the loyal and brave sheep dog always standing watch for the wolf that lurks in the dark.”

I hope the outpouring of love and support that Trooper Moden's family and friends have received in the past few weeks bring them a small bit of comfort.

To Trooper Moden's family and loved ones, our State thanks you for your service, sacrifice, and willingness to share William with the people of Colorado.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I come to the floor once again to speak about a humanitarian crisis that is not taking place in Yemen or in Syria or in any foreign country but, rather, right here at the southern border of the United States.

They say a picture speaks a thousand words, but I think it is even more than that. Photographs have the power to cut through noise, speak the truth, and invoke action.

We all remember the heartbreaking image of a little boy who was covered in ash while he sat in an ambulance in Syria. It told us all we needed to know about acts of mass murder committed by Bashar al-Assad. Likewise, we remember the look in the eyes of the malnourished girl who was on the brink of death in Yemen—one of more than 85,000 children to have succumbed to hunger during Saudi Arabia's disastrous bombing campaign. Yet the photo I have brought to the floor today has shaken me to the core as a father, as a grandfather, as a son of immigrants, and above all else, as an American.

Like the other photographs I mentioned, this one tells a story too. This one speaks an ugly truth, and that truth is that President Trump's cruel, inhumane, and un-American border policies have failed. They have failed to make us safer. They have failed to reduce migration to our border. They have also failed to live up to the American values that define our leadership around the world.

We will never forget this heartbreaking photo. More importantly, we will not forget the names of Oscar Alberto Martinez and his 23-month-old daughter, Valeria. They drowned in a

desperate attempt to claim asylum in the United States.

Oscar, Valeria, and Tania, her mother, fled El Salvador in the hopes of seeking asylum in the United States.

The Washington Post reported:

They traveled more than 1,000 miles seeking it. . . . But the farthest the family got was an international bridge in Matamoros, Mexico. On Sunday, they were told the bridge was closed and that they should return Monday. Aid workers told The Post the line to get across the bridge was hundreds long.

The young family was desperate. Standing on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande, America looked within reach. Martinez and Valeria waded in. But before they all made it to the other side, the river waters pulled the 25-year-old and his daughter under and swept them away.

Later, when Mexican authorities recovered their bodies, Oscar and Valeria were still clinging to each other.

Here in the United States, it is hard to imagine what kind of desperate conditions would propel you to flee your home and embark on a perilous journey in search of protection from a foreign nation.

Most of these families who arrive at our border come from Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras—three countries that are collectively known as the Northern Triangle. It is a region that is plagued by transnational gang violence, weak institutions, and poverty. Young boys are forced into servitude by gangs. Young girls are beaten and raped if they refuse to become their girlfriends. Parents who try to protect their children end up getting killed. These countries are among the most dangerous in the world. In El Salvador, a woman is murdered every 19 hours, and in Honduras—the country with the highest homicide rate in the world for women—a woman is killed every 16 hours.

To be blunt, these families face an impossible choice. It is either stay and die or flee for a chance to live.

Well, if this horrific and tragic photograph does anything, I hope it dispels us of the ludicrous notion that you can deter desperate families from fleeing their homes in search of safety. That is how the Trump administration describes its cruel policies at the border—deterrence.

In the name of deterrence, it is tearing children and babies away from their mothers and fathers. In the name of deterrence, it is shutting down legitimate ports of entry, effectively encouraging migrant families to seek more dangerous methods of getting into the United States, like crossing the Rio Grande. In the name of deterrence, children are being housed in unsanitary conditions, which leaves infants in dirty diapers and children without soap or toothpaste.

Let me share with our colleagues just a few of the statements that the children who have been kept in these abhorrent conditions have made.

Said one 8-year-old boy:

They took us away from our grandmother, and now we are all alone. They have not

given us to our mother. We have been here for a long time. I have to take care of my little sister. She is very sad because she misses our mother and grandmother very much. . . . We sleep on a cement bench. There are two mats in the room, but the big kids sleep on the mats, so we have to sleep on the cement bench.

Consider the words of a 16-year-old girl:

We slept on mats on the floor, and they gave us aluminum blankets. They took our baby's diapers, baby formula, and all of our belongings. Our clothes were still wet, and we were very cold, so we got sick. . . . I have been in the U.S. for 6 days, and I have never been offered a shower or been able to brush my teeth. There is no soap, and our clothes are dirty. They have never been washed.

Finally, here are the words of a 17-year-old mother:

I was given a blanket and a mattress, but then, at 3 a.m., the guards took the blanket and mattress. My baby was left sleeping on the floor. In fact, almost every night, the guards wake us at 3 a.m. and take away our sleeping mattresses and blankets. . . . They leave babies, even little babies of 2 or 3 months, sleeping on the cold floor. For me, because I am so pregnant, sleeping on the floor is very painful for my back and hips. I think the guards act this way to punish us.

This is not the America I know. Yet this administration wants us to forget who we are. This administration wants us to believe that if the Government of the United States is cruel enough, that if it denies those who seek asylum all semblances of humanity, that if we ignore basic standards of child welfare, and that if we abandon fundamental American values like respect for human rights, then desperate families who flee Central America will stop coming here.

It is not true. The entire doctrine of deterrence is grounded in hideous lies, beginning with the lie the President has fed the people from the moment he launched his campaign in 2015—the lie that immigrants are a threat to our security. President Trump has cast immigrants as criminals and rapists and drug dealers when the truth is that these migrants are the ones who are fleeing the criminals, the rapists, and the drug dealers.

I am sick and tired of these lies, like when the President repeatedly says he inherited the policy of family separation from the Obama administration. That is a lie. The Trump administration masterminded this despicable policy, pure and simple.

These cruel policies are not working. They have done nothing to stem the tide of families who seek asylum in the United States. They have done nothing to stabilize Central America and to alleviate the conditions that force families to seek refuge here.

It is time to turn the page. There are so many alternatives to detention that are available to the DHS that are far more humane and far less costly to the taxpayers.

Consider the Obama administration's pilot program known as the family case management system. It established procedures to treat migrant fam-

ilies humanely as their cases moved forward. Pregnant women, nursing mothers, or mothers with young children were given caseworkers who helped to educate them on their rights and their responsibilities. They were connected to community resources or to family in the country who could help them.

According to an inspector general's report, the program was an enormous success. It had a compliance rate of 99 percent. That means that 99 percent of the time, families in the program showed up for their ICE check-ins and appointments. Likewise, they showed up 100 percent of the time for their immigration court hearings. Tell me—how many government programs work 100 percent of the time? It is very rare. This one did, but that didn't stop President Trump from terminating it. Even though it had a 99-percent compliance and check-in rate and had 100 percent who showed up for their hearings, oh, no. Evidently, that was not good enough for the Trump administration, for it was far more humane and far less costly to the taxpayers.

Beyond embracing alternatives to mass detention, we must ramp up humanitarian assistance at the border. That is why I voted yesterday for the House's emergency supplemental bill, which would provide desperately needed support to on-the-ground organizations and would better ensure the humane treatment of children who are in CBP custody.

The House bill included strong guardrails to prevent this White House from using these funds to pursue its draconian detention practices and mass deportation agenda. While the Senate bill fell short in these areas, I hope the administration uses whatever money it receives to ensure that the children are properly cared for—in a way that respects basic human rights.

Solving this crisis will take more than humanitarian funding. If President Trump were serious about reducing migration, he would be working day and night to improve the conditions that are driving families to flee Central America in the first place. Instead, he has cut off aid to the Northern Triangle and has undermined critical U.S. efforts to work with Central American governments to crack down on gang violence, strengthen the rule of law, and alleviate poverty.

These programs were working, and the Trump administration knows it. Why do I say that? In recent years, Congress has not only increased funding for foreign assistance to Central America, but it has required these governments to meet clear benchmarks in order to demonstrate their progress in areas like combating drug trafficking and strengthening their legal systems.

The Trump administration has acknowledged the effectiveness of these programs on several occasions. In fact, it has sent Congress not one, not two, but nine different reports that have certified these benchmarks have been met.

Here is just one of them that has been signed by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo:

I hereby certify that the central government of El Salvador is informing its citizens of the dangers of the journey to the southwest border of the United States; combating human smuggling and trafficking; improving border security, including preventing illegal migration, human smuggling and trafficking, and trafficking of illicit drugs and other contraband; and cooperating with the United States Government agencies and other governments in the region to facilitate the return, repatriation, and reintegration of illegal migrants arriving at the southwest border of the United States who do not qualify for asylum consistent with international law.

This one is dated August 11, 2018. There are nine certifications by the Secretary of State saying that the programs we had going on and working in Central America were, in fact, working.

But we all know this President has no respect for facts or evidence-based reality. His decision to punish Central American governments for the migration crisis by slashing aid is only making the crisis worse. It absolutely makes no sense.

If we want to reduce migration from Central America, we need a bold strategy to address the root causes driving families in fear from their home. That is why my colleagues and I have introduced the Central America Reform and Enforcement Act. Our bill would dramatically expand U.S. engagement in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala through proven programs that help strengthen the rule of law, combat violence, and build prosperity. Our bill would also minimize border crossings by expanding refugee processing centers in the region in an effort to reduce demand at the border, and, finally, it includes several measures to protect the welfare of children and ensure efficient, fair, and timely processing of asylum seekers.

Now, this administration may wish the Northern Triangle's serious problems would just go away, but the longer we let these conditions fester, the greater this migration crisis will become.

There is a very real possibility that President Trump views a growing crisis at the border as an asset in his path to reelection in 2020. The President believes his best shot at winning elections is to stoke fear of migrant children who pose no threat but desperately need the safe embrace of Lady Liberty.

After all, President Trump cannot campaign on solving the student loan debt crisis or providing Americans with better, cheaper healthcare, or making sure that big corporations pay their fair share. He has failed on all these fronts and more. The only play left in the Trump playbook is to blame immigrants for America's problems instead of solving America's problems.

That is what I call the politics of hate. The politics of hate is what led

President Trump to attempt to ban Muslims from traveling to the United States. The politics of hate is what led President Trump to end DACA and threaten 800,000 Dreamers with deportation to countries they have never called home—young people who through no choice of their own were brought to the United States, the only country they have ever pledged allegiance to is the United States and to the flag of the United States. The only national anthem they know is the Star Spangled Banner. The only place they have ever called home is America.

The politics of hate is what led President Trump to attack TPS holders and jeopardize thousands of parents to American-born children. The politics of hate is what led the administration to forcibly separate nearly 2,800 children from their parents—and maybe thousands more, because they don't even have a recordkeeping system of where all of these children are. That is a policy that will forever be a stain on our history.

The politics of hate is what led President Trump to tweet out his plan to send ICE agents into our communities to terrorize our towns and cities with mass arrests and mass deportations. It is a plan that would leave millions of U.S.-born American citizen children wondering: Why mom never came to pick me up at school or why dad never made it home for dinner. It is a plan that would inflict traumatic and irreparable harm on American children who would not only have to reckon with the loss of a parent but the loss of the income provided by that parent. The politics of hate led to the remain-in-Mexico policy, which forces asylum seekers to remain in Mexico amid dangerous conditions.

Indeed, just yesterday, U.S. asylum officers requested that the courts block the Trump administration from requiring migrants to stay in Mexico, stating it is "fundamentally contrary to the moral fabric of our Nation and our international domestic legal obligations."

Now, in the latest action, I fear it is the politics of hate that explain the awful press reports we heard today suggesting that President Trump plans to end a program that protects undocumented members of U.S. military families from deportation. Imagine that—someone who wears the uniform of the United States, who may serve halfway around the world in service to the Nation, who risks their lives, and now you are going to take the one program that put their mind at ease—that their spouse or child, who may be undocumented in the country and had the ability to stay because of that service-member's service, and now you are going to say you are going to deport their children, their spouse.

Well, if someone is willing to wear the uniform of the United States, pledge allegiance to our flag, and risk their life to defend this Nation in battle, the last thing we ought to do is to deport their loved ones.

The Trump administration's policies at our border have brought us nothing but chaos, despair, and shame. We cannot let the politics of fear and hate degrade the values that make America great.

We cannot wall off our country from the strife gripping Central America. We cannot tweet our way out of this problem. We must lead our way out of this problem with real solutions and strategies that bring sanity, dignity, and order back to our border and prevent the kind of tragic loss of human life we saw earlier this week on the banks of the Rio Grande. We are just better than this. We are just better than this.

If my colleagues do not raise their voices, then, they are complicit to this. History will judge us poorly.

I hope we will have bipartisan voices who say: This is not who we are; this is not what we stand for. And we can work toward making sure this tragic photograph never ever happens again.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I was coming to floor today to talk about legislation we just got passed in the last week in the Homeland Security Committee with the hopes that I can convince some of my colleagues to join us in this effort, and I will talk about that bill in a moment. But first let me, if I could, address the photograph and the comments from my colleague from New Jersey.

He showed a tragic photograph that so many of my constituents and all Americans have seen—Oscar Alberto Martinez Ramirez and his daughter Valeria, facedown in the Rio Grande.

This man came from El Salvador. We don't know all the details yet, but clearly he was interested in coming to the United States and applying for asylum, as so many others have come—hundreds a day, thousands a week, hundreds of thousands a month now, overwhelming the infrastructure at the border, pulling 40 to 60 percent of our Border Patrol off the border to deal with the humanitarian crisis that has occurred.

That tragic photograph—and it is a horrific photo of a daughter clinging to her father's neck, having drowned in the Rio Grande coming over from Mexico—should be a wake-up call. I agree with that, but it should not be a wake-up call to have us continue to point fingers around here at the other side and blame someone else for the problem. It should instead be a wake-up call for solutions—for bipartisan solutions—because that is all that works to be able to resolve these issues.

I hope the first step will be taken today, because I just learned, as I came to the floor, that the House of Representatives is now considering taking up the legislation we passed here in the

Senate just yesterday. It provides immediate emergency funds for humanitarian assistance at the border that is needed right now. We passed it with over 80 votes here in the Senate—82 votes, with 9 of our Members absent, I believe. Over 82 votes is very unusual for anything to pass around here, particularly something so substantial.

It is bipartisan. It came out of the Appropriations Committee with a 30-to-1 vote to get these funds and these resources down to the border now to help with this true humanitarian crisis that we are facing. Everyone must acknowledge that.

The House was balking at that. They were sending us another bill that had some partisan elements to it that no Republican could support in the House—not a single one.

Finally, I think they have decided to pick up our bipartisan bill and pass it, and thank God, because now the President can sign it and that aid can go down to our border immediately where it is needed.

But I have to be frank with you. That humanitarian aid going down to the border is not enough because I don't think it would have had an impact on the tragic photograph that was talked about on the floor earlier.

That incident did not occur because of the lack of humanitarian aid that is badly needed. That incident occurred because there is this pull factor to come to our country, particularly from these Northern Triangle countries—Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador. This particular gentleman, Oscar Alberto Martinez Ramirez, came from El Salvador.

Then, there are push factors from those countries. And, again, this is causing so many families to come here, so many unaccompanied children to come here from these three countries in Central America.

The traffickers are telling them: If you come to America and you ask for asylum, you will be let in.

Let's be frank. These countries are countries that have real challenges and real problems.

My colleague from New Jersey is right. We have sent a lot of American taxpayer dollars down to those countries, and he noted that the reports back from the administration and others are positive, saying it is beginning to make a difference. He noted that that funding is now being reduced or even eliminated in some cases, but it was during the time when that funding was there that the people started coming.

So, yes, we should have more funding that is effective for those countries. I agree with that. The Millennium Challenge Corporation funding is the new way we send that funding. It is more effective because it says: What are you doing in Central America to improve your infrastructure, your conditions, your judicial system, your rule of law, and to fight corruption? We need to do all those things.