

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.

But let's be frank. Let's be honest. We have been doing that, and yet the push factor is still there.

So I believe it is part of the answer, but I don't think logic applied to this situation means that you could say that it is all of the answer because we have been doing it.

My taxpayers and other taxpayers, I think, around this country are willing to do more, but they also want to deal with the pull factor, and the pull factor is very simple. If you come to America and you apply for asylum right now, with the system being overwhelmed and with certain laws in place, including a court decision, you are released into the community, meaning you come into America. Most of the court cases that deal with whether you are successful or not in your asylum claim take over 2 years now. It takes over 2 years until you are before a judge for a hearing.

When those court cases occur, we are told on the Homeland Security Committee, that about 15 percent of those individuals are granted asylum—15 percent.

Now, in America, our wages are 10 to 20 times higher than they are in these Northern Triangle countries—El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras. Is it any wonder that they come here seeking a better way of life? No, you would too. But we have to have a system of laws here in this country where, yes, we accept refugees and, yes, we accept people who have claims of asylum that are granted, but we don't have open borders.

We have a system here, a system of laws, and it has clearly broken down now. Again, thousands come in every week, hundreds of thousands every month—mostly families, mostly children because of the way our laws work. I don't think we should be separating families, by the way. So, if you have a child with you or you are a child, then under a court decision you could be held only for a short period of time, 20 days maximum, in emergency situations. What happens is that people are released into the community.

I will be frank with you. From what we have heard from Customs and Border Protection and from the Department of Health and Human Services, which are responsible for many of these detention facilities, they are so overwhelmed, they don't even have room for 20 days, so people are allowed to come into the community. Again, the court cases happen a long time after that, and people are granted work permits. That is why people are coming. It is a pull. They are saying: If you get to America, we will get you in.

These traffickers are charging a lot of money. It is horrible. They are taking mortgages on people's homes. They are saying "We will take half your pay for the next year," promising things that are frankly beyond what can be accomplished.

A situation in Ohio occurred a couple years ago with kids from Guatemala.

Unaccompanied kids coming from Guatemala were told: You can get in. It is good. We will take care of you. In this case, the traffickers took mortgages on the parents' homes. They brought these kids to the United States, to the Department of Health and Human Services, HHS, detention facility. They were then sent out to sponsor families, which is what they do. They take these minor children, underaged, and send them to sponsor families. Sometimes they can find families; sometimes they can't. In this case, our own government sent these kids back to the traffickers because the traffickers applied for the very kids they had brought up from Guatemala.

Despite claims and promises to their parents that they would get a good education with a family taking care of these kids, do you know what they did with these kids? They put them on an egg farm in Ohio—underage kids—and exploited them. They took away their pay, had them live in conditions none of us would find acceptable for any member of our family. They had them living in trailers, some of them under trailers, on mattresses without sheets, working 12 hours a day. Some of these kids were working 6 days a week, some 7 days a week. This is not America. Yet this was happening. Again, our system is broken. These traffickers were exploiting these children.

Finally, in this case, law enforcement stepped in, and we have been able to indict and convict the traffickers. Thank goodness. But this is not a situation that can or should continue.

In the tragic photo of the story I just told, the answer is not politically pointing fingers. Blaming Donald Trump isn't going to solve this problem. We need as a body to change the laws. We need as a body to provide more effective aid to those countries. That is true. The push factors and the pull factors both need to be addressed. But if we just play politics with this on both sides, we will have more unnecessary deaths. We will have more tragic situations.

Again, I had planned to come and talk about something else, and I will, briefly. But I must say, with regard to this immigration challenge we face as a country, I hope the tragedy we have now all seen online and on TV serves as a wake-up call to get to bipartisan solutions that actually help solve this problem and stop the push factors and the pull factors that will continue to bring hundreds of thousands of people from these three countries to our border, which has overwhelmed us.

Today there is a start. Today there is a start with the humanitarian aid package. Thank goodness.

Tomorrow we need to get to work to talk about these bigger problems. I will say, I have worked on this with some of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. I heard the words today from my colleague from New Jersey about refugee processing centers. I think that is part of the answer. In the Obama ad-

ministration, you could apply for refugee status from your country—El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras—and not come to the border. The refugee criteria is almost identical to the criteria for asylum. The United Nations does this all over the world. I agree, that is a much better solution.

Let's have these processing centers in the Northern Triangle countries. Let's have one in Mexico, maybe one in Mexico at the southern border with Guatemala, maybe one at the northern border of the United States. Let's deal with this processing problem. Let's determine who is qualified, who has a legitimate fear of persecution. Again, 15 percent of them are now being granted. The other 85 percent are not. For the others, we have to say: You can apply to come to the United States as everybody else does, from Mexico, from the Philippines, from India, from countries in Africa, and we need to continue to be a generous country with regard to immigration. But we have to have a system of laws, and we have to stop these tragedies where people are being told by traffickers: You can make this journey to the north. It will be fine.

It is not fine. It is arduous, it is dangerous, and you see the results.

The trafficking that is going on of girls and women is all part of this too. It is not going to stop unless we as a group here in Congress, on a bipartisan basis, deal not just with the push factors but also the pull factors and deal with them realistically.

NONPROFIT SECURITY GRANT

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, the legislation I came to the floor to talk about today passed in the Homeland Security Committee last week to help make our synagogues, our churches, our mosques, and other nonprofit institutions safer.

Sadly, we have seen a troubling pattern in recent years. Hate-fueled attacks at houses of worship and religious institutions, not just in our country but around the world, are becoming more and more common. A couple of months ago, a shooting at a synagogue outside San Diego took the life of Lori Gilbert Kaye, who heroically sacrificed herself to save her rabbi. Exactly 6 months to the day prior to that, the shooting at the Tree of Life synagogue outside of Pittsburgh, PA, claimed 11 lives, the worst act of anti-Semitic violence in U.S. history.

Sometimes this hate is manifested in other ways: bomb threats at the Jewish Community Center in Columbus, OH, and anti-Semitic graffiti sprayed on the Hebrew Union College walls in my hometown of Cincinnati, OH.

Right after the attacks on the synagogue in Pittsburgh last year, I went to the Jewish Community Center in Youngstown, OH, only 60 miles away from Pittsburgh, to meet with Jewish community leaders. An attack on one is an attack on all. We must all stand up.