

Sadly, despite the clear benefits faith-based organizations provide to the communities around them, there remains an ongoing push to strip them of Federal funding or to even shut them down for following their sincerely held religious beliefs. That is why, this week, I am introducing the Equal Treatment of Faith-Based Organizations Act, along with several of my colleagues.

My bill codifies into law parts of the recently proposed HHS rule to ensure equal treatment for faith-based organizations. My bill reverses the discriminatory policy from the previous administration that required faith-based providers of social services to disclose their religious affiliation and refer potential clients to other providers. My bill also allows faith-based organizations to apply for Federal funding on equal footing with secular organizations.

Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government has no business discriminating against faith-based organizations purely on the basis of their sincerely held religious beliefs. I am proud to lead this legislation and to protect the good work that faith-based organizations do every day.

SENATE DEMOCRATS BLOCK PRO-LIFE VOTE

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

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, last week, Senate Democrats blocked a vote in the Senate on two pro-life bills: the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act, which would require doctors to provide medical care to a child who survives an abortion, and the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, which would ban abortions beginning at 20 weeks. Senate Democrats prevented a vote on both of these commonsense bills as House Democrats have already done 80 times.

I call on the Democrats on both sides of the Capitol, as Senate Majority Leader McCONNELL said last week, to take a "clear and moral stand" to protect innocent life.

SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, this week is Severe Weather Awareness Week, and it is a good reminder to always be prepared for extreme weather events, which we too often face in Kansas.

Ready.gov—that is, r-e-a-d-y.gov—which is run by FEMA, is a great place to find resources related to flooding, thunderstorms, winter weather, or advice on building an emergency kit.

Similarly, FEMA offers a free smartphone app which provides real-time alerts, shelter locations, and other resources to help during and after a severe weather event.

But it is not enough to just communicate severe weather events to the public. We need to continue to invest in tools and encourage innovation

when it comes to weather modeling and forecasting so that we can ensure as much lead time as possible before a severe weather event occurs.

From coastal regions to the heartland, severe weather impacts us all, and the Federal Government not only needs to be working with public and private partners to improve systems, but also to encourage and incentivize innovation in the field.

Recently, the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee has taken a look at the various forecasting and modeling efforts across the country and discussed how we can better improve these systems to give people increased warning in the event of severe weather events.

Furthermore, I met with those on the front line in forecasting, such as our hardworking meteorologists back home at our National Weather Service, along with research institutions across the country, discussing the advances they are making thanks to new tools and technologies.

It is important to stay safe, informed, and prepared as we head into the severe weather season, and I hope all Americans will take advantage of the tools available to achieve these goals.

STEPS UNITED STATES IS TAKING TO RESPOND TO CORONAVIRUS

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, the spread of the coronavirus and its dominance in the news has been at the top of my mind as well as for many Kansans.

While there is no reason to panic, it is prudent for all of us to be mindful of the ongoing challenging situation. As a physician and Congressman, I feel it is important that I convey the steps the Federal Government is currently taking to best respond.

First, we must demand more transparency from the Chinese and Iranian Governments. American experts must be allowed to get access to information on the ground in both China and Iran, particularly in Wuhan—ground zero of the outbreak. Unfortunately, these countries have a long history of misinformation and coverups, and we need to know the full truth to best protect Americans.

Some in the American medical industry are concerned about a shortage of supplies which are largely manufactured in China. Currently, the FDA is not aware of any national shortages of medical products. Federal agencies have been proactively reaching out to hundreds of manufacturers to assess potential shortages and to let manufacturers know they can provide assistance. That being said, this is an excellent time to review our supply chain for both American healthcare as well as all other industries.

I personally believe President Trump and Vice President Pence are doing everything in their power to protect Americans. Consulting with the top medical experts, this administration is moving to swiftly mitigate outbreaks of coronavirus here at home.

Attempts by the national media and Democrats in Congress to place blame on the President for these outbreaks are inexcusable—they are unprofessional; they are unnecessary; and they are actually very harmful.

Anything President Trump can possibly do to expedite the development of testing, antivirals, and vaccines is already being done—and, I might add, is being accomplished in record time.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Department of Health and Human Services have been preparing for outbreaks like this for years. We are the most prepared and the best equipped nation in the world to take on this coronavirus.

On the eve of a potentially global epidemic, this situation underscores how imperative it is for our country to be able to prevent unidentified individuals from entering this country. Border security is national security, and families in Kansas deserve a home safe from unvetted individuals who may knowingly or unknowingly be carrying contagious diseases.

I visited with the CDC over 5 weeks ago, asking what preventative measures they were taking when this virus was in the early stages of outbreak. I have been staying in close, constant contact with the White House, the CDC, and all agencies responsible for controlling the spread of this disease. The safety of Kansans is my top priority, and I will continue monitoring developments closely and communicate with officials across our State.

In the meantime, as a physician, I recommend some commonsense practices: regular handwashing, applying hand sanitizer, proper nutrition, and minimal travel outside your community. This is a time to prepare and plan, a time to make sure you have a plan for your children, for your elderly parents, perhaps, that you have a plan for your place of work and for your place of worship, wherever you might gather in your own community.

The event also underscores what an absolute disaster a government takeover of the medical system would be. America's healthcare capabilities are second to none because of competition and free market innovation. Radical socialist policies would effectively eliminate private investment in new medicines and technologies. That would be unacceptable.

OPPOSITION TO THE NEW WAY FORWARD ACT

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

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my firm opposition to the New Way Forward Act, a radical piece of legislation that would put American lives at risk in numerous ways.

Under this bill, heinous crimes committed by illegal immigrants would no longer result in immediate deportation, but, even worse, it would allow

those who have been deported to come back to the United States legally and on the taxpayer's dime—essentially allowing for the importation of violent and dangerous illegal immigrants into our country. I have yet to meet a single person who supports that idea.

The bill would also decriminalize illegal entry into the country, including for criminals who have already been deported.

This measure is a dream for those who seek to abolish ICE, throw open our national borders, and gut the rule of law in America.

I have heard from constituents who are outraged about this proposal—and rightfully so. While sponsored by nearly a fifth of the House Democratic Caucus, the legislation stands little chance of advancing past President Trump or a Republican Senate. But it is, nonetheless, important for the American people to know the priorities of some Members of this body.

I will continue to stand strong against policies like the New Way Forward Act and any other legislation which would encourage illegal immigration and cripple the safety of American citizens.

HONORING BAM CARNEY

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to encourage the body to keep my dear friend, Bam Carney, of Campbellsville, Kentucky, in their thoughts and prayers as he continues to battle a serious illness.

Bam has been hospitalized for over 2 months and has a long journey ahead. However, anyone who knows Bam knows that he is the ultimate fighter.

As a father, educator, State representative, and Kentucky's house majority leader, he has always fought strongly for what he believes in. But, more importantly, he has always fought for his family and friends above all else.

Bam's community has organized "A Day of Prayer and Encouragement for Bam," where people across Kentucky are joining together to lift him up in prayer.

I ask for this body to join me in keeping my friend and golf buddy in their thoughts and prayers. He means so much to so many people. I ask everyone for their prayers as Bam continues his fight.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 40 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

God of mercy, thank You for giving us another day.

Quicken our spirits so that we will know the blessings of living together in unity and peace. Grant that we might know the satisfaction of sharing our common concerns and experiencing the joy of mutual accomplishment.

Bless the Members of this people's House with success in bringing fruition to all efforts to work toward common solutions to the issues facing our Nation, solutions which often seem so distant.

On a day of major electoral impact, and as our Nation faces the possible effects of the coronavirus, grace us with the assurance that You are with us in difficult times.

May we all understand that a unified nation is equally the work of each of us where we live.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COOPER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. COOPER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

TENNESSEE NEEDS EMERGENCY DISASTER RELIEF

(Mr. COOPER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COOPER. Madam Speaker, very early this morning, my hometown of Nashville, Tennessee, was terribly hard hit by a tornado.

At least 19 lives have been lost. Buildings were destroyed. Many, many homes were destroyed, and countless lives have been disrupted. At least 34,000 people lost electricity.

I have been in contact with our Governor, our mayor, our entire congressional delegation, including my good friend JOHN ROSE, to do all that we can

to bring emergency relief to the area as fast as possible.

This is a genuine tragedy, and we need to praise our neighbors, friends, residents, first responders, firefighters, police, and EMTs who worked all through the night, despite fierce rains, to provide first aid.

Nashville is strong. We recovered so well after the terrible 2010 flood that many parts of America didn't even know we had been suffering.

Now is the time to beat this disaster.

PLEDGE FOR AID IN RESPONSE TO TENNESSEE TORNADOES

(Mr. JOHN W. ROSE of Tennessee asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOHN W. ROSE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today, I rise with my colleague from Tennessee, Mr. COOPER. As he has already indicated, earlier today, a devastating tornado tore through Middle Tennessee, including much of the area that I represent and call home.

While rescue workers are still in the critical phase of sorting through debris and accounting for those who are still missing, we know already that many lives have been lost and dozens of people were rushed to emergency rooms.

I, along with countless Tennesseans, are lifting those people up in prayer, and we hope that everybody will join us.

I am working diligently alongside my fellow Representatives, the administration, Governor Lee, Senators ALEXANDER and BLACKBURN, and emergency officials to get much-needed Federal aid to the affected areas.

Homes, schools, businesses, churches, farms, and other buildings and numerous communities have suffered serious and, in some cases, overwhelming damage.

I stand today with those affected by this disaster and pledge every effort will be made to give shelter to those who need it, give care to those who are hurt, and give assistance in the critical effort to recover and rebuild.

FUND CORONAVIRUS RESEARCH

(Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, this week, the House should consider legislation responding to the threat of COVID-19, called the coronavirus, that poses a significant threat to our Nation.

Since the end of December, over 3,000 people worldwide have died from the virus, and there are over 91,000 confirmed cases. Without a specific treatment protocol or vaccine, the virus is dangerous and will likely reach the level of a pandemic.

We need to fund scientific research that can quickly diagnose and provide therapies to prevent and treat the virus.