

dignity. The Olympic Charter states that the goal of Olympism is to promote “a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity.” Beijing has not, by a long shot, earned the honor of hosting the 2022 games.

Now, my record is crystal clear when it comes to calling out and condemning China’s horrific record on human rights and the threat it poses to the United States and the rest of the international community. As my colleagues know, during my years in Congress, I have introduced, advocated for, and helped pass legislation on behalf of the people of Xinjiang, Tibet, Chinese civil society dissidents, a democratic and autonomous Hong Kong, and supporting democracy across the Indo-Pacific region. Just recently, I introduced a comprehensive bill to strengthen the United States across various sectors to best confront and counter China’s efforts. I also recently released a report about the necessity of standing up against China’s dangerous new digital authoritarianism.

There is no question that under Xi Jinping, China has taken a great leap backward on human rights, establishing concentration camps in Xinjiang, and instituting a surveillance state that not even George Orwell could have imagined and crushing any thoughts and ideas that deviate from the dictates of the party. China’s rise, bringing hundreds of millions out of poverty during the last century, is something the Chinese people can be justly proud of. But Xi Jinping’s dystopian totalitarian vision, currently crushing the Chinese people, is one of the century’s great tragedies.

So I am very sympathetic to the goals of the resolution and the sponsor of the legislation. However, I believe these issues merit serious discussion in drafting of the appropriate language before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I have been urging Chairman Risch to hold a legislative markup for months to discuss the many pressing pieces of legislation that Members on both sides of the aisle have had pending for many months.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 549

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I would, in response to the Senator’s request, say that there is a human rights crisis much closer to home that we have discussed before the committee. We have an opportunity to address people suffering from a dictatorship who are right here in the United States, many of whom live in Senator SCOTT’s State of Florida.

For the second time in 2 weeks, I would like to call upon this body to take up legislation the House has passed that would designate Venezuelans for temporary protected status. I am asking Republicans to remember that there was a time before President Trump when our Nation stood in solidarity with victims of dictatorship.

Nicolas Maduro is a dictator, plain and simple. His regime is a cruel,

criminal cabal that has destroyed Venezuela. Some 200,000 Venezuelans currently live in the United States without legal status. They are unable to safely return to their homeland, and they would benefit from temporary protected status. I believe we have to do the right thing. We have to uphold American values and offer them protection.

Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 549 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; further, that the bill be considered read a third time and passed; and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I have no problem with asking unanimous consent at this point to pass the legislation with a few amendments. Since this will not be going through committee, we ought to, like you say, examine the legislation and think about what it involves. I think having a few commonsense amendments would make sense.

It is about 200,000 or 270,000 Venezuelans. I think we can accommodate them. We are a big, great country, and America has room for them. We should make sure, though, that they don’t overburden the welfare system, and there should be rules that people, as part of this program, do not come to the country to receive welfare. That is my first amendment.

My second amendment would say that at the end of the 18-month period, Congress should vote on whether or not to extend the period. In the past, we have granted this temporary status, and it has been renewed decade after decade and become just sort of this lost zone for people for whom we can’t figure out a permanent solution.

My third amendment would actually create an ability to absorb more people in our country and would be more of a permanent solution. My third amendment is called the BELIEVE Act, and it is a bill that I have had out there for several years. What it would do is to take the merit-based employment in our country, employment-based visas, and double these visas. So, if you want to accommodate the 200-some-odd thousand Venezuelans, we need more green cards, ultimately, for permanent status. This would be increased employment-based visas.

So, my unanimous consent request would be to pass your bill with these three amendments: One, to prohibit welfare; two, to make it Congress’s prerogative to decide that this term needs to be extended and it would have to be a vote by this body; and then the third thing would be that we expand our employment-based visas in order to accommodate folks like this in our country.

I would ask unanimous consent that your bill be passed, and, also, including my three amendments to the bill, and at this point, I ask unanimous consent for that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator so modify his request?

The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, reserving the right to object to this modification, on these three amendments, I respect my colleague who sits on the Foreign Relations Committee. We don’t always agree, but I always respectfully listen to him.

This effort that I am trying to bring to the floor, in line with Senator SCOTT’s question about human rights in China, is human rights right here in our hemisphere. The amendments that the Senator proposes seeks to basically gut the existing statute for temporary protected status, and it distracts from other issues in our immigration system as a price for providing Venezuelans with temporary protection in our country. One of these amendments is aimed at making it nearly impossible to renew TPS for foreign nationals, no matter the country or the conditions in the country.

I would also note that this is at a time in which we have 131,000 with temporary protected status from other countries helping to support the Nation as essential workers. So I object to the modification, and I object to Senator SCOTT’s motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard to both requests.

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I voice my objection to the original motion of Senator MENENDEZ.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard to the request.

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, first, as you would expect, I am disappointed in two ways.

No. 1, I am disappointed that we couldn’t get a resolution done that dealt with what is going on in China.

I would love the process to work perfectly so that everybody would do things in proper order, but the resolution is pretty simple. We know all the bad things that are happening in China, and we need to stand up. We have a chance now, not in 6 months, not in—I don’t know what time it would take to go through the Foreign Relations Committee, but we ought to be standing up now to say that the IOC needs to move the Olympics. So I am very disappointed that my colleague is not willing to just go along with a simple resolution to do that.

No. 2, what my colleague knows is that the bill he is proposing would never get done. I have colleagues who want to reform and fix the TPS program. I worked with my colleagues—all 53 Republican colleagues—and they said that as long as we do a commonsense reform of the TPS program, we would go ahead and do TPS for Venezuelans. So that is a bill we could do today.

We could have done it a couple of times, but my colleague on the other side of the aisle—another—blocked it. It doesn't make any sense to me why we are not getting this done. We can both talk about all of the problems and issues the Venezuelans are dealing with. It is very disappointing to me.

I don't know what the reason is. I have been trying to work with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to ask: What is the problem? And nobody will say: This is exactly what it is, and this is what you need to change to get it done. I don't know how we get things done here if people are not willing to sit down and talk to each other to figure out how to get it done.

I have also proposed other things that my colleague has blocked, like trying to make sure that Maduro couldn't—there were no revenues that could get to the Maduro regime, and that was blocked.

This just doesn't make any sense to me. I don't know what the issue is. I don't know if it is because it was proposed by Republicans rather than Democrats, but we have to figure out how to stand up together against human rights violations around the world.

It should be simple to say that the International Olympic Committee should not be hosting the Olympic Games in 2022. It is pretty simple. It is disgusting what Xi is doing.

It should be pretty simple to say: If we want to get TPS taken care of, whether it is for Venezuelans or whether it is for El Salvadorans or anybody else, we need to have a commonsense reform of the TPS system. That is why I proposed this resolution, and all 53 Republican Senators agreed with me.

I hope my colleague will commit to work with me to try to help the Venezuelans and also help others by fixing this TPS program. I hope he will work hard either to get a resolution that he agrees with me on or work through the Foreign Relations Committee to do something. But we have to do everything we can to stop the genocide of the Uighurs in Communist China and also do everything we can to help the Venezuelans who are here and need TPS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments of my colleague from Florida.

Let me just say, first, that we don't even need legislation for Venezuelans to get TPS. Let's not lose sight of that.

President Trump, with a stroke of his pen, could give temporary—temporary—protected status to the 200,000 Venezuelans who have fled the Maduro regime—a regime that President Trump himself has signaled out in every possible way as a regime that undermines the human rights of its people and that attacks them. So we don't even need legislation.

The only reason the House of Representatives, with Democratic majori-

ties, passed legislation is to try to instigate the President to go ahead and give TPS to Venezuelans.

Unfortunately, every time Senator SCOTT has come to offer what he calls a reform of TPS, it is really basically the death of TPS. I don't know why we have to deny those who presently have TPS and whose country's status may not have changed—slaying their status in order to give it to Venezuelans. I am not that Solomonic. So that is why there has been an objection.

Again, I remind us that we don't even need legislation. President Trump, with a stroke of his pen, could declare TPS for Venezuelans. That is the first thing.

The second thing is, I would urge my colleagues and all my Republican colleagues—by the way, I know that you all know this, but just to remind us, you are in the majority. Chairman RISCH is the chairman because there is a Republican majority. Chairman RISCH gets to call when the Senate Foreign Relations Committee goes into a business meeting. So as I have said to many of my colleagues, if you want to see your legislation considered—and I certainly would agree to an agenda that includes Senator SCOTT's legislation—urge Senator RISCH to hold a business meeting and a markup on legislation. That is the way this body is supposed to work. Otherwise, then, let's just meet here as 100 and make it the committee of the whole, where we can all opine and cast amendments on Appropriations, Judiciary, Foreign Relations, Energy and Commerce—the whole spectrum. But if the committee system is supposed to mean anything, which is the concentration of those who have dedicated their time to be on that committee and who have insights for which legislation passes through, then it has to hold meetings and markups to consider legislation. So it is not that you have to urge us; you have to urge your colleague, the chairman, to hold markups to consider your legislation.

I am sure that with some modifications, I would be one of those who would support your legislation in committee. But we cannot have everybody bypass the committee, come to the floor, and think that is the way things are going to operate.

Yes, there are some things we would love to see in a timely fashion. From the reading of several motions the majority leader made for nominations, it sounds like we are going to be here next week. Well, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee could call a business markup for next week. We could get your resolution on; we could get it passed; and then we could get it to the floor. Why not? Why not?

Then, the last thing: I don't know what the Senator is referring to in terms of stopping moneys going to Maduro. My VERDAD Act, which became law—along with Senator RUBIO and others—in essence tried to do exactly that. But I am certainly happy to

join with the Senator in any efforts to continue to work on stopping any flow of money to the Maduro regime and, more importantly, to reclaim the money that has already—the national patrimony of Venezuela that has been spent elsewhere.

But let's be honest. TPS for Venezuelans could have happened already. It could have happened yesterday. It could happen today, could happen tomorrow if President Trump only wants to declare it so.

I think he should. I don't think we should have to pass legislation, but that is where we are.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, I appreciate the comments of my colleague from New Jersey.

No. 1, I still have not heard what the issue is with a resolution that sounds like 99 other Senators are OK with, with regard to holding General Secretary Xi accountable. I haven't heard my colleague say what the concern is with it.

It seems to me that we have the opportunity right now, between the two of us, if we need to make a change, maybe we can make a change. But I would like to get something done today.

No. 2, as we know, the TPS program is a temporary program. It is not operated as a temporary program, and it has to be reformed.

I agree with my colleague from New Jersey. I would like the President to say that the Venezuelans would get TPS right now, but I think the White House's position is that we have to fix the program because the program doesn't work. It is not a temporary program.

That is why my fix—because what a lot of Senators keep saying—they want to say that we have to take back power we have given to the President. My resolution does that.

The President can still do TPS, but after he does, if he wants to extend it, it has to come back to Congress, and we need to make a decision. It is pretty common sense. If we did that right now, we could get TPS for Venezuelans.

The Senator from New Jersey has blocked my bill. It is a bill with Senator RUBIO to hold Maduro accountable by prohibiting Federal agencies from doing business with anyone who supports the oppressive Maduro regime. I don't understand why he would do that. He has blocked a bill that is going to prevent money from going there.

We have to stand up, whether it is against the Castro regime or Maduro. We have to support democracy and freedom in Latin America.

I hope my colleague will stop blocking that bill also.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Has the Senator yielded the floor?

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I won't stay the whole night debating my colleague, although I would enjoy that. But let me just say, No. 1, he has the power, as a colleague in the majority, to go to the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee and say: I really think this resolution is timely and needs to be done.

We are going to be in session next week. The chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee can call a markup next week. For his resolution, I will give him my word that I will support asking the chairman to put his resolution on the business meeting, and, probably, with some modifications, I would support it. But he needs to ask the chairman to hold a markup, No. 1.

No. 2, the reality is that the concern about TPS not being "temporary"—well, that concern was vitiated. I don't know if it was the Ninth or Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals that recently held a decision that said the President of the United States can give TPS, and he can end TPS, in his judgment. I don't necessarily agree with that judicial decision, but, nonetheless, that is, right now, the law of the land, so that concern is over.

The suggestion that we have to end TPS as we know it in order to make sure that it only remains a temporary protected status—the courts have determined that. They have said that the President can give TPS and can take it away. So, as far as I learned in my civics lessons, the court is the final law of the land in interpreting what it is that the law is.

Lastly, I am going to look at—I would like the gentleman to get in contact with—I don't know what legislation he keeps referring to that somehow we blocked, but before the gentleman even arrived here, I have been pursuing the Castro regime for 20-something years—since I was in the House of Representatives, passing the LIBERTAD Act and so many others—and, certainly, the Maduro regime as well. So I am happy to look at that.

But let's get the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee to hold a markup, and I think we can solve a lot of these problems.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, may I inquire if the Senators are concluded with their discussion?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. They have both yielded. It appears they are.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am back again, thee and me once again together, to discuss climate change as unprecedented wildfires scorch the west coast and a deadly hurricane season turns in the Atlantic and Americans cry out for action.

Powerful players outside this Chamber hear that cry, including, recently, over 200 CEOs of major American cor-

porations who form the Business Roundtable.

Here are some of the 200 companies represented by those CEOs. As I discussed last week, the Business Roundtable just earlier this month called for science-based climate policy to reduce carbon pollution, consistent with the Paris Agreement, and specifically endorsed carbon pricing—from Verizon, to Chevron, to Apple, to Wells Fargo, to McKinsey, to American Airlines, to Amazon, to Pfizer, to Ford. It is quite the who's-who of corporate America.

So why, you might ask, did the Business Roundtable do this when normally business lobbyists are up here telling us to get out of their way? The answer is economics 101. Pollution is the textbook example of market failure. A factory dumps toxic pollution into a river, and anyone living downstream bears the costs of that pollution. They can't use their well, perhaps. Their property values decrease. They may even get sick. It is basic economic theory that polluters ought to bear those costs, called negative externalities—the downstream costs, if you will. Even Milton Friedman, the patron saint of free market economics, agreed that polluters should pay the costs associated with their pollution.

For climate change, for the big carbon polluters, this is big bucks. The International Monetary Fund calculates that fossil fuel enjoys a \$600 billion—not million but billion with a "b"—subsidy in the United States every year—every year, \$600 billion. It is mostly because the industry has managed to offload the costs of carbon pollution onto the general public. Why do you think they are so busy here in Congress all the time? They are trying to protect that subsidy.

So if it is economics 101 that a product's price should reflect its true cost, and if, in the case of fossil fuels, they are cheating on that rule, then a price on carbon pollution, as the Business Roundtable recommends, is a correction to that market failure.

The CEOs also read the same warnings as the rest of us. Dozens of central banks, economists, and other financial experts warn of massive economic risks caused by our failure to address climate change—risks one recent estimate put at triple the 2008 great recession; risks that are commonly called systemic, meaning they take down the whole financial system, not just fossil fuel. Business executives tend to take that kind of warning seriously.

So this is a good-news story if you look at the business voice coming through the Business Roundtable. Here is the problem: The business voice doesn't just come through the Business Roundtable; it also comes through other groups—groups that are historic enemies of climate action, constantly up to climate mischief.

The very same corporations whose CEOs sent that friendly message through the Business Roundtable send the opposite and even louder message

through these enemy groups, which brings me to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, by far the largest lobbyist in town, a prolific litigator, a dark-money elections spender, and an inveterate opponent of serious climate action.

In a recent study by InfluenceMap, the chamber was denominated one of the worst climate obstructers in America. In my view, it is not one of the worst; it is the worst because of the power that it brings behind its message. If you imagine the Business Roundtable as emitting a positive political squeak, the chamber can emit a negative political roar—and they have for a long time.

This chart is a partial list of the companies that are members of both the Business Roundtable and the Chamber of Commerce. I say it is partial because the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, unlike local chambers of commerce, is very secretive. It doesn't disclose its funds. It doesn't disclose its membership. So the companies here either voluntarily disclosed their membership, or the press ferreted it out. So let's look at what some of these companies say about climate change and what they do through the chamber. Let's start here with Johnson & Johnson.

Johnson & Johnson is a giant healthcare and consumer goods company. You probably have plenty of Johnson & Johnson products around your house.

Through the Business Roundtable, Johnson & Johnson says that climate change is serious and that Congress should enact a carbon price. In its corporate materials, Johnson & Johnson says that climate change is impacting health and that "risks resulting from a changing climate have the potential to negatively impact economies around the world."

Johnson & Johnson recognizes the importance of government action, stating:

While companies have a responsibility and ability to [mitigate climate change], the unilateral capabilities of businesses are limited. Addressing these issues requires the collaboration of companies with governments . . . to achieve systemic change at scale.

So it sounds like the company gets it. But Johnson & Johnson also put at least \$750,000 behind the chamber last year.

What did the chamber just do on climate? It filed a brief supporting the Trump administration's effort to undo emissions standards for cars and trucks set by California but honored across the country. Well, the nonpartisan Rhodium Group estimates that revoking those fuel emissions standards would result in up to about 600 million metric tons of additional CO₂ emissions through 2035. That is equal to the emissions in a year from 130 million cars or from the electricity needed to power 100 million homes.

So which voice of Johnson & Johnson are we supposed to listen to—the Business Roundtable voice or the chamber voice?