

The refugee has been fully vetted. We know who they are; we know the situation; we know the crisis that their family has gone through; and our Nation, like multiple nations around the world, engages to see what we can do to help that family in trauma. That is who we are as Americans. It is whom we will continue to be.

The challenge is when we have thousands of people cross our southern border requesting asylum whom we don't know who they are, who are not vetted, that begin to take advantage of American generosity, and it becomes a challenge for us to be able to filter who really qualifies as a refugee/asylee as they are crossing the border and who is just taking advantage of our system.

That is a challenge. It has been a challenge for us for years, but it has dramatically accelerated in the last 3 years. This year we will have 2½ million people that will cross our southern border. The vast majority of those will ask for asylum, and they will be released into the United States awaiting a hearing, sometimes 8 to 10 years in advance, to be able to make their case that they qualify. In the meantime, we don't know who they are. They have not been vetted. We don't have background information for those individuals.

Last week, the FBI picked up eight individuals with direct ties to ISIS that were in our country, that in the last 2 years had crossed our southern border—had blended in with the rest of the folks who requested asylum—requested asylum and then disappeared into our country.

Thankfully, our FBI was able to pick up that these eight individuals were in Los Angeles, New York, and Philadelphia, preparing to be able to carry out acts of violence in our country. We are grateful for the work of the FBI to be able to do that, but why aren't we filtering these individuals at the border?

We are not evaluating criminal history even in the country they are coming from. How do I know that? I know that because I work with DHS, and I am fully aware of what their process is. We fingerprint individuals, and we see if they are on the Terror Watchlist; that is, we know them, we have been tracking them internationally, or if they are on the Interpol international criminal list.

But if they are on a list in their own country, we don't know that. Last week, Victor Antonio Martinez was picked up in my State, in Tulsa, OK, sitting in a sports bar in Tulsa, where he had left out from Maryland after murdering Rachel Morin, a mother of five.

Now, he had fled to Maryland because he had carried out acts of violence in Los Angeles in a violent home invasion in Los Angeles. So he carried out an act of violence in Los Angeles, went to Maryland, murdered a mom there, then was headed to Tulsa. What do you think was about to happen in Tulsa?

Oh, by the way, did I mention, he fled from El Salvador because he murdered

someone in El Salvador. So he fled El Salvador, came to our southern border, requested asylum, came into the United States, attacked a family in Los Angeles, murdered a mom in Maryland, and then was arrested in my State, in Tulsa.

Please don't tell my folks in Tulsa, there is nothing to worry about on illegal immigration, this is all going fine at the border. We don't believe it because a violent, multiperson murderer was on a national crime spree, and my State was next before he was picked up and arrested, now extradited back to Maryland for the crime there.

In New York, earlier this year, Raul Castro-Mata from Venezuela shot at two New York police officers. He is one of those folks from Venezuela that had come across asking for asylum. Earlier this month in Texas, an illegal immigrant was arrested when he had broken into a private business and had committed a pretty large robbery there. In Florida, a SWAT team got into a shootout with an illegal alien who had killed a police officer just a few months ago.

In Washington State, an illegal alien from Mexico was driving, and he killed a Washington State police officer. The car was going 107 miles an hour. He was under the influence of marijuana at the time.

Listen, I am fully aware that not everyone that crosses the border is going to carry out acts of criminal activities. I am fully aware of that. All I am doing is asking a simple question: Are we checking criminal history at the border for the thousands of people that are coming across the border? And the answer is no.

For the eight people that were picked up last week that were ISIS terrorist connected, those eight are individuals that were listed as special interest aliens. They are 8 of the 53,000 special interest aliens that had entered our country this year across the southern border.

Oh, and if you think that number is big, last year the number was 70,000 special interest aliens were released into our country last year.

These are individuals that this DHS has declared, at the border, a potential national security risk. Yet instead of detaining them, the vast majority of them have been released on their own recognizance around the country somewhere.

Listen, this body knows full well I am willing to work with anyone on either side of the aisle to be able to solve this issue. Between now and the election, we are going to have another million and a half people illegally cross into our country—between now and the end of the year.

We have had 10 million people illegally cross in the last 3½ years—10 million. If we don't stop this, every day we have folks that are coming in to find work, to connect with families, and folks that are also coming in to commit criminal acts. They are not fleeing

from poverty. They are fleeing from the law in their own country, and they are carrying out acts of violence in ours.

When we can't tell the difference between the two, why are we defaulting to open rather than defaulting to closed? Why are we literally telling the people in my State: That guy sitting next to you at the sports bar—we didn't know if he was a criminal or not, so we just let him in. We didn't know if he had committed murder in his own country, so we just let him in.

Why are we doing that? Why is that happening today on our southern border, and what are we going to do to stop it? I am going to continue to come to this floor to bring this up because it is not getting better.

The Executive action the President took 2 weeks ago to declare they are going to put new limits in place—everybody here should check the facts on it. We had the same number of crossings yesterday that we had 4 weeks ago before that Executive action went into place. That Executive action hasn't changed the numbers. What has changed is the way they are counting the numbers. They are now not including in the count the people who come to a port of entry who are not legally present. They are now not being included, so the numbers look smaller, but look at the asterisk and the fine print of who now is no longer being counted in the publicly released numbers. The numbers haven't changed; the way they are publishing the numbers has changed.

Then this week, the President announced a new amnesty program for folks who are here in the country. That is now his 95th Executive action announcing to the world that if you get across our border, you can stay. It is inviting people to be able to come into our country illegally. That is the wrong message to the world. It is a message we need to address, and we shouldn't just wait around until it gets better on its own.

TRIBUTE TO MICHELLE ALTMAN

Mr. President, I was first elected to the House of Representatives in 2010. I had no political background at all—none. I was a voter and a youth pastor. I was someone who loved our country and felt called to this task. When I ran for election, we figured out everything we could all the way through the campaign time period, trying to figure out what to do and what to do next.

I was elected in 2010 by the folks in Central Oklahoma to represent the Fifth District of Oklahoma in the House of Representatives. In November, I came up for orientation, and I started doing interviews to try to figure out who were going to be staff for this very green Member of Congress that was walking in.

There was a group of folks I met with over a couple of days to be able to interview. One of them—her name was Michelle Altman. She had already worked on the Hill. She had worked for

my predecessor, Mary Fallin. She had done a great job there. She worked as a staff assistant. That is the person answering the phones. That is the entry-level position into the office.

She graduated from college and determined that she wanted to be able to serve our country. She came to Washington, DC, worked for a Member of Congress she didn't know at that time at all, and landed her first job on the Hill and went to work.

Michelle Altman, one of my very first hires that I had as a brandnew House Member in 2010, is now leaving my staff as my chief of staff. She has literally worked her way through the office, from answering the phones at the front desk all the way to being in the top leadership position on my team.

In supervising individuals on my team, she knows how to supervise all of them because she has done just about every task in the office. She continues to be able to work and to engage with people to be able to mentor and help others in the office be better at what they do. It is a gift to every young staff member that comes in to be able to have somebody that knows what they are talking about and has a passion for my State of Oklahoma.

She knows half the people in my State of 4 million people, and she gets to interact with people on the phone. She tracks what is happening in the news. Although she lives up here, she stays in close contact with what is actually happening in my State of Oklahoma. She has loved the State of Oklahoma and served in ways that Oklahomans will never know in the tasks that she has taken on for now the last 14 years in serving alongside of me.

She is tenaciously competitive. She is a person that plays golf and wants to be able to win. She is an avid horseback rider and loves to be able to get on her horse. If she is going to escape from the craziness of Washington, DC, it is going to be riding a horse somewhere.

She also is quite a shot with a shotgun as well. My team—when we get together on our staff retreats, we will often do trap shooting or skeet shooting. When we get out there, we will do a competition among all of our staff. So when all of our staff—both from instate and Washington, DC—all compete for the best shots, it often ends up Michelle and I end up in the very final round, and I am not embarrassed to tell you that in the final rounds, she has beaten me before in trap and skeet shooting.

She is tenaciously competitive but also incredibly gregarious. She loves to study policy. She loves to engage in the politics of the conversation. I am also not afraid to be able to note that she knows politics better than I do. She is a student of how things actually move and has done a great job.

She knows the lyrics to every song, but don't ask her to quote a single movie—she can't tell you. In fact, at

one point, among all of our staff, there was this ongoing dialogue about different quotes from the movie "Princess Bride" that just moved among our staff for a couple of months, different random statements from the movie "The Princess Bride," and she had a blank stare long enough that one of us looked at her and said: You have never seen this, have you? She had to admit that she had never seen the movie "The Princess Bride." So I literally brought her a copy—this was an old-school DVD—and handed it to her and said: Your assignment as my chief of staff is to watch "The Princess Bride" this weekend and come back and give me a report on the movie. She now understands all of the jokes among the staff on the movie "The Princess Bride."

She has been through a countless number of vote-aramas, BRACs. She was here during the Affordable Care Act conversation, debate, fiscal cliffs, debt ceiling, an endless number of late-night votes where all they could do was watch us here on the floor as they were back in the office, trying to be able to track everything going on.

I am grateful to have had a chief of staff that has worked so hard, so remarkably for the State of Oklahoma and has been a person that has been able to be beside me for years now.

She is leaving. She is starting a consulting firm. Her skills will still be used to be able to support the Nation and the task at hand. I know Michelle's faith. She will be a person that will continue to walk with God and follow God's leadership in the days ahead as she follows what she sensed as a calling to be able to do.

But I have been grateful to be able to have the time, and my State of Oklahoma is grateful to Michelle Altman for what she has taken on for the sake of our State and the Nation.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PETERS). The Senator from Texas.

NOMINATION OF MUSTAFA TAHER KASUBHAI

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I have served on the Senate Judiciary Committee my entire time in the Senate. As the Presiding Officer knows, one of the responsibilities of the Judiciary Committee is to vet and to vote on a President's nominees for judicial office.

These are unique jobs because they last literally a lifetime, so it is very, very important that we vet these nominees. In my case, in the case of Texas, Senator CRUZ and I have appointed a group of the best lawyers in the State of Texas on something we call the Federal Judicial Evaluation Committee to help us screen the people who want to serve on the Federal bench, and so we are then in a position to enter a conversation with the White House, whether it is a Republican or a Democrat, about whether or not we will vote for and support that nominee for the Federal judiciary.

There is something called the blue slip which is unique to the Senate Ju-

diciary Committee where, if a home State Senator does not return a blue slip on somebody that the President has nominated, the committee will not process that nominee.

So the Judiciary Committee has a very important role and one I think consistent with the responsibilities of vetting and considering these lifetime-tenure judges.

For 13 years, I was a judge myself on the State court bench in Texas, so I have some strong views about the qualities that make for a good judge. A good judge is not a policymaker wearing a black robe, because judges don't stand for election—or at least Federal judges do not.

So I have been watching very closely President Biden's judicial nominees to make sure they meet at least the minimum standard to serve on the Federal bench, but I have to say that President Biden's unqualified judicial nominees are a problem. Not all of them but some of them stand out, and one in particular continues to face big problems in this Chamber.

Earlier this week, the Senate was expected to vote on Judge Mustafa Kasubhai, who was nominated to serve on the U.S. District Court for the District of Oregon. He was set to receive a vote on Tuesday, but Senator SCHUMER pulled that down. He is the one who sets the schedule in the Senate. He pulled that down at the last minute because he obviously did not have the votes to confirm this nominee.

They were expected to push that vote to today because perhaps there would be enough Senators that would be absent the day after the Juneteenth holiday that it would actually change the outcome and make it more likely that he would be confirmed. But then it became obvious that this nominee was so controversial that even a poor attendance day would not lead to his confirmation. All I have to say to that is, thank goodness.

Our colleagues have delayed Judge Kasubhai's confirmation vote again, and I sincerely hope this will mark the end of the road for this particular nominee. Given everything we know about the judge, it is clear that he is not fit for a lifetime appointment to the Federal bench. Maybe there is some other job in government he would be qualified to do but not serve as a Federal judge.

When nominees appear before the Judiciary Committee, of course, they are asked about their judicial philosophy. They are asked about their ideology, their world views, and how they would operate if confirmed. This is basic stuff.

With Judge Kasubhai, we don't have to wonder how he would function as a judge because he has a long record on the bench as a U.S. magistrate, and he also previously served as a circuit court judge in Oregon. He has been on the bench since 2007, so he has an extensive record that we can look to as a way of predicting how he will behave,