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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BYRNE).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 27, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable BRADLEY BYRNE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I would like to enter into the RECORD this article written by Reverends Eason, Goodroe, and Castillo, all three of Spartanburg, South Carolina, who wrote an article that appeared Tuesday in the Greenville, South Carolina, News entitled, "God Often Reminds Us to Welcome the Stranger."

Mr. Speaker, yesterday I participated in another do-nothing Judiciary Com-

mittee hearing in this do-nothing Congress. This do-nothing hearing was unique. The goal was to make sure that the President was a do-nothing President as well.

It is not enough for the Republican majority to be setting records for how little they are doing. No. Ignoring immigration reform is bad enough—let alone the minimum wage, unemployment benefits, and the environment.

So the do-nothing Congress held a hearing yesterday entitled, "Enforcing the President's Constitutional Duty to Faithfully Execute the Laws." The intent was clear: attack the President. It was held in the Judiciary Committee, which has jurisdiction over immigration, so there was lots of discussion about deferred action for DREAMers. This is where the President has exercised his power of prosecutorial discretion to temporarily suspend the deportation of people who came here to the U.S. as children.

Apparently, when the President stood just over there last month and delivered his State of the Union address, saying he would use his pen and phone to take executive action where the Congress was taking no action—well, that didn't go over well with this do-nothing Congress.

Look, I know it is easier for Republicans to blame Democrats and blame Obama and make excuses for why they can't do immigration reform this year. You have to keep it connected to reality. You put your principles for immigration reform on the table. You call them "standards." And there were some things I liked and some things I didn't. But what I said was: Good. Thank you. It's a nice start. Let's sit down and talk some more.

NANCY PELOSI and the leadership of the Democratic rank and file in the House said: Good. Great starting point. Let's talk some more.

And the President you don't trust said: Good. It's a great starting point. Let's negotiate.

How did the Republicans respond? When Democrats said: Yes, let's talk; the Republicans said: No, just kidding. Immigration reform is hard. We would rather just talk about how awful it is that people are getting health care through ObamaCare.

You put something on the table, we say let's talk, and you say no, and then blame Democrats for blocking immigration. It makes no sense.

Questioning whether the President has the power to stop the deportation of immigrants who came here as children and have lived here practically their whole lives in the U.S., what are you thinking? The President not only has the power to suspend those deportations, he has the duty to suspend those deportations.

So here we are, with the entire country demanding reform of our immigration system, demanding we change our law. We see the parents of U.S. citizen children being deported and their children put in foster care. And we say there's got to be a better way to handle this situation that is good for the taxpayer, good for the immigrant family, good for our economy, and national security.

House Republicans see the situation and apparently say: No, we refuse to change the law because it is hard and we don't trust the President. And because the law is the law, we must deport them all.

When I and anyone else with a conscience looks at that American child being put in foster care because we have deported his parents and he looks at you doing nothing, we say something has to be done because it is the right thing to do from a moral perspective.

So, let me be clear, Mr. President, if you act to suspend the deportation of a person whose American child will be put in foster care, I will applaud you and so will most everyone on this side of the aisle. It will not only be us applauding. The three evangelical leaders

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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who wrote the essay I entered into the RECORD, all three important religious leaders from Spartanburg, South Carolina, this is how they put it:

Immigration reform is an urgent need—inaction carries a profound human cost and we consistently see this in our ministries.

Hardworking, contributing members of our society live in constant fear of deportation. The victimization of individuals and families goes unreported, and families are torn apart as American-citizen children lose one or both of their parents to deportation proceedings.

They add:

We stand at a critical crossroads. Our broken and antiquated immigration system has precipitated an economic and moral crisis that we can ignore no longer.

Listen to your church elders. While you do nothing, the number on the board behind me continues to increase and the deportation machine continues.

If you don't, I and millions of others across this land will continue insisting that the President exercise his authority to stop deportation and separation of American families. We will force the President to act, and I assure you we will win that fight.

[From the Greenville News, Feb. 22, 2014]

GOD OFTEN REMINDS US TO WELCOME
IMMIGRANTS

(By Ricky Eason, Jim Goodroe, and Greg Castillo)

Late last month, House Republicans released standards that will guide their efforts as they move forward on immigration reform. As evangelical leaders, we join voices from the business and law enforcement communities to strongly support this step.

We applaud any progress toward a solution for one of our nation's most complex and critical issues. With President Barack Obama's comments in the State of the Union address, Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers' mention in her Republican response, and now the release of these standards, bipartisan support for immigration reform is clear.

In a time of bitter division and partisan politics, we call on our nation's leaders to transcend their differences and pass commonsense, broad reform that will strengthen our economy, make our nation safer, and give our undocumented neighbors an opportunity to come out of the shadows and earn legal status.

As faith leaders who call ourselves "The Three Amigos," we represent the three largest ethnic groups in South Carolina. Although we come from communities with different cultural and political perspectives, we stand united in our Christian commitment to share the Gospel with all peoples (Matthew: 28:19), welcome and love the strangers in our midst (Leviticus 19:34, Matthew 25:31-46), and seek justice in our communities (Isaiah 1:17).

Throughout Scripture, God continually reminds His people to love and welcome the immigrants in their midst. As people who arrive to a strange place with no land, family or connections, immigrants are some of the most vulnerable people in any given community. For this reason, they consistently join widows and orphans in the Biblical "triad of the vulnerable" that God desires to protect (Exodus 22:21-22).

In our combined 60 years of ministry in the Upstate of South Carolina, we have served and ministered to immigrants from all over the world, documented and undocumented.

While undocumented immigrants are often mischaracterized or used abstractly in political arguments, we know these people personally as our neighbors, friends, and brothers and sisters. Immigration reform is an urgent need—inaction carries a profound human cost that we consistently see in our ministries.

Hardworking and contributing members of our society live in constant fear of deportation, the victimization of individuals and families goes unreported, and families are torn apart as American-citizen children lose one or both parents to deportation proceedings. Striking a middle ground between the extreme positions of mass deportation and open borders, we join with House Republicans in advocating for a middle ground where those without documentation can come out of the shadows, make restitution, and get right with the law.

Such an approach is very different from amnesty, which is the absence of legal consequences. Instead, this realistic approach would allow undocumented immigrants to admit culpability and pay their debt to society without separating or harming families or causing undue harm to our nation's economy.

We stand at a critical crossroads. Our broken and antiquated immigration system has precipitated an economic and moral crisis that we can ignore no longer. The Republican standards moved us one step closer to a solution that will protect the border, help grow our economy, and provide an opportunity for undocumented immigrants to earn legal status and fully participate in our communities.

The time for further action is now. Congress needs to overcome its doubts, and keep moving toward the legislation that is so desperately needed.

We join other evangelical leaders from across the country in reaffirming our commitment to earnestly pray for Congress and for immigration reform in 2014.

MODERNIZING OUR DRUG AND DIAGNOSTICS EVALUATION AND REGULATORY NETWORK CURES ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, this week we recognize the work of the tireless advocates for rare diseases. I had the honor of serving as the Republican chair of the Congressional Rare Disease Caucus. I consider it a very important responsibility as part of my service here and an honor to work for innovative treatments, new technologies, and to build an atmosphere of appreciation and understanding on Capitol Hill with the hard work of all the patient advocates. Their passion is often driven by the care of loved ones, and their personal stories are profiles in courage.

Hearing from countless advocates, many of whom are here in Washington this week, gives the members of the caucus renewed energy and purpose. Events held during Rare Disease Week highlight what has been accomplished and what still needs to be done, and there is a lot to do, but we will do it together.

I am working on important legislation in this area, the bipartisan Modernizing Our Drug and Diagnostics

Evaluation and Regulatory Network, or MODDERN, Cures Act. It will update the Nation's drug evaluation process to encourage the discovery and development of new treatments for chronic and rare diseases. The measure will also create a system that rewards efficiency and effectiveness to the benefit of all persons with rare diseases.

The MODDERN Cures Act will encourage the development of drugs abandoned in the development process. It will create a new category of drugs known as dormant therapies for compounds with insufficient patent protection, drugs that offer the promise to treat conditions with unmet medical needs.

Updating regulatory networks such as patent reform will help open the pipeline for new innovations and therapies. Patients with degenerative conditions, cancers, and rare diseases await the genius of these new solutions. While we do not know the cause or cure of many of these rare diseases or cancers, we do know that awareness is the best protection, information is the best tool for innovation, and well-rounded care during and after treatment is the best therapy. That is our mission in the caucus: to work together to find solutions that make a lasting difference.

I again thank the families and the advocates whose challenges we may never completely understand, but whose commitment to their loved ones is unyielding and inspiring. The caucus pursues its mission in their name.

COMPREHENSIVE DENTAL REFORM ACT

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

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize National Children's Dental Health Month. It is a critical part of overall health, yet it is also an issue frequently overlooked.

Too often we think of dental care as an optional service, but in reality, it is a critical component of overall health. Its importance first hit home for me 7 years ago when I learned the story of a young Maryland boy named Deamonte Driver.

In February of 2007, 12-year-old Deamonte came from school with a headache, which had started as a toothache days before. His mother, who worked hard to make ends meet with low-paying jobs, searched for a dentist who would accept Medicaid for her children. She found not one dentist. Let me say that again. She found not one single dentist who would care for her children's teeth.

At wit's end, Deamonte's mother brought him to the emergency room, where he received medication for pain, a sinus infection, and a dental abscess. Unfortunately, that was not enough. The bacteria from Deamonte's cavity spread to his brain, and at 12 years old, he died for lack of a simple procedure