

human rights violations, and imprisonment of innocent Americans.

Thirty States, to date, Mr. Speaker, have imposed sanctions against Iran. Both Democrats and Republicans have worked at the State and local level to enact laws to ensure that State assets are not invested in and State contracts are not awarded to companies that do business with Iran.

As long as Iran continues its outrageous activity abroad, it is our right and it is our duty to make sure that we are not complicit in funding its terrorism, its human rights abuses, and its other activity that is contrary to the U.S. national interests and global stability.

Now, there is some ambiguity and some confusion about State sanctions that are authorized under the so-called Iran deal of this year. This legislation clarifies, it puts an exclamation point, and it reaffirms the legal right of States to maintain these sanctions as enacted into law under the 2010 statute until Iran ends its support of terrorism and reverses its abhorrent human rights violations.

Please join my colleagues Representative TED DEUTCH of Florida, Representative DAN LIPINSKI of Illinois, Representative MIKE POMPEO of Kansas, Representative BRAD SHERMAN of California, and Representative LEE ZELDIN of New York, along with me, in this effort to ensure that the right of States to maintain these important sanctions against Iran prevails.

We can ensure that States have this right and this authority from preventing their resources from funding Iranian terrorism and human rights abuses.

END HUNGER NOW—MONTE'S MARCH

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, last week, I had the pleasure of taking part in Monte's March, an annual hunger walk in western Massachusetts. The march started in 2010 and is named after its founder, Monte Belmonte, a local activist and WRSI The River radio host in Northampton.

Over the course of 2 days, we walked 43 miles across western Massachusetts, from Springfield to Northampton to Greenfield, to raise awareness about the very real problem of hunger in our communities and help families in need this holiday season.

We had a great group walking with us this year, led by Monte, and including Andrew Morehouse, the executive director of the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, University of Massachusetts Amherst Chancellor Kumble Subbaswamy, Northwestern District Attorney David Sullivan, and a host of other local officials and community members.

I want to say a special thanks to my colleagues Congressmen RICHIE NEAL

and JOE KENNEDY for joining us along the way and helping to support those in need.

Also joining us on that march were Sean Barry of Four Seasons Liquor in Hadley, Erika Cooper of Tea Guys in Whately, Ben Clark of Clarkdale Fruit Farm in Deerfield, Natalie Blais of UMass Amherst, Steve Fendel from Gill, Marty Dagoberto, Dan Finn from Pioneer Valley Local First, Chia Collins from Northampton, Kristen Elechko, Georgian and Rick Kristek, and many, many, many more.

This year's walk was extra special for me because my son, Patrick, walked the entire route with us both days.

Mr. Speaker, every day, 48 million Americans struggle with hunger, including 15.3 million children. We live in the richest country on Earth and have greater access to food than any previous generation, so the fact that hunger continues to be so widespread in America is absolutely stunning.

Monte's March was started in 2010 to do something about it. This year's walk was the longest and biggest effort yet.

Bright and early last Monday morning, our group of walkers began our march in the Mason Square neighborhood of Springfield. The Mason Square neighborhood is one of those communities in western Massachusetts most in need, with so many families living in poverty and facing food hardship. In fact, childhood poverty rates have been as high as 59 percent in this area alone.

For these families, overcoming hunger is especially challenging because the neighborhood is a "food desert," an area where affordable and healthy food, like fresh fruits and vegetables, are hard to come by. With no full-line supermarket within walking distance for residents to purchase food at affordable prices, we wanted to make sure that the Mason Square neighborhood was front and center in this year's march.

It also gave us the opportunity to thank the Mason Square Health Task Force for their tireless efforts to address hunger and to show our deep appreciation to local feeding programs like St. John's Congregation Church.

We then marched through Springfield, Chicopee, and Holyoke before finishing day one in Northampton. Seventeen miles were behind us, with day two still to go.

We started on Tuesday morning walking through Northampton, then Hadley, and then Amherst, where we stopped at the Amherst Survival Center.

The Amherst Survival Center is an amazing place. Since 1976, they have welcomed everyone who has come through their doors with open arms and a kind word. They help those who are struggling to meet their basic needs. All of their services are free. They run a food pantry, community meal program, drop-in health clinic, job-readiness workshops and job fairs, and a host of other important programs.

After our brief visit, it was back to the pavement, through Sunderland and Deerfield, before finally ending in Greenfield.

We walked a total of 26 miles on day two. Along the way, we felt the incredible support of the western Massachusetts community. People stopped us along the way to add canned food and other donations to our shopping cart. They came out of their homes and their businesses and schools, or they stopped their cars along the side of the road to offer words of encouragement.

Along the way, we helped raise more than \$150,000 for The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, which distributes hundreds of thousands of pounds of food throughout the emergency feeding network in the region.

Mr. Speaker, by the end, we were sore and tired, but we were exhilarated by people's generosity and support. When you add it all up, the outpouring of donations and support from our community will help provide more than 450,000 meals to families in need.

The good news is that hunger is a solvable problem. We just need to muster the political will to help more communities like these in Massachusetts and across the country.

There is not a single congressional district in the United States where hunger isn't an issue affecting the daily lives of kids, families, seniors, or veterans. We all have a stake in this, and with strong grassroots support from communities in all 50 States, just like the ones we visited over 2 days, we have the power to make a real difference and help the 48 million Americans struggling with hunger.

Mr. Speaker, during this holiday season, I urge my colleagues and all Americans to remember those who are struggling with hunger. They are our neighbors or colleagues and our friends.

I want to thank everyone who supported this year's Monte's March and especially want to thank the incredible community partners on the ground for their tireless efforts day in and day out. You inspire us, and we thank you for your service.

FIXING AMERICA'S SURFACE TRANSPORTATION ACT

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

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, or FAST Act. This critical legislation will provide 5 years of fully paid-for transportation projects across the Nation to repair our aging infrastructure.

The FAST Act makes important reforms to highway and vehicle safety and expands public transportation to make Federal investment more cost-effective. It also expands funding available for bridges and roads.

And, most importantly, Mr. Speaker, this bill was done through the regular order process, with transparent amendments considered and all Members having their say.

I would like to highlight several initiatives that are important to my south Florida congressional district included in the FAST Act.

Language was included in this bill that I offered with Representative TITUS to protect our seniors and pedestrians in congested traffic areas. While total traffic crash fatalities are down nearly 25 percent in the last decade, pedestrian deaths are up, hurting children and the elderly most.

This language will encourage States to adopt safe and adequate accommodation standards for roadways and sidewalks when developing future Federal projects.

Also included in the FAST Act is robust funding levels for University Transportation Center programs, with much-welcomed increases over the next 5 years.

One hundred twenty-five universities across the country participate in the UTC program, conducting critical research to develop future transportation technologies. Florida International University, in my district, is a world-recognized leader in accelerated bridge construction, and I am proud to advocate for them and all the UTCs here in Congress.

I also introduced a bill earlier this month with Representative LIPINSKI that was similar to this language and appreciate all the bipartisan support UTCs have received.

Lastly, I would like to thank Chairman GIBBS and Ranking Member NAPOLITANO for their work in the creation of the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act, or WIFIA, in last year's WRRDA legislation. This is a perfect example of good government and will be truly revolutionary in addressing the dire water infrastructure needs throughout the country.

I represent Miami-Dade County, one of the 10 largest water and sewer departments in the Nation, that services 2.3 million people daily. The 14,000 miles of pipeline date back more than 40 years, and repairs are much-needed.

Included in the FAST Act was a fix to the WIFIA program to allow for the use of tax-exempt municipal bonds in these infrastructure projects. Earlier in the year, I introduced a bill with bipartisan support that proposed this fix, and I am grateful it was included in the FAST Act to allow local governments the tools necessary to repair our water systems.

Lastly, I would like to thank Chairman SHUSTER and Ranking Member DEFazio and their Senate counterparts for all of their hard work in crafting this important legislation. This final product embodies the essence of bipartisanship, and I am proud to serve on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

I urge the House and Senate to pass the FAST Act to strengthen our Nation's transportation networks. I know my neighbors in south Florida, especially those living in Kendall and South Dade, will be very grateful.

SEVENTH ANNUAL SOUTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL CLIMATE LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give accolades to Monroe County and the city of Key West for holding their Seventh Annual Southeast Florida Regional Climate Leadership Summit.

For 7 years, they have created a forum for people to come together and discuss the importance of mitigating the effects of climate change. I thank them for their continued efforts and for being leaders on this critical issue that warrants serious attention.

Like me, they believe that humans are a contributing factor to climate change and that our years of living irresponsibly have caught up with us, leaving a blemish on our planet. They have dedicated time to making a positive impact on our world, and I applaud them for their valiant and enduring efforts to see this task through.

To all the attendees of the climate summit in beautiful Key West, thank you for your efforts to make the world a better place. I am confident that if we work together we can do right by future generations and leave them a cleaner, more beautiful planet.

NELSON SOBRINO, STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a student in Homestead, Florida, Mr. Nelson Sobrino, and congratulate him on his recent election as student council president of Somerset City Arts Conservatory.

President Nelson, who is 13 years old, ran on a platform of adding additional school spirit days and helping the less fortunate with food during the holiday season.

The story of President Nelson's path to success at such a young age has a lot to admire. In first grade, he was diagnosed with autism. However, Nelson has overcome difficult odds and has not only been a very successful student academically, winning awards like "Reading Plus" for Web-based comprehension program, but has excelled socially as well.

His teachers, parents, and fellow students have been a tremendous support network and have greatly contributed to President Nelson's success.

So, President Nelson, I proudly recognize your leadership of the student body of Somerset City Arts and look forward to visiting with you soon.

CLIMATE CHANGE

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

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, today, the world leaders, more than 100, are gathered in Paris to talk about an existential threat to all of us. This is not just the Syria issue, it is not just Iraq, it is not just terrorism, but it is about this planet's ability to continue to sustain life as we know it. It is about climate change.

Here in Washington, it is as though it is a different universe, not the universe in which we live, but a completely different one.

What I want to do is to basically cover this issue today of climate change. Let's start with the underlying problem, the emission of carbon into our atmosphere.

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For thousands and thousands of years, the atmospheric carbon has remained below 300 parts per million. This little spike here at the end—this year we reached 400 parts per million, and the consensus of scientists around the world is that this level of carbon will significantly increase the ambient air temperature of the world and the temperatures of the ocean, having a profound effect on the world's ability to sustain itself, like the production of food.

The last 2 years—2014 and this year—are going to be the hottest ever recorded in recent centuries. What does that mean? Well, it means that the ice in Greenland is rapidly melting, as it is in the Arctic Ocean as well as Antarctica. Sea levels are rising and will continue to rise both because of the melting ice and the warmer temperature of the ocean, which causes the water to expand.

All of this is a serious problem for us if we care about the production of food and if we care about our ability to survive. Here in Washington, yesterday, on the floor of this House of Representatives, it was a different universe.

It was not the universe in which we live. It was not the planet on which we live. It was some very, very strange place, because yesterday the majority in the House of Representatives passed two pieces of legislation that would wipe out the Clean Power Act, an effort by the administration to reduce the production of coal energy here in the United States.

Now, there is a problem in the rest of the world with the use of coal, and we still have that problem here in the United States.

In The Washington Post yesterday there was a picture of Beijing, China. You couldn't even see across the street. The article goes on to say that it is principally from the production of coal.

So while we have a chance here in the United States—and we have been at this for many years, reducing the effect of coal and the production of coal both in terms of pollution as well as in terms of its carbon emissions—the House of Representatives, the majority party, yesterday voted to take not a step, but to take a whole mile backwards and eliminate the ability and the effort of this Nation to continue to reduce our consumption of coal and the pollution that is caused from there.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, but today, maybe tomorrow, we will be taking up H.R. 8, a bill that would again turn us away from the world