

allowing commercial vehicles serving these communities to continue to use this long-established highway. Specifically, it directs the Department of the Interior to establish a fee and permit program for commercial vehicles serving these communities.

This bill enjoys broad support in the affected communities, and Congressman MARINO should be commended for his efforts to resolve this vexing issue for his constituents.

I urge the passage of the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bill amends the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Improvement Act to extend the authorization of a waiver for certain commercial traffic on U.S. Route 209, a federally owned highway that runs through the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

When Congress decided to restrict commercial traffic on the portion of the highway that runs through the recreation area, the law included an exemption for certain vehicles that belong to nearby businesses and municipal governments. This bill provides a 5-year extension of that exemption in order to facilitate continued access for local residents.

It is supported by the National Park Service, and I urge my colleagues to support its adoption.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the author of this measure, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MARINO).

Mr. MARINO. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my bill to reauthorize commercial traffic along Route 209 through the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

For nearly 5 months now, uncertainty has reigned over this 21-mile stretch of road that is running through my district. Over 30 years ago, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania—as the chairman so eloquently stated—transferred Route 209, then a State road, to the National Park Service.

As commercial thru traffic is banned on roads within our national parks, it would also be so on this stretch of Route 209; but, at that time, a 10-year exemption was made to support the local freight transportation industry and because acceptable alternative routes were unavailable. After multiple extensions, the most recent commercial vehicle authorization expired at the end of September of 2015.

To address the problem, county and township officials from the surrounding areas met with the National Park Service and my staff to negotiate a new plan. They recognized the continued need to allow some commercial vehicle access, and they settled on the carefully crafted language we are considering today.

The work to produce this extension acknowledges the continued need of

employers, businesses, and homeowners I represent in Pike and Monroe Counties. The expiration in September cast a cloud on the local business community and put countless jobs in jeopardy. Passing this bill so that it can be swiftly considered by the Senate is imperative as the weather warms and business activity increases through the region.

I thank Chairman BISHOP for his support and assistance in bringing this bill to the floor as quickly as possible. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3620.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING PENN STATE'S MIKE HERR, "MIKE THE MAILMAN"

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Mike Herr on his retirement from the United States Postal Service. For generations of students at Penn State University, Mike is lovingly known as "Mike the Mailman."

Mike's first day with the Postal Service was April 1, 1968—48 years to the day of his expected retirement this year. In his nearly five decades of working at the university's main campus in State College, he has formed bonds with countless students and has become a fixture at the school's annual dance marathon, also known as THON—the largest student-run philanthropy in the world. In fact, Mike has become known for delivering Mack Trucks that are full of letters and packages for dancers who are participating in the event.

When asked about becoming a Penn State campus institution, Mike said: "My secret is fairly simple: kindness matters; humor always helps; staying enthusiastic about the big and little things and showing compassion to every single person that I meet."

Mr. Speaker, these are words that we can all live by, and I wish "Mike the Mailman" the best of luck in his retirement.

THE GENOCIDE OF CHRISTIANS AND OTHER RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Ne-

braska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nebraska?

There was no objection.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I had the extraordinary privilege of being in the room when Pope Francis was given a small cross, a crucifix. This crucifix belonged to a young Syrian man who had been captured by the jihadis and then given a choice—convert or die—and he chose. He chose his ancient faith tradition.

He chose Christ.

And he was beheaded.

His mother was able to recover his body and the crucifix that he wore and bury him, and then she subsequently made her way to Austria by which this cross came into the possession of the Holy Father.

This type of incident—the killings, the beheadings, the crucifixions, the immolations—occurs day, after day, after day to the beleaguered religious minorities of the Middle East—the Christians, the Yazidis, and others—who have ancient faith traditions, who have every right to be in their ancient homelands as does anyone else.

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This is a genocide. This is a deliberate attempt to exterminate an entire set of peoples based upon their faith.

Mr. Speaker, in the year 2004, then-Secretary of State Colin Powell came to the United States Congress and in a committee hearing—the Senate Foreign Relations Committee—he declared what was happening in Darfur in Sudan a genocide. In making that simple declaration, using that powerful word, he helped put an end to that grim reality.

Thankfully, what is happening now that should give the beleaguered communities of the Middle East some hope is that there is an international coalition developing that has recognized the fact that this is a genocide being committed.

Nearly 200 Members of the United States Congress, this body, have signed on and are cosponsoring a resolution that declares this a genocide. The International Association of Genocide Scholars has stated it as such.

Others, including the Yazidi community, the United States Catholic bishops, Pope Francis himself, Hillary Clinton and MARCO RUBIO, both Presidential candidates, have declared this to be a genocide.

Genocide is a powerful word. It evokes special meaning. It creates the conditions for when there hopefully is inevitably and perhaps miraculously