

## LET'S STOP PLAYING POLITICS

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, over the August work recess, I met with many constituents, but I also met with my regional Zika task force that included health professionals from the public and private sector who recognize the devastation of the Zika virus.

In the continental United States, there are over 2,000 cases. Over 600 pregnant mothers have been impacted by the Zika virus with yet unborn children, and then there are about 30-plus cases of transmission right here in the United States. And yet tonight the other body failed to pass the Zika funding. Now is the time.

My committee was very constructive. Dr. Persse from the city of Houston talked about surveillance of those coming into their clinics to determine whether they have been impacted by fever and a rash. We have talked about the vaccine and also a Zika act to be able to give information to those who are in need of knowing how to prevent it.

Yet the funding is not here. Why? Because we cannot pass a clean Zika funding, emergency funding, without riders.

Let's stop playing politics. Pass the Zika funding. The health professionals insist on it. People are dying.

## REMOVING REDUNDANT RED TAPE

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

Mr. POLIQUIN. Mr. Speaker, there are millions of Americans across our country who are frustrated that Republicans and Democrats are not working together to get things done. Well, I can tell you that is not the case, Mr. Speaker, in the great State of Maine.

During the past 6 months, I have worked very hard with Congresswoman CHELLIE PINGREE, a Democrat, who represents our First District in Maine. I am a Republican representing our Second District. Together we have ushered through a very important bill, Mr. Speaker, that removes redundant and harmful red tape from being imposed upon 650 hardworking Mainers who harvest and process sea urchins and cucumbers from the ocean floor.

Now, unlike lobsters, Mr. Speaker, that are caught in traps up in Maine, sea urchins and cucumbers are collected on the bottom of the sea floor by those who dive in the cold, dark waters. It is a very dangerous job, and the product is a delicacy in the Far East, but it is very perishable.

Now already, Mr. Speaker, Maine officials inspect sea cucumbers and urchins before they leave the State, but the last couple years, U.S. Fish and Wildlife folks down in New York are imposing additional red tape before they can get on cargo planes.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I am proud of the Maine commonsense, bipartisan bill that removes this redundant red tape from 650 people who work as hard as anyone you can find.

JUDGE POE IS CONFIDENT HE  
WILL BEAT CANCER

(Mr. GOHMERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, while most of us have been working around in our districts trying to assist others in their lives, one of our number, who is one of the most dedicated public servants in the world, has been fighting leukemia. That is our friend Judge TED POE. He sends this message:

"This summer, while Congress has been out of session, I have undergone treatment here in Houston for leukemia. Fortunately, just 8 weeks into treatment, I am feeling like myself again and am confident I will beat cancer. Incredible progress has been made so far thanks to the good Lord and the world-class team physicians at MD Anderson.

"Tomorrow I will return to Washington for votes and then be present for as much of the fall session as my treatment schedule will allow. The support I have received during this difficult time has been overwhelming."

He goes on to say: "Thank you for your continued thoughts and prayers. This September, during Leukemia Awareness Month, I intend to keep fighting the disease with all that I have while fighting for Texans in the House of Representatives just as I always have.

"And that is just the way it is."

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STOP THE SLAUGHTER OF  
CHRISTIANS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, as we stand here today, let us remember that the slaughter of Christians in the Middle East continues. The slaughter by radical Islamic terrorists continues as we do our business as usual. We have a President who is even unable to use the words "radical Islamic terrorists," which could have something to do with the fact that we have had policies that have failed to stop this historic slaughter of Christians in the Middle East.

This group has declared jihad on the West and has begun their gruesome bloodletting by targeting Christians in the Middle East for genocide. Again, this administration has failed to do anything to stop the slaughter. Those people who have been permitted into our country from that part of the world, overwhelmingly, have been Muslims and not Christians.

It is time for Congress to act. We have not done our job. We have failed

as well. We need to pass legislation. I have submitted such legislation that says that, from now on, in that part of the world where Christians have been targeted for genocide, they will be given preference for any refugee status or immigration status into the United States. At the very least, we can do this to stop this slaughter of Christians in the Middle East.

## STUDENT LOAN DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, as I was flying to Washington from California today, I recalled conversations I had over the weekend with a group of students who are headed back to school at the universities in California and other parts of the Nation.

To an individual, I asked them: "How are you financing it? What are you going to do? Are your parents taking care of you; your grandparents?"

In some cases, they said: "Well, they are helping a little bit, but I am going to do this with a student loan."

All across this Nation, young men and women and maybe some that are not so young are going back to school to continue their education, to begin it, and, in some cases, learn new skills, and they are taking out student loans. This is an incredible, incredible way in which we have now begun the financing of our higher education system.

What does it amount to?

Well, let me show you what it amounts to. It amounts to a whopping amount of debt. Among Americans, no other loan program exceeds the amount of student debt, except for home mortgages. It is well over a trillion dollars in 2014, and probably approaching a trillion and a quarter dollars.

It is a burden on not just current students, but students from yesterday and from the decades before, still carrying that burden of debt, unable to begin what used to be the normal process of a family, a car, a house, participating in the economic activities of America. But, rather, they are burdened by an extraordinary debt. And here we are in Congress, really not even paying attention to this fundamental American issue. It is an economic issue for the large economy. It is macroeconomic. It is also very, very much a personal issue.

Is there one of you out there in America that doesn't have a son, a daughter, or maybe even yourself that is burdened by this student debt?

You are paying interest rates that are 5, 6, 7, 8 percent and you are wondering why, if you are able to refinance your home, why you are not able to refinance your student debt.

That is a reasonable question and one that I asked my staff and others: Why