

community, your colleagues, your country, and I thank you for your service.

NO WALL ON OUR SOUTHERN BORDER

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

Mr. O'ROURKE. Madam Speaker, we have the lowest levels of northbound apprehension coming across our southern border in modern history. We have more Mexican nationals going south to Mexico today than coming north to the United States. We have less than zero migration from Mexico.

In El Paso, Texas, the border community is the safest city in the United States. On top of that, there has been not a terrorist, terrorist plot, or terrorist organization that is connected to our border with Mexico.

But just in case, we are being vigilant. We are spending \$19 billion a year to secure that border. There are 20,000 brave members of the Border Patrol who patrol every inch of that 2,000-mile border.

Madam Speaker, we do not need a wall on our southern border. It is a waste of time. It is a waste of resources, and it takes our eye off of the real threats to this country.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in opposing a wall from this new administration.

CONGRATULATING XAVIER BECERRA

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

Mr. CARBAJAL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to thank my friend and former colleague, Xavier Becerra, for his long and effective record of service on behalf of California in Congress.

Attorney General Xavier Becerra has been a true mentor and a friend to me, especially during this transition serving as a new Member of Congress.

His support and his service reaffirm that the children of immigrants and immigrants themselves have a crucial role to play in our Federal Government.

I want to congratulate Xavier Becerra on his well-deserved appointment to serve as California's attorney general. While he is no longer with us in the House, I know that his new appointment will be even greater felt across our country during these troubling political times.

I have no doubt that, as attorney general, Xavier will defend our Constitution and fight for families in California and help our State serve as a beacon of hope and progress in America.

IMMIGRATION EXECUTIVE ORDER AND CONFLICT OF BUSINESS INTEREST

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I rise to focus on President Trump's curious executive action to deny U.S. entry of certain refugees and travelers who were cleared and properly vetted. The arbitrary and discriminatory nature of his order is odd in that he only identified seven countries to be included.

One must ask: Why were other nations excluded? Yes, excluded from the executive order are several Middle Eastern, African, and other nations where The Trump Organization has business interests, including Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Azerbaijan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, where the majority of 9/11 terrorists originated.

We know Mr. Trump has failed to divest from his company, as ethics experts have duly noted. Every American should wonder whether he designed this executive order with his own business interests, at least, partly in mind. This is the purpose of divestiture, to eliminate any possible question of doubt or possible mal intent.

Without divesting from management and ownership, President Trump's circumstance threatens the basic tenet of the rule of law that the government and all of its actors will discharge duties in the best interest of the American people, not their self-interest or the interests of their cronies or the interest of their brand.

TRUMP'S REFUGEE ACTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. CHENEY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I might say it is great seeing you in the chair. You are a natural fit. Maybe we can do something about that at some point.

It is an honor to speak in this hallowed Hall. There has been much ado made about contrived misrepresentations about what has gone on with President Trump's executive order regarding seven countries that the Obama administration designated as being problems when it comes to refugees coming from those countries.

It has been absolutely incredible. And I think some of us were talking that it really exemplifies why networks like CNN—that was the one, the only 24-hour cable news network—have lost so much to other networks. MSNBC, CNBC, and even Fox News got caught up in some of the misrepresentations, and I couldn't believe that they were spending the kind of time talking about a contrived issue.

Now, there was a problem in some innocent people being delayed and im-

properly handled, people who didn't deserve that. I am familiar with how that feels because I deal, like most of us do in this body, with TSA on virtually a weekly or even sometimes more often basis.

There is a great article here by John Hayward from January 29. Mr. Hayward says:

"The sober and logical reasons for President Donald Trump's executive order on refugees and visitors are rising above the noise after an evening of hysterical over-reactions and emotional meltdowns on the Nation's TV networks.

"Advocates of sane, secure immigration policy have long noted that it's almost impossible to have a reasonable discussion of the refugee and immigration issues, because it's been sentimentalized and politicized beyond the realm of rational thought.

"This weekend brings them another superb example of media-magnified shrieking about fascism, bleating about 'white nationalists,' howling about 'religious persecution,' false invocations of the Constitution, and theatrical sobbing on behalf of the Statue of Liberty."

We do have that water coming off the Statue of Liberty being analyzed, so that we can determine whether or not it is tears or something else.

"For readers who want to wallow in the emotion, examples can be found in this handy dossier of hysteria compiled by the Washington Post. But clear-eyed adults prefer to examine plain facts about Trump's executive order:

"1. It is NOT a 'Muslim ban.'"

I have the executive order here. Unlike those in the Senate and those in the media, who were just excoriating President Trump and anyone involved in this executive order, I actually read it, unlike those people. I read the executive order.

□ 1745

And because I read the executive order, I understood there was no ban against Muslims, no ban against Islam. It was very straightforward. And Hayward's article points that out.

He said: "You will search the executive order in vain for mentions of Islam, or any other religion. By Sunday morning, the media began suffering acute attacks of honesty and writing headlines such as 'Trump's Latest Executive Order: Banning People From 7 Countries and More.'"

And that was from CNN. And, Madam Speaker, I am very pleased that CNN finally got around to having a more truthful headline.

"Granted, CNN still slips in the phrase 'Muslim-majority countries' into every article about the order, including the post in which they reprinted its text in full, but CNN used the word 'Muslim,' not Trump. The order applies to all citizens of Iraq, Iran, Syria, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen. It does not specify Muslims. The indefinite hold on Syrian refugees

will affect Christians and Muslims alike," not to mention people of every other religion and people of no religion.

"As Tim Carney at the Washington Examiner points out, the largest Muslim-majority countries in the world are not named in the Executive Order.

"More countries may be added to the moratorium in the days to come, as the Secretary of Homeland Security has been instructed to complete a 30-day review of nations that don't provide adequate information for vetting applicants.

"It is also noteworthy that the ban is not absolute. Exceptions for 'foreign nationals traveling on diplomatic visas, North Atlantic Treaty Organization visas, C-2 visas for travel to the United Nations, and G-1, G-2, G-3 and G-4 visas' are expressly made in the order. The Departments of State and Homeland Security can also grant exceptions on a 'case-by-case basis'—that is all in the executive order—"and 'when in the national interest, issue visas or other immigration benefits to nationals of countries for which visas and benefits are otherwise blocked.'

"There is a provision in the Executive Order that says applications based on religious persecution will be prioritized 'provided that the religion of the individual is a minority religion in the individual's country of nationality.'"

And so it is important to note here, I think from the executive order, that it says applications based on religious persecution. That means that people that have applied for visas or immigration benefits to come into the United States who, themselves, raise their religion as a reason to let them into the United States, those need to be prioritized based on whether or not their religion is actually being persecuted, those holding those religious beliefs are actually being persecuted. And I think that is a rather intelligent way to approach things.

But in those cases, it would be the applicant that would raise the issue of religion, not the Trump administration, not the State Department, not Homeland Security. It would be the foreign applicant trying to come into the United States who would be the one to raise that issue.

Now, the article goes on: "This has been denounced as a 'stealth Muslim ban' by some of the very same people who were conspicuously silent when the Obama administration pushed Christians—who are the most savagely persecuted minority in the Middle East, with only the Yazidis offering real competition—to the back of the migration line."

So it is important to note that, for years, this administration has been part of the discrimination and persecution against Christians in the world against whom there has been a genocide in progress.

So when the head of the U.N. was in charge of the refugee program and was

asked why is there not a similar percentage of Christians coming in as refugees to other countries to the percentage that Christians make up in that nation they come from, basically, the man who is now head of United Nations said, well, it is important to leave them where they have this historical presence, basically.

So in other words, yes, there is a genocide going on. They want to kill off every Christian in those areas, every Christian in the Middle East, and so the U.N. now Secretary General says let's leave them in the area where they are being wiped off the map, brutally killed. Let's leave them there until we can say this place where they were historically has now shown there are none there. They have all been brutally murdered as the U.N. watched and didn't help. It is outrageous how uncivilized this United Nations has become.

I filed a bill, and I still think we should bring it to the floor, that would require a complete defunding by the United States of the United Nations until such time as they withdraw the resolution of the Security Council that condemned Israel.

I mean, it is like a teacher of mine in the fifth grade after I got beat up by a bully who had been held back two grades, was about 18 inches taller. She pointed to the class and said: This is what happens when little boys try to play with the big boys.

Well, that is basically what the Obama administration had been doing. It is basically what the U.N. had been doing. They took the side of the mean bullies that had been devastating the Christians in the area.

Having talked to so many Christians who were living in Syria and who the mainstream press say, oh, yeah, they are big Assad fans—no, they were not big Assad fans. They knew that he could be quite brutal, but their only point that the mainstream media in the United States and most of the world was missing is that Assad prevented Christians from being the victims of a genocide; and as Assad was weakened, the assaults and the murders and the rapes of Christians increased exponentially.

I do think that the United States may still be held to account in the ledger of world history—what I would submit is God's ledger—for having the power and the moral right to stop a genocide of Christians in the Middle East and we participated in leaving them where they were, as did the U.N., so that they could be brutally murdered.

I am going back to Mr. Hayward's article.

"2. The order"—talking about the executive order of Donald Trump. "The order is based on security reviews conducted by President Barack Obama's deputies."

And, Madam Speaker, for those in the mainstream media, I think it is important to repeat that line. President Trump's executive order that didn't

ban Muslims but that ordered a temporary pause on people from certain countries from whom we had no information or inadequate information to vet the people that were coming in, it was based on security reviews conducted by President Barack Obama's deputies.

"As White House counselor Kellyanne Conway pointed out on 'Fox News Sunday,' the seven nations named in Trump's executive order are drawn from the Terrorist Prevention Act of 2015. The 2015 'Visa Waiver Program Improvement and Terrorist Travel Prevention Act of 2015' named Iraq, Iran, Sudan, and Syria, while its 2016 update added Libya, Somalia, and Yemen.

"These are countries that have a history of training, harboring, exporting terrorists. We can't keep pretending and look the other way," said Conway.

"3. The moratorium is largely temporary. Citizens of the seven countries"—and by the way, in this executive order that President Trump signed, there is no mention of the countries. It refers to what President Obama signed declaring, first, the four countries, and then the three countries.

It just refers to that that President Obama signed. He doesn't single out or name the countries; and I can't help but think, as intelligent as some of the people are that are assisting President Trump, that they showed a massive amount of naivete because it appears that they thought, if in the executive order President Trump refers to documents that President Obama signed designating these countries as countries where we didn't have adequate information, then even the mainstream media would have to go back to President Trump's and look above his signature and see that these are places that President Obama said were threats.

And then they would—having some semblance of a conscience—have to point out that actually Trump is just putting in an executive order of what basically Obama signed off on but didn't go ahead and carry out what needed to be done based on that law.

But, as I say, these folks were rather naive. And as the saying goes in Washington, no matter how cynical you get, it is never enough to catch up in this town. And so the Trump administration, the Trump advisers have a lot of growing to do to understand just how unfair the media can be. It is a valid presumption that if you don't name the countries, you make the mainstream media go back and look at what President Obama signed that they will understand, oh, this is what President Obama proclaimed that he is basing this on, so we can't be so mean to President Trump.

Well, it didn't turn out that way, and they are learning that just because it would make great sense, be common sense in most areas of the country—that is areas that are not the fringe

that voted for Hillary Clinton, but most of the country would say it is common sense. It isn't common within the original 10-by-10 mile boundaries of the District of Columbia, which are no longer 10 by 10 after ceding the land west of the Potomac to Virginia back in the 1840s.

But number four in this Hayward article: "Obama banned immigration from Iraq, and Carter banned it from Iran."

"'Fact-checking' website PolitiFact twists itself into knots to avoid giving a 'true' rating to the absolutely true fact that Jimmy Carter banned Iranian immigration in 1980, unless applicants could prove they were enemies of the Khomeini theocracy."

"One of PolitiFact's phony talking points states that Carter 'acted against Iranian nationals, not an entire religion.' As noted above, Trump's Executive Order is precisely the same—it does not act against an 'entire religion,' it names seven countries."

But, you know, I had some personal experience with PolitiFact. I used the word earlier today, "hack," "political hack," in an interview, and that is what I think of PolitiFact. They shouldn't be called PolitiFact. They ought to be called "PolitiHack."

□ 1800

I know I was speaking here on the House floor—I think it was last year—and I made a statement based on data received by the Senate on the percentage of American citizens and the percentage of noncitizens—non-American citizens—who were in Federal prison for possession of a controlled substance. The reason I singled out possession was because President Obama has tried to make it appear that people in Federal prison have gotten such a bad rap because they really—just simple possession—they didn't deserve to be in prison so long. There is this whole intimidation that, gee, there are people in Federal prison for possession of controlled substances who should have been let out a long time ago, and that is why we needed to have our laws changed.

Well, since the President had mentioned people in Federal prison for possession, I singularly pointed out that the huge majority of people in Federal prison for simple possession were not American citizens. I'm going from my memory, but, apparently, PolitiFact wanted to do as they normally do and cover for the Democrats and try to do a hatchet job on a Republican since they are not political fact, they are political hack. So my communications person gets an email from "PolitiHack" that uses the name PolitiFact and wanted to know the source of my information because they were going to rate my statement. She provided the facts as provided by this administration to the Senate.

Clearly what I had said was exactly true. I had quoted specifically from the data from the Obama administration,

and it was 100 percent accurate. So then they come back—they thought they would catch me in not having proper information, and they come back to my communications person and said: Well, we have got information from the Bureau of Prisons that showed that if you look at all offenses that involved controlled substances, the percentage of noncitizens is not nearly that high. So why would he use just possession?

The point was because President Obama had used simple possession to try to make it look as if people in Federal prison were not there for very serious crimes, and there is certainly a smaller number of people in Federal prison for possession than for dealing drugs and other charges.

So in the end, after all the back and forth, they basically perpetuated a fraud upon the American people, PolitiFact—a bunch of political hacks—by not being willing to say that my statement was 100 percent true because they, in some contorted manner, did not want to point out that my statement was exactly true. They refer basically to, oh, that the number wasn't near that high of people involved in controlled substance. I didn't mention everybody with controlled substance.

So that is just a parenthetical in Hayward's article for me because I know personally PolitiFact is a political joke if what they were doing was not so serious in harming the American people by misrepresenting the true facts of what is going on. I hope that at some point being still remaining an entrepreneurial country for a little longer—at least we have got nearly 4 years to go that we can be assured of as an entrepreneurial country—at least in that time perhaps we will have an entrepreneurial group that will rise up and start scoring PolitiFact to show just how unfair they are, and, on occasion, when they are actually fair, show that as well so the American public can actually score the illegitimate scorers.

But going back to this article, it says: "As for Barack Obama, he did indeed ban immigration from Iraq, for much longer than Trump's order bans it from the seven listed nations, and none of the people melting down today uttered a peep of protest. Richard Grenell summed it up perfectly in a Tweet: 'Obama took 6 months to review screening for 1 country. Trump will take 3 months for 7 countries. . . .'"

This article goes on: "5. Trump's refugee caps are comparable to Obama's pre-2016 practices: David French, who was touted as a spoiler candidate to keep Donald Trump out of the White House during the presidential campaign—in other words, not a big Trump fan—wrote a lengthy and clear-headed analysis of the Executive Order for National Review. He noted that after the moratorium ends in 120 days—and that is one section. It ends in 120 days,

the other section is 90 days, another part says they will have 30 days to produce a report."

But it goes on to say: "Trump caps refugee admissions at 50,000 per year . . . which is roughly the same as President Obama's admissions in 2011 and 2012, and not far below the 70,000 per year cap in place from 2013 to 2015."

"Obama had fairly low caps on refugees during the worst years of the Syrian civil war. He didn't throw open the doors to mass refugee admissions until his final year in office. Depending on how Trump's review of Syrian refugee policy turns out, he's doing little more than returning admissions to normal levels after a four-month pause for security reviews."

"6. The Executive Order is legal: Those invoking the Constitution to attack Trump's order are simply embarrassing themselves. The President has clear statutory authority to take these actions. As noted, his predecessors did so, without much controversy."

"Most of the legal arguments against Trump's order summarized by USA Today are entirely specious, such as attacking him for 'banning an entire religion,' which the order manifestly does not do. Critics of the order have a political opinion that it will in effect 'ban Muslims,' but that's not what it says. Designating specific nations as trouble spots and ordering a pause is entirely within the President's authority, and there is ample precedent to prove it."

"It should be possible to argue with the reasoning behind the order, or argue that it will have negative unintended consequences, without advancing hollow legal arguments. Of course, this is America 2017, so a wave of lawsuits will soon be sloshing through the courts."

"7. This Executive Order is a security measure, not an arbitrary expression of supposed xenophobia. Conway stressed the need to enhance immigration security from trouble spots in her 'Fox News Sunday' interview. French also addressed the subject in his post:

"When we know our enemy is seeking to strike America and its allies through the refugee population, when we know they've succeeded in Europe, and when the administration has doubts about our ability to adequately vet the refugees we admit into this nation, a pause is again not just prudent but arguably necessary. It is important that we provide sufficient aid and protection to keep refugees safe and healthy in place, but it is not necessary to bring Syrians to the United States to fulfill our vital moral obligations."

The article goes on. It is well written, points are well made, and I would humbly submit, Madam Speaker, that we had the statistics last year that showed that for the cost of bringing one Syrian refugee to the United States for 1 year, we could help take care of 12 Syrian refugees in place in a safe zone over near their home.

Now, I am very encouraged that even though President Obama simply would not ever agree or strive to have a safe zone in areas near the refugees' homes so we can take care of 12 times more than we can possibly bring to our country for the same cost, and he is working on that, and he has got some agreements, and it looks like that may be a possibility. We give air cover, help create safe zones in areas there in the Middle East so the refugees can live without being killed and horribly brutally murdered and abused. That makes more sense. It appears that the President has worked with or talked with the Saudi authorities and perhaps will be able to get something like that worked out.

There were people just quite emotional over the fact that Saudi Arabia was not mentioned and Egypt was not mentioned. Actually, the order did not mention any nations by name. The Trump executive order simply referred to what President Obama signed off on which included seven countries. These are seven countries where it shouldn't even be arguable among people of common sense that we do not have, have not received, and cannot get adequate information from which to determine whether people wanting to come into the United States are actually refugees or if they are part of al Qaeda, al Nusra, and ISIS, and they want to come kill Americans and end our freedoms and our way of life. That is why such an executive order was entirely appropriate.

Although I supported a different candidate for President for over a year, I applaud President Trump in caring so deeply about the American public that he would take the honorable and appropriate steps to protect Americans that the last administration would not take.

A great article in Townhall from Matt Vespa is entitled: "Friendly Reminder: Obama Selected The List Of Seven Countries in Trump's Executive Order." That certainly should be noted yet again.

Another great article here by Seth Frantzman says: "Obama's Administration Made the 'Muslim Ban' Possible and the Media Won't Tell You." It is a good article there.

I think this article from John Hayward from January 27 on Breitbart may give us insight as to why there is so much howling by CAIR and CAIR associates because there were implications of people involved with CAIR in the Holy Land Foundation trial.

□ 1815

One just merely need to go look at the pleadings. Here in Congress, since Eric Holder and Loretta Lynch went through their entire terms as Attorneys General and continued to refuse to provide the discovery documents in the Holy Land Foundation trial that were provided in pretrial to the convicted terrorist supporters, it is pretty incomprehensible for some of us.

On one occasion, when Attorney General Holder pointed out that, well, there may be some classified issues involved, I pointed out to him—apparently, it went right over his head and he couldn't discern—the fact that the Justice Department gave the documents I am requesting to people that were then convicted of supporting terrorism.

If Justice could give them to the terrorists without concern about being classified, surely they could give them to Members of Congress. Although some of us may argue in such ways that it terrifies some people, we are not terrorists and we are authorized to receive classified information. We should have been authorized in Congress to receive the same documents that the Justice Department provided to the terrorist supporters who were convicted.

This article from John Hayward, January 27, points out that:

"According to Reuters, a 'factional' debate is under way within the Trump administration over adding the Muslim Brotherhood to the State Department and Treasury lists of foreign terrorist organizations.

"This is a measure often called for by critics of the Brotherhood as Center for Security Policy President Frank Gaffney, who once again recommended an official terrorist designation on Wednesday's edition of Breitbart News Daily.

"A source in the Trump transition team told Reuters the effort to so designate the Muslim Brotherhood is led by National Security Adviser Michael Flynn. The source was personally in agreement with Flynn.

"In Congress, a bill to add the Muslim Brotherhood to the official terrorist list was introduced this month by Senator TED CRUZ and Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Secretary of State nominee Rex Tillerson denounced the Muslim Brotherhood as an 'agent of radical Islam' during his confirmation hearings, but he has not made public statements regarding adding them to the foreign terrorist organization list.

However, other Trump advisers, and members of the intelligence and law-enforcement communities, argue the Brotherhood has 'evolved peacefully in some countries,' Reuters claims.

"They also expressed the pragmatic concern that going hard on the Muslim Brotherhood could complicate diplomatic relations with nations such as Turkey. It would unquestionably, however, please such U.S. allies as Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia, although there have been signs the Saudis might be softening on the Brotherhood as they search for allies against ISIS in Iran.

"One official familiar with the State Department's deliberations conceded that the Muslim Brotherhood's ideology has influenced such terrorist groups as Hamas, but since it is a large, loose organization spread over

several nations, it could be legally difficult to apply the terrorist designation. Allied nations such as Britain have also expressed suspicions about the Brotherhood's influence, while stopping short of a formal terrorist designation."

So this is important to note. It is a good article. But I can't help but wonder if the Council on American-Islamic Relations, or CAIR, may be getting quite concerned about the potential for designating their friends in the Muslim Brotherhood.

There may be a mutual relationship there. There may be people that are part of both groups. No doubt, CAIR is getting quite concerned about heightened talk about naming the Muslim Brotherhood as the terrorist organization they are. It is just that they don't use terrorist tactics, as some of them have indicated before, when they are making great progress without terrorism, but knowing that eventually, after they get as far as they can with peaceful methods, they will ultimately be resorting to terrorism to bring the United States and other Western civilizations, countries into the international caliphate, wherein we are ruled by a caliph.

So it is interesting times. Here, tonight, in perhaps an hour and a half or so, our new President will name the nominee to fill the Honorable Antonin Scalia's spot on the Supreme Court. He is still greatly missed. He was a great man. He was a great jurist. He was a great patriot and he was great for America and our freedoms. So we will look forward to hearing that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD).

PRIVACY PROTECTION

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for the way that, on a nightly basis, he comes down to the well and helps inform people. Jefferson, in the writings of our Founding Fathers, talked about how important it was to have an informed electorate.

I just really appreciate the way the gentleman gives people clarity and information that they can then digest and make their decisions with. That process of informing is, I think, a vital part of the politic. He does it on the daily basis, and I appreciate it. His doing so matters to me and to the people that I represent.

I appreciate so much the gentleman's yielding because I want to talk just a couple of minutes about a bill that I introduced today entitled the REAL ID Privacy Protection Act.

It is a bipartisan bill. It is supported from the Republican side by people like MARK MEADOWS. It is supported on the Democratic side by Democrats like CHELLIE PINGREE from Maine. I think they do so because it is a commonsense bill that gets at some of the deficiencies that one can find in REAL ID.

Quite specifically, what it does is eliminate the requirement that your personal documentation and documents be held and archived, in essence,

in warehouses for 10 years. It will not require your stuff to be out in government databases for 10 years. Secondly, it eliminates the requirement that the DMV databases be co-linked. Thirdly, it creates uniformity with regard to the way in which extensions are granted.

So the bottom line is your driver's license could still be used to get you in the Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort or it could be used to go into Joint Base Charleston or a whole host of other facilities around this country. More significantly, for the average flying public, you could still use your driver's license next year to be able to get on a plane in the United States of America.

Why is all this important?

It is important because individual privacy matters. It is important because equal treatment under the law matters. It is important because the 10th Amendment really matters. States have a role in which the Founding Fathers intended the Federal Government to fit with the State government, to fit with local government, and to fit with individual prerogative.

Now let's examine each one of those couple of things. One, if you look at South Carolina driver's licenses, just as an example, they are secure. We have holograms. We have barcodes. We have a whole host of different things that create security.

Yet, in the wake of 9/11, what the Federal Government, Homeland Security, and others decided at that time was that, in essence, what they wanted was a de facto national ID card and for the Federal Government to, in essence, federalize what had previously been a State function, with State's issuing driver's licenses.

There is not a Federal driver's license. Texas has driver's licenses, South Carolina has driver's licenses, Florida has driver's licenses. Each State may have a little bit different way of doing so, but it was a state prerogative.

In the wake of that Federal requirement—I was wearing a different hat at the time; I was wearing a Governor's hat—I joined with, for instance, Governor Schweitzer from Montana in saying: Wait, this doesn't make sense. The States still have a vital role here. This role does not need to be federalized. We pushed back and, long story short, we were successful with many others in that effort. Yet, what is happening is many of those deadline requirements are now reemerging and approaching.

The question we have to ask ourselves in Congress is: What are we going to do about it? Are we going to push back again? Or are we going to try and slow this again? Or are we just going to let the Federal Government come in and steamroll what has been a State function?

I think it is important that we act, and that is why we introduced this bill. It, again, gets at three important things. One, privacy matters. Quite

simply, if government doesn't need your stuff, they don't get your stuff. I think that is a simple premise. Again, let me say it again. If government really doesn't need your stuff, it shouldn't get your stuff.

What do I mean by that?

What I mean is, if the requirement, as is now the case, is that the Federal Government take your personal information and they archive it for the next 10 years, do you really feel that you are more secure?

I would argue that is not at all the case. I would argue that it is much better to have a system that, when you take your birth certificate, you take your marriage license, you take your divorce papers, you take your citizenship papers, whatever it is that you have, take it all, let folks at the government level decide whether you are who you are or whether you are not who you are, and then give your stuff back to you. They don't need to house it for the next 10 years.

That is all this bill does. If you house it for the next 10 years, in fact, there is a considerable cost. The unfunded mandate to States is \$17 billion.

So what we are saying is make the determination. Take, again, all your stuff, look at it, but then give it back, rather than requiring States to archive this stuff for the next 10 years.

It also matters because, again, of individual human privacy. Whether it is a divorce decree, whether it is a marriage license, whether it is citizenship papers, whatever it is, we have been in hearings over the last couple of weeks where it was proven that the Russians were quite involved in hacking of American databases.

Why do we want to open that up to Chinese hackers, Russian hackers, to whoever it is, if it isn't required and necessary from the standpoint of security?

Two, this bill simply gets at the notion that States matter. The 10th Amendment matters. Patton was once attributed with saying that, if you tell a soldier to take a hill, tell them to take the hill. Don't tell them how to attack the hill.

The same is true of the Federal Government as it relates to States. Give us a secured requirement, but then allow Texas to go about their way of taking the hill and South Carolina to come with its way of attacking the hill, as long as we take the hill, which is the necessary security requirement.

I think it is also important from the standpoint of security that one thing we have learned over time is that centralization of data does not make data more secure. We have a host of different breaches that have occurred at the Federal level that prove this point.

I think that one of the things that is interesting about Pearl Harbor is that the boats were in one spot and it was one-stop shopping for the Japanese. So, in fact, what we have seen in terms of military strategy going forward is people spread assets out. They don't want

them congregated all in one spot so that an attacker would be able to take down a multitude of different assets with one particular raid. I think the same is true in the information age, as it relates to databases.

Finally, this bill is about equal treatment under the law. I think that what many States—South Carolina would be among them—are concerned about is: Is this too subjective? If you happen to be a blue State versus a red State, does that have some degree of determination in the way in which you get an extension or you don't get an extension?

□ 1830

Eighteen States and territories have been granted extensions. Seven States have been granted very limited extensions. All this bill does is say, Let's make that process transparent so that States can look one to the other and say, How was it that you got an extension but I didn't? I think that that level of uniformity would make sure that nobody suspects this system of being arbitrary or capricious by nature.

That is in simple form what the bill does. Again, it is about your privacy. We have had a long debate over the course of our country on security versus freedom, and what we don't want to do is give up certain, in essence, soul conditions, if you will, for freedom, including this notion of federalism, in our efforts to be secure. It is about recognizing that States are not wards of the Federal government, that a \$7 billion unfunded liability really does matter to the taxpayers of different States. Finally, it is about equal treatment under the law.

Again, the bill is called the REAL ID Privacy Protection Act. I would ask Members to join us on that bill. I would ask folks out there listening to talk to their House Member about that bill because I think it is one that makes a whole lot of sense.

I would say, again, how much I appreciate the gentleman from Texas yielding. Most of all, I thank him for the way he comes down to the well on such a regular basis to inform the American public.

Mr. GOHMERT. I thank the gentleman from South Carolina not merely for the bill, but this gentleman's bills, just like the reasoned argument made here in this Chamber, well reasoned, well thought out. Having sat and listened to so many lawyers during my years on the bench, both trial bench and appellate bench, I would have welcomed the opportunity to hear from my friend from South Carolina in any courtroom where I was sitting. Well reasoned, a lot of good research in trying to solve problems. I look forward to a lot of us reading that bill and finding out because there is no doubt it involved just as good reasons as were used in your argument here today.

Also, we heard from another colleague of ours, the Honorable DON YOUNG from Alaska. I am actually optimistic about so many things with this

President in the Oval Office now, and one of them is that our friend, DON YOUNG from Alaska, may finally get some help.

President Carter had identified an area that really didn't have any wildlife to speak of. Yes, it was part of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, but it was an area that really didn't have wildlife to speak of. As I understand it, there are some caribou that may walk across there from time to time, but they can't stay because there is not enough to sustain them. But President Carter, as anticarbon energy as he was, realized that is an area that we can agree ought to be drilled for the production of oil and gas, and it has been fought over and over.

Who stands to gain?

Well, actually, the American public. But since so much oil has now been found out in my friend MIKE CONAWAY's district in west Texas, up in the Dakotas, we are not as needful of that as we were. But the people who will really benefit are the people of Alaska, and then additional beneficiaries will be the people of the United States and the people who want to get out from under the iron fist of Russia rising. We will be able to help them with that by not only becoming energy independent; but after energy independent, exporting oil and gas to other nations so they don't feel the pinch that nations like China and Russia are putting on them.

I thank my friend, Mr. YOUNG from Alaska, and my friend, the former Governor of South Carolina, Mr. SANFORD.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

PEOPLE ARE WORRIED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, today is Tuesday, January 31. It has been 11 days since the inauguration of our new President; and, oh my goodness, has it been an extraordinary 11 days. I just hardly know where to begin.

Normally I come up here, and we talk about how we can grow the American economy, how we can provide jobs, how we can see a return of our manufacturing industries, but I am compelled today to pick up comments on the last 11 days.

I was at a dinner out in California on Friday evening, and a wide variety of people from multiple interest groups were there: some labor unions, some farmers, senior citizens, healthcare folks, teachers. There was an overwhelming sense of concern—deep concern—about the direction this country is going. Some of these friends of mine were Republicans and others were Democrats; some liberal, some conservative.

But to a person, they came up to me and said: Oh, my God, what is hap-

pening in Washington? Where is this going? What is he doing? What does it mean to us?

And some of them said: Will they really actually terminate the Affordable Care Act? Is ObamaCare really going to end? What about my insurance policy; will I lose it? I am on Medi-Cal. What will happen to me?

And teachers saying: How does this fit with the effort to improve our schools?

And some that had been in the military looked at some of what was going on and said: But veterans' care, this hiring freeze affects the Department of Veterans Affairs. What does it mean to me? What is happening in Washington?

Some others were concerned about, well, there is going to be this transportation bill, infrastructure bill. How are they going to fund it? Is it really going to happen?

I have been to many events in my years in public office, but I have never been to an event in which there was this overwhelming concern about what's going to happen in Washington.

I have seen changes occur. Jimmy Carter to Ronald Reagan, there was concern, but not the kind of angst, deep emotional concern about where this country is going. I have seen George H.W. Bush to Bill Clinton, and I am sure there were many Republicans concerned about where Bill Clinton would go, and then Clinton to George W. Bush, and then to Obama, but nothing like this.

It is not just last Friday night. Today, in front of my office in Davis, California, 200 people showed up to say: You have got to do something. You have got to make it clear that we can't have these shutting down our borders. You can't let them do that. Davis, California, the University of California, there are 5,000 foreign students and teachers on that campus. There are more than 200 from the countries that are affected by the immigration and by the ban on people coming in from those seven countries. What does it mean, they asked me? And what about the Affordable Care Act?

All across this Nation people are demonstrating. It is now 20 minutes to 7 here in Washington, D.C., and I suppose at 8 tonight the President is supposed to give a nationwide address on his next Supreme Court nominee. I am quite certain that tomorrow morning there will be another eruption of concern by Americans as to what does it mean if the Supreme Court throws out the role of the Federal Government in protecting voter rights? What does it mean if the Federal Government isn't there to assure that a woman's body is her own?

All across this Nation people are going: Oh, what is happening?

Executive order after executive order, starting with the repeal of the Affordable Care Act and instructions to every agency of the Federal Government to stop it, see that it doesn't work. And here in Congress, a budget

resolution that calls for the elimination of the financial support for the Affordable Care Act which, if you remove the money, what happens to the subsidies, the tax subsidies that people are able to use to be able to afford healthcare insurance, the additional money that goes to the States for their Medicaid programs?

And, oh, what about the seniors? If that budget resolution actually goes through, the money that is in the Affordable Care Act to provide the seniors the opportunity to have their drug benefit costs reduced, affecting millions of American seniors, the money is gone. Will the drug benefit be gone also? Most assuredly it would unless, of course, you want to just increase the deficit.

And about that free annual visit that is available to seniors that has clearly extended the life of thousands or tens of thousands of seniors because they find out they have high blood pressure. They can take a cheap pill, get that blood pressure down and not have a stroke. Or maybe diabetes, the onset of diabetes. That free annual benefit checkup, will it still be available if the budget resolution and if Mr. Trump's attack on the Affordable Care Act actually happens?

People are worried. People are frightened. And they should be. They should be. Because this goes to the very ability of Americans to carry on their tasks, protections that are necessary to protect Americans from fraud. The House of Representatives today voted to pass a rule that would lead to the elimination of protections that Americans have in their financial services. I don't know how we repeal the Affordable Care Act.

And how are we going to protect America by building a wall? What is it going to cost? 15, 20, 30 billion dollars?

Most people who look at the immigration issue rationally would say it is not going to solve the problem. And besides that, the problem is dramatically reduced as a result of the Mexican economy growing and jobs being available there as a result of the enormous build-up that has already occurred with the Border Patrol and the immigration service. We have seen a dramatic reduction.

I was told today by some people that work in this field in California that the people who are coming into the United States illegally are mothers and children from Central America who are seeking refuge from the horrible gangs and violence in Central America. They are not sneaking over the border. They are presenting themselves at the border as refugees. We will come back to the refugee issue in a few moments.

□ 1845

How proud he looks, signing yet another executive order, this one on a wall. We are going to build a wall, 1,400 miles of wall between the United States and Mexico. So with a look of pride, he wants to spend anywhere