

Mr. Speaker, we must stand with the people of Cuba. We must stand against a Castro regime that seeks to benefit only itself. We must give the Cuban people hope and commit to help them achieve freedom and democracy.

It is the duty of the new administration to review the previous administration's failed policy and start working for the people of Cuba and against the Castro regime.

#### WE MUST RESIST NOW

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, in this Chamber last night, as I listened to the President's address to the joint session, I could only think of one word: "resist."

Whether one voted for Donald Trump or not, we are all obligated to resist his incoherent and contradictory pledge to dismantle the protections of the Affordable Care Act with empty slogans.

Perhaps the most revealing moment of the Trump administration so far was his declaration Monday in his meeting with America's Governors that health care is complex. "Who knew?" he said.

Well, anybody who has done any work, any research, or had even had conversations with the people who rely on health care, who study health care, or deliver health care. This was not a secret that it is complex. Yet, for months, he has made reckless, misleading comments and has unleashed efforts to make the Affordable Care Act less effective and to destabilize insurance markets.

We should resist his cynical and cruel step of singling out people who have somehow been harmed by illegal immigrants as a special category. Why not an office dealing with the far greater number of Americans whose lives are turned upside down as a result of gun violence—which, by the way, is the method of choice for homegrown terrorists who, experts in his own government point out, are responsible for more terrorist acts and violence and death of Americans than people who are foreign-born.

We should resist empty promises to rebuild and renew America by failing to provide any meaningful detail. That squanders an opportunity for bipartisan cooperation and a badly-needed effort to revitalize America and put millions of Americans to work at jobs that can't be outsourced overseas and that will strengthen each community. It is important to resist an administration program long on divisive rhetoric, misinformation, and lost opportunities.

The least popular new President in our history, as near as we can tell, has mobilized millions of Americans to be involved, to resist. It is critical that Americans of good conscience, who care about the future of their country and want to change the trajectory and tone of politics, dive in now to protect

programs they care about which are under assault, to reject shortsighted policies that will spend billions of dollars on things we don't need, like even more nuclear weapons. How many times do we have to be able to blow up the world in order to achieve deterrence?

We should resist spending less on critical parts of our defense. For example, the diplomacy and international aid saves human lives; it undercuts the calls to radicalism for people without hope. Making the job of our diplomats and our aid workers harder and more dangerous and less effective should be resisted at every turn.

We should resist draconian budget cuts and hiring freezes that undercut the opportunity to take care of our veterans, especially their health. Their health is a long overdue promise that Trump has occasionally talked about but is now actively undermining.

We should resist unparalleled potential budget assaults on things that make a difference to our communities, like arts, public broadcasting, programs for children, things that matter deeply.

Together, we can resist these destructive policies in Congress, in the budget, and in legislation, while we strengthen their support for similar programs at home. Everybody should resist by being involved in their community. There is something every one of us cares about at home and on the national stage. We should resist politics of division, hatred, and hopelessly flawed and failing priorities.

We should resist. It is within our power to dramatically change the political equation. Remember, Donald Trump lost the popular vote by almost 3 million votes, while Democrats picked up seats in the House and the Senate. The country is much more evenly divided, and they are not united in support of this administration.

By doing our job now, it makes it possible to build on the successes by making sure everyone has a chance to participate in the voting process. Fight efforts at voter suppression.

It is time for all of us to engage in that resistance that adds energy and hope across America. It must start now and will continue until we defeat hate, bigotry, shortsighted policy, and misallocated priorities.

America can halt and reverse the damage that has been set in motion. We should resist. We should resist now.

#### RARE DISEASE WEEK

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 fighting rare diseases.

I have the honor of serving as the Republican chair of the House of Representatives Rare Disease Caucus. I consider it one of the greatest responsibilities of my service to work for in-

novative treatment and new technologies and to build an atmosphere of appreciation and understanding in Congress for the hard work of all of the patient advocates. Their passion is often driven by the care of loved ones, and their personal stories are profiles in courage.

Hearing from thousands of 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 here on Capitol Hill and at the NIH in Bethesda highlight what has been accomplished and what still needs to be done.

One of those champions joined us in the House Chamber just last evening. I was very proud that President Trump invited New Jersey resident Megan Crowley to his joint session address. Megan's story of combating a terrible rare disease is a testament to the American spirit. Megan is now a student at Notre Dame. I salute her, her parents, and her family for their courage.

Passage of the 21st Century Cures Act was a major accomplishment in the last Congress—indeed, in my opinion, it was the most important piece of legislation passed during the 114th Congress. We worked in a bicameral, bipartisan way. We worked with the White House and with the Department of Health and Human Services. It passed overwhelmingly in the House and in the Senate, and now it is the law of the land.

I am encouraged that the Trump administration will carefully implement its provisions to our healthcare system, improving the healthcare system and to help spur the next great medical innovations.

Congress will join and help direct that effort and proceed through the appropriations process to match progress and research funds.

□ 1015

Right now it takes 15 years for a new drug to move from the lab to the local pharmacy. The CURES Act modernizes clinical trials to expedite the development of new drugs and devices, removes regulatory uncertainty in the development of new medical apps, and breaks down barriers to facilitate increased research collaboration.

Patients with degenerative conditions, cancers, and rare diseases await the genius of these new solutions. We need to do everything we can to help find these cures.

I have met with many rare disease patients, advocates, and their loved ones. Their work is inspiring, and it gives our caucus a mission and a purpose.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join the Rare Disease Caucus and help us in this great cause. In this, the week that we recognize the work of the tireless advocates across the Nation, I salute all of them for what they are doing for the American Nation.

## CONNECT THE DOTS

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

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, we have a reality show host masquerading as President of the United States of America who came to this Chamber yesterday in a Hollywood-style production and pretended to act Presidential.

But the question that we confront is one that Richard Nixon actually first raised, in November of 1973, when he said that the American people deserve to know whether or not the President is a crook. That was an observation that Richard Nixon made in the context of the Watergate scandal which began as a nickel-and-dime break-in at the Democratic National Committee headquarters in the summer of 1972, and, obviously, concluded with impeachment proceedings and the ultimate resignation of a President in disgrace.

Nixon made the observation that the American people deserve to know whether or not the President is a crook, and many people across the country are raising a similar question because 17 different intelligence agencies have concluded that the Russians, at the explicit direction of Vladimir Putin, interfered in our election for the purpose of helping Donald Trump. Yet, it is hard to get an independent investigation going in this place because my friends on the other side of the aisle continue to put party ahead of the country.

But that is just the beginning. We know that, as early as December of 2015, at least four different cronies of Donald Trump were in regular communication with Russian intelligence agents at the same time these individuals were hacking into the DNC, the DCCC, and the Clinton campaign, interfering with our democracy. These individuals were Michael Flynn, who came to become Trump's first national security adviser; Carter Page, who was his former foreign policy adviser; Paul Manafort, who was the chairman of the Trump campaign; and Roger Stone, a longtime affiliate.

If they were having these conversations at this time, we know they probably weren't talking about Russian vodka. What were they talking about? The American people deserve to know.

We also are aware that Michael Flynn had an illegal conversation, in December of 2016, with the Russian Ambassador where he discussed sanctions that were imposed on Russia because of their hacking. He then apparently lied about this conversation to the Vice President who then went out and misrepresented facts to the American people, and then Michael Flynn resigned in disgrace. But we still can't get an independent, nonpartisan investigation in this place.

But that is not all. We know that Donald Trump has not been bashful when going after our allies like Mexico or Australia or NATO or the European

Union or, this past weekend, France. He is not bashful about being critical, but he can't say a negative word about Vladimir Putin, a brutal dictator. It appears that this President is more determined to make the Kremlin great again.

But that is not all. He refuses to release his taxes despite promising the American people that he was going to do so prior to November of last year. What exactly is he hiding in these tax documents? Yet, we still can't get an independent investigation.

We also know that the White House Chief of Staff engaged in potentially unlawful conversations with the FBI, perhaps trying to get them to obstruct justice in the public sphere in the midst of an ongoing investigation.

All we are saying is connect the dots. This should not be a Democratic issue or a Republican issue. The American people deserve to know whether or not the President is a crook.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

## MONROE COUNTY ROADS PROJECT

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

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to congratulate and express my gratitude to Monroe County leaders who recently took steps to address the impact sea level rise is having on roads and infrastructure in my district.

Earlier this year, the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners took action that sets new standards for determining elevation of future county road improvement projects to account for future sea level rise. This is a problem my district is already facing. The 2015 King Tides led to flooding that lasted more than 3 weeks in several neighborhoods, causing damage to homes and businesses and leaving my constituents unable to move freely to and from their homes.

Mr. Speaker, few cities or counties around the United States are as advanced in sea level rise planning and implementation as Monroe County. I am grateful for their leadership, and I am committed to continuing to support their efforts any way I can here in Washington, from advocating for transportation infrastructure research grants that will help ensure we have the best engineering at our disposal to working with my fellow members of the Climate Solutions Caucus to discuss and build consensus for proposals that will mitigate the effects of rising sea levels.

It is critical we continue to work toward an infrastructure package that will give our communities the funds they need to bring our roadways like those in Monroe County into the 21st century.

## NATIONAL DEBT

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss one of the most serious issues facing the United States—the staggering national debt that will reach \$20 trillion this month, or \$62,715 per person living in our country. While the national debt grew over \$9 trillion under President Obama, we now have a new opportunity here in this Congress to work together with the new administration to propose and debate solutions that will address our country's debt and get our fiscal house back in order.

Every day, families across my district sit around the dinner table and make tough decisions about how they will spend their money. Most stick to their budgets because they don't have a choice, and their government should be no different.

In 2015, I was proud to support a 2-year bipartisan budget agreement that implemented new caps on discretionary spending for both fiscal years 2016 and 2017. Too often, enormous sums are wasted due to unpredictable budget cycles and government shutdown threats. With the adoption of this 2-year budget, Congress was able to reduce wasteful spending by providing certainty to agencies as they plan for the future.

The budget also included reforms to entitlement programs, which is the largest percentage of national debt. It is important that we protect programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid—the invaluable safety net for those who need the help—while working to implement reforms to make these programs solvent for future generations.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents sent me back to Washington to continue to build consensus with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to advance solutions that will rein in our national debt, and that is exactly what I plan to do. It is our duty, as elected officials, to leave our children and grandchildren with the same economic opportunities as previous generations, and that will continue to be one of my main priorities here in Congress.

## SMALL BUSINESS HIGHLIGHT

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have never had much of a sweet tooth, but it has recently been brought to my attention that my district is home to some thriving small businesses that are putting south Florida on the map for desserts.

Not far from my district office, Night Owl Cookie Company, recently named Forbes 30 Under 30, is delivering fresh-baked cookies to constituents across West Kendall. Since starting the business in 2015, when he would make and deliver cookies from his parents' kitchen, Andrew Gonzalez's success has flourished to three brick-and-mortar locations across Florida.

Further south is Knaus Berry Farm in the Redlands where families from all across south Florida will travel to pick up fresh produce and, of course, to wait in line for fresh, homemade cinnamon