

ADDRESSING SERIOUSNESS OF SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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

Mr. BACON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to address a serious issue that affects millions of people around the world, to include many Americans: slavery and human trafficking. Despite major progress, many countries still struggle to define and understand human traffic operations and how to combat it.

Most of us assume that human trafficking transports people only internationally. In reality, the 2019 Trafficking in Persons Report showed that a majority of human trafficking survivors were identified in their countries of citizenship. While women and children may account for the majority of people trafficked, adolescent boys and men also have been victims of this modern-day slavery.

Everyone is vulnerable to human trafficking, women, children, foster youth, Native Americans, immigrant children, those with disabilities, and the LGBTQ community. That is why the public must be educated on human trafficking and reject the misconception that it can't or won't happen to them or someone they know.

While there is not an exact statistic on how many people are trafficked in the United States, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo assessed as many as 24.9 million people—adults and children—are trapped in this human form of modern slavery around the world, including our own country.

We may also assume trafficking occurs only in major cities like New York or Las Vegas, but it also happens in suburbs, rural areas, and on Tribal or farmland. In Nebraska, 900 individuals are being sold online for sex each month, and 75 percent of them are from just Omaha.

I am grateful for the steps Nebraska has taken to combat trafficking and protect survivors, but legislation can do only so much. Organizations such as the Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of State have worked hard to fight this global issue and have been trained to locate and deter human trafficking.

I thank the Nebraska State Patrol, the sheriff departments, and local law enforcement for their diligent work in capturing traffickers and rescuing survivors. I thank the many nonprofit volunteer organizations that are dedicated to making a difference in combating this crime.

In honor of the National Slavery and Human Trafficking Month this past January, we must commit to work together to address this heinous crime and ensure that all are safe from exploitation.

BRINGING AWARENESS TO IMPORTANCE OF MENTORING

Mr. BACON. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of National Mentoring

Month from this past January. As a member of the Youth Mentoring Caucus, I rise to bring awareness to the importance of supporting strategies and policies that enhance mentoring programs and increase the procurement of quality volunteer mentors.

Research has shown that mentoring relationships have positive effects on people's lives in so many ways. Mentoring reassures our youth that they are not alone in dealing with everyday challenges; creates opportunity for personal growth and development; and provides youth, especially those in foster care, with vital relationships, networks, and counseling services needed to navigate life and successfully transition into adulthood.

I know the power of mentorship firsthand. I joined the Air Force in 1985 after a faith-based mentor saw where my talents leaned, and I would never have been a five-time commander nor a general officer without thoughtful mentors.

In my district, MENTOR Nebraska has partnered with 26 Omaha public schools to implement a mentoring program called Success Mentors, which serves over 600 youth. Within the last 2 years, the percentage of mentored youth in North Omaha increased by 150 percent. In the last 5 years, the percentage of mentored juvenile justice youth increased by 250 percent. In addition to a number of positive benefits associated with increased mentorship, this program has shown an improvement in school attendance—by over 50 percent in one school alone.

Congress must partner and support State and local governments and nonprofits so they can continue to prioritize new ways and approaches for serving at-risk or disadvantaged youth and connect them with caring adults who will help them navigate life and be their support system.

That is why I am an original cosponsor of H.R. 3061, the Foster Youth Mentoring Act of 2019, which addresses the need for greater support of mentoring programs that serve youth in foster care by developing best practices and quality mentoring standards when searching for and hiring mentors.

I thank our Nation's mentors, who are actively strengthening our communities and making a difference in the educational, personal, and professional lives of today's youth. Additionally, I urge my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to commit to improving our youth's outcomes and futures by supporting legislation like H.R. 3061.

RECOGNIZING GUN VIOLENCE SURVIVORS WEEK

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

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Madam Speaker, this week, we recognize Gun Violence Survivors Week across our country. In my district alone, there

have been 331 gun-related deaths and 716 injuries, including seven mass shootings over the last 7 years.

There are two sides of the coin when it comes to ending gun violence. Implementing commonsense gun safety measures that a vast majority of Americans support must be our top priority. At the same time, we have to begin addressing the root cause of gun violence in our communities, which is a revolving door phenomenon. Victims of gun violence are caught up in the drug wars, the culture of retaliation, and disrespect.

In fact, the rate of violent reinjury at most of the Nation's trauma centers is as high as 45 percent. One of the leading risk factors for violent injury is prior violent injury.

While these victims are recuperating in the hospital, they are a captive audience. They are confined to bed, if only for a few days. This offers us a window of opportunity where we can offer support when they most need it.

I am in the process of finalizing bipartisan, bicameral legislation with my colleague Congressman KINZINGER from Illinois, and our measure creates a new grant program to provide the victims of gun violence, who often become repeat victims of predators themselves, with the resources they need to stop this vicious cycle. This might include bus money, clothes for a job interview, or some groceries. Often, victims need help finding an affordable apartment or getting off drugs.

Violence intervention programs, like the ones that our bill will support, work. They reduce recidivism and hospital readmissions, jail time, and unemployment. This is why my previously introduced bill was endorsed by organizations such as the NAACP, the Fraternal Order of Police, and the American College of Surgeons.

The University of Maryland's Shock Trauma Center has been rated the top trauma center in the world. They support our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. They do research as it relates to all sorts of trauma. Shock Trauma is led by Dr. Tom Scalea, with the great doctors, nurses, and aides who work in that great institution. They have implemented this program that I am talking about here today, and let me tell you, it works.

I am excited to reintroduce my bill so we can work on lowering the rates of firearm deaths throughout the country.

HONORING EDDIE BRIDGES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLDING. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Eddie Bridges of Greensboro, North Carolina.

Members of Congress rarely get the opportunity to honor those who have truly dedicated their lives to the public good. That is because it is increasingly

rare to encounter those who are truly selfless, truly dedicated to a cause larger than themselves, and who truly care about preserving the best of our natural resources for future generations. Greensboro's Eddie Bridges is such a rare person.

Madam Speaker, Eddie is an unselfish leader whose love of the outdoors and sportsmen's community has led him to become one of the most effective conservation leaders in the history of North Carolina.

On behalf of North Carolina's congressional delegation, I want the world to know what an impact Eddie has made and to thank him in this official salute, which nobody has ever deserved more.

Madam Speaker, Eddie founded the North Carolina Wildlife Habitat Foundation, which raised \$5 million and has funded \$1.5 million in conservation projects across North Carolina.

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Eddie has been the driving force behind wildlife resource improvements that will benefit future generations forever. Thanks to Eddie's persuasive abilities and creative thinking, he has recruited the State of North Carolina and others to join him—to the tune of millions of dollars in projects—to improve wildlife restoration, water quality, and habitats statewide.

Eddie's foundation has funded, for example, a quail habitat project in the Sandhills Game Land, a bass habitat project at Jordan Lake, a North Carolina State University black bear research project in Hyde County, and created the Frank A. Sharpe Junior Wildlife Education Center in Guilford County.

We can all thank Eddie Bridges for the idea to create the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission's Wildlife Endowment Fund, which currently has \$130 million in assets and has funded \$70 million for wildlife restoration and habitat improvements.

Madam Speaker, Eddie also helped create the State waterfowl stamp and State income tax checkoff for nongame and endangered wildlife, which together have raised \$10 million for nongame wildlife and waterfowl projects. The endowments founded by Eddie have raised more than \$200 million to preserve and improve our natural habitat areas.

Eddie served 12 years on the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission after being appointed by Governor Hunt. He has received top national awards, including the Field and Stream Conservation Hero of the Year Award, the Budweiser National Conservationist of the Year Award, the prestigious Feinstone Award, the Thomas L. Quay Wildlife Diversity Award, and the Chevron Conservation Award. Last year, Eddie was inducted into the North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame.

But talk to Eddie and he will tell you these awards aren't about him; they are about his desire to give something

back. As Eddie said to the Wilmington Star-News last January: "It's about much more than me. It honors the 1 million men, women, and children who hunt and fish and inject more than \$1.3 billion into North Carolina's economy every year."

An accomplished athlete at Elon University, a leader in the sportsman community, and a hunter and angler legend, conservationist Eddie Bridges has made a positive impact on North Carolina's natural resources like no other before him.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the entire delegation, I wish to thank Eddie for his years of service, his incredible resource development to strengthen our State's wildlife, and the educational impact on our youth and future generations. It is truly an honor to know Eddie and to recognize him today.

PRESIDENT TRUMP HIGHLIGHTS NUMEROUS SUCCESSES

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

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Madam Speaker, just over 12 hours ago, President Donald J. Trump stood in this Chamber and delivered an incredible State of the Union Address. He highlighted numerous successes during his time as President of the United States:

Over 7 million jobs created;

Record unemployment—record unemployment—for five decades;

The lowest unemployment in over 70 years for women;

Record unemployment for African, Hispanic, and Asian Americans;

Doubling of the child tax credit from \$1,000 to \$2,000;

Orchestrating phase one of the China trade agreement, which increases the amount of agriculture products that the Chinese have to purchase from American farmers—the largest purchase in the history of our country;

Passing of the USMCA agreement. The President campaigned on it. It was a promise made. It was a promise kept;

The largest military pay raise in the history of this country.

The President said he was going to build a barrier along the southern border. He highlighted 100 miles of it being finished in his State of the Union Address yesterday, with 500 more miles still planned.

He highlighted how his administration has approved a record number of generic drugs, and, for the first time in over 50 years, drug prices have actually gone down.

He highlighted numerous successes that all Members of Congress who attended heard. It was unfortunate to sit in this Chamber and watch the Democrats on the other side not stand, not applaud for these successes for America, these victories for America, the people who sent us to Washington, the people we serve, the people who are our bosses. These are their victories. These

are their successes. But just because they came out of the mouth of President Donald Trump, the Democrats oppose them.

Folks, that is chaos in government.

Ever since the Democrats took control of this Chamber, they have had one mission, one mission alone, and that is to remove the duly elected 45th President of the United States, Donald J. Trump.

Their mission wasn't about lowering the cost of prescription drugs. Their mission was not getting government off the backs of small businesses, family farmers, and individuals. Their mission was about removing Donald Trump.

This partisan impeachment sham, this impeachment circus will be done today. In the United States Senate, President Donald J. Trump will be acquitted for life. You will see the process that happened in the House of Representatives was clearly a sham in impeaching the President of the United States.

It was so unfortunate yesterday to be sitting here and watching Speaker PELOSI, after the end of the speech, tear up the official speech of the President of the United States. That shows the true hatred that the Democrat socialists have for the President of the United States. That conduct is not fitting for the Speaker of the House.

When the Speaker tore up that State of the Union speech, she ripped up the words that recognized one of the last living serving Tuskegee airmen.

When she ripped up that speech, she ripped up the story of a 21-week-old surviving child who was born in a Kansas City, Missouri, hospital.

When she ripped up that State of the Union speech, she ripped up the story and the recognition of the families of Rocky Jones and Kayla Mueller.

RECOGNIZING MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARD RECIPIENT MELISSA FIKE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Madam Speaker, the prestigious Milken Educator Awards have been called the Oscars of teaching. I rise today to pay tribute to a resident of Missouri's Fourth District who was recently honored as one of the Milken Family Foundation's outstanding educators.

Melissa Fike of Oakland Middle School of Columbia, Missouri, has taught for 14 years and was not told ahead of time about her award. She was shocked to hear her name announced during a recent school assembly packed by Oakland Middle School students and staff.

As a winner, she receives an award, the recognition of her colleagues, and a check for \$25,000.

Teachers make an indelible mark on the lives of young people through their kind words, encouraging smiles, impartation of knowledge, or by helping