

other essential personnel who are keeping our society going during an unprecedented crisis at home—and I thank the diplomats and development professionals around the world that are working to keep us safe. We must now honor their dedication and sacrifice by committing the resources to them that they will need to stop the spread of this virus and re-create an environment that will enable our communities to thrive.

AMERICA'S GLOBAL LEADERSHIP
DURING COVID-19

HON. ABIGAIL DAVIS SPANBERGER

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 28, 2020

Ms. SPANBERGER. Madam Speaker, as the world faces the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, U.S. leadership in the global response is essential. Thank you to my colleague from California, Congressman BERA, and my colleague from Florida, Congressman YOHO, for leading a Congressional special order so that Members who represent communities across America can reiterate this point clearly.

I serve on the Asia Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, which Representatives BERA and YOHO lead as Chairman and Ranking Member. Our Subcommittee held our first hearing on the coronavirus outbreak in China in early February and our second one later that month. What we heard during these hearings from public health experts and administration officials reaffirmed something we already knew: The United States needed to demonstrate leadership in the international response in order to keep Americans safe.

Since these hearings, this horrible disease has ravaged families and communities in the United States and around the world, including in Central Virginia. The death toll, as well as the impact on our way of life, has been heart-breaking. Every day, I speak with Central Virginians who are experiencing this pain. As we do everything we can to halt the spread and impact of the virus in our local communities and across our nation, we must also recognize that U.S. leadership in the global fight against coronavirus is an essential part of ending the suffering at home.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that infectious diseases know no borders. An outbreak in a remote village can spread to major cities across all populated continents on earth in less than 36 hours. Even once we have more thorough testing and U.S. towns begin to see dropping numbers of cases, the disease could easily return. No matter how successful we are in fighting the threat of COVID-19 at home, we will not end the suffering and fear created by the virus unless we also combat it around the world.

This is exactly why global health experts, as well as foreign policy and military leaders, are speaking out—calling on U.S. government officials to lead by example and demonstrate leadership on the global stage. If our nation cedes international leadership, we are demoting our international standing, creating a void that our adversaries will fill and exploit, and most critically, we are risking the safety and livelihoods of Americans.

In addition, the pandemic is an incredibly painful reminder that, at the end of the day, U.S. national security comes down to resilience at home. As we face international threats, including infectious disease, we are only as strong and prepared as our most vulnerable neighbors and our most susceptible systems. The coronavirus pandemic highlights that national security is much more than what typically comes to mind—it includes our medical supply chains, the safety of American workers, and so much more. It includes emerging, transnational threats such as climate change and the COVID-19 virus—a disease that at any moment now is expected to cause a death toll surpassing the number of Americans who died in nearly a decade of fighting in Vietnam. Going forward, we must be prepared for the full range of risks to American security. And to do this, we must think of national security in a more comprehensive and integrated fashion, recognizing it is rooted in our strength at home and that the United States must lead on the global stage to provide the sense of security that so many Americans lack as they face disease and job loss.

As we strengthen and implement our response to the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare for future threats, we must recognize that U.S. global leadership is essential to protecting the health, security, and economic interests of all Americans. We cannot step back from this challenge; we must step up.

AMERICA'S GLOBAL LEADERSHIP
DURING COVID-19

HON. TED S. YOHO

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 28, 2020

Mr. YOHO. Madam Speaker, the United States, along with the rest of the world, currently finds itself in the midst of a global emergency of epic proportions. Never in the modern era has every nation on Earth been brought to their knees so quickly by a pandemic that threatens our security, our economy, and the social fabric of our lives.

The United States, and the rest of the world, were woefully unprepared for the arrival of COVID-19. Our underestimation of infectious diseases goes back multiple administrations, when we had ample opportunity to secure our essential supply chains, ensure stockpiles of PPE, and dedicate the necessary resources to research and study emerging diseases.

If there is one bright side of our current crisis, it is that our nation will never again take for granted our health security. President George W. Bush and industry leaders like Bill Gates forewarned us that our country would need to take proactive measures to prepare for the next pandemic. We clearly failed in heeding their warnings. COVID-19 will not be the last health crisis we face, and we must use the lessons we have learned to aggressively build up our capacity to prevent future pandemics.

As a veterinarian, it's no secret that I have been vocal on the threat of zoonotic diseases and the dangers of animal to human transmission. Just recently, I introduced the Advancing Emergency Preparedness Through One Health Act of 2019, which would improve public health preparedness by helping federal

agencies implement a "One Health" approach, recognizing that the health of people is linked to the health of animals and the environment. Multiple studies by the CDC have found that 6 out of 10 infectious diseases were seen in animals before humans, including the virus we face now. Coordination between government agencies is essential in addressing and eliminating zoonotic outbreaks, which is why the One Health model would improve synchronization between veterinarians and doctors by requiring the Department of Homeland Security and United States Department of Agriculture to work together.

Historically, the United States has applied its health expertise to the global stage as well, in the form of direct support and contributions to multilateral health organizations. The U.S. has historically been one of the largest donors to organizations like the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI), which utilizes market forces and private sector partnerships to drive down medical costs and develop and deliver new and underused vaccines to developing nations. Similarly, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), established by President George W. Bush in 2003, has saved millions worldwide by providing essential resources for prevention, treatment, and vaccine research. It is through smart investments like these that the United States demonstrates leadership on global health security.

But we can, and must, do more. As we have seen, our current efforts were not enough to stop the spread of coronavirus from infecting millions and killing hundreds of thousands. We must prepare for the next pandemic by partnering with initiatives like the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), an alliance aimed at coordinating the development of new vaccines to prevent and contain new infectious disease epidemics. CEPI works directly with industry, universities, and private research and development organizations to leverage a dedicated approach to advancing vaccine research. Currently, CEPI has reoriented its entire organizational structure to address COVID-19 and is advancing eight vaccine candidates at a rapid pace.

However, despite multiple multimillion-dollar contributions from Norway, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom and the Gates Foundation, the United States has yet to donate a cent. CEPI represents the next frontier in health security preparedness, and the United States must take the initiative if we are to continue leading international efforts on health security.

If we abdicate our place as a leader in global health, there is another country eager to take the reins. China has not been subtle in asserting itself on global health issues, and often not for the benefit of other nations. China's recent coronavirus debacle should be evidence enough that their communist regime cannot be trusted to lead with accountability, transparency, or pragmatism, traits that are essential when fighting widespread disease.

As for how China would fare as a global health leader, look no further than the disastrous initial response by the WHO to coronavirus, one that was clearly influenced by Beijing. Information was slow-walked, warnings from nations like Taiwan were ignored at crucial turning points, and cooperation with outside health experts was spurned until it was too late. And it has resulted in the largest