

campaign pockets of those responsible for awarding the contracts.

Amazingly, a loophole created in a previous administration in the Federal Highway Administration's contracting requirements is making it difficult, if not impossible, for States to implement these anticorruption laws. The Federal Government has threatened to cut off highway funds to any State that passes an anti-pay-to-play law. The Highway Administration's competitive bidding requirements have been interpreted to mean that States can't weed out corrupt contractors.

Clearly, this was not the intent of Congress when it passed these requirements. That is why I'm reintroducing the State Ethics Law Protection Act. This important measure simply amends the Federal Highway Administration's contracting requirements to allow States to pass these important laws. It ensures States that do pass anticorruption laws do not face financial penalties for doing so.

It is time for us to make it clear that Congress supports the right of States to fight corruption as they see fit. States have the right to ensure their contracting conforms to the highest ethical standards and offers the best value to taxpayers. It is not the Federal Highway Administration's place to second-guess a State on how to best ethically award contracts. States like Connecticut, New Jersey, South Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky have all passed laws like Illinois to root out this kind of blatant corruption.

These States should be applauded, not punished, for doing the right thing. By amending the Federal Highway Administration's contracting requirements, we can ensure that States have every tool at their disposal to encourage transparency and accountability. Our States have shown they are ready to reform. It is now our duty to ensure they have the ability to implement these reforms.

I am often asked what the true cost of corruption is. I will tell you, in my view, coming from Illinois, it is the loss of the public's trust. We cannot lead without this trust. And at this critical juncture, we must do all we can to restore trust and inspire the confidence of people across this country.

#### TRUST, ANTITERRORISM, AND BREACH OF TRUST BY OBAMA ADMINISTRATION

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

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. The Justice Department targets Associated Press, FOX News, and other journalists. For political reasons, the State Department and White House contrive a false story about Americans murdered in Benghazi. Cover-ups ensue. The President promotes rather than fires the principal deceiver. The President promises to punish the Benghazi

murderers, yet the only person jailed is a scapegoated filmmaker the White House falsely blamed for inspiring the Benghazi attacks.

Armed Federal SWAT agents raid Gibson Guitar and threaten to put Gibson Guitar out of business. Why? Gibson Guitar imported the same guitar materials they have imported for years; yet Martin & Company, a Gibson Guitar competitor, imports the same guitar materials with impunity. The difference? Gibson Guitar contributes to Republicans like Congresswoman MARSHA BLACKBURN and Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER of Tennessee, while Martin contributes \$35,000 to Democrats.

The IRS targets law-abiding citizens who use names like "Tea Party" and "Patriots" and dare exercise their freedom of association and speech rights. In one particularly outrageous example, Texan Catherine Engelbrecht is investigated and harassed by the IRS, the FBI, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms. Why? Engelbrecht founded the King Street Patriots, which hosts weekly discussions on economic freedom, and True the Vote, which trains volunteers to fight voter fraud.

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The White House manages the Fast and Furious gunrunning scandal that left hundreds of Mexicans and an American Border Patrol agent dead. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius unethically—and perhaps unlawfully—shakes down companies she regulates for donations to support ObamaCare.

President Obama thumbs his nose at America's immigration laws by not only giving millions of illegal aliens a free pass; Obama rewards illegal conduct by giving illegal aliens work permits in direct violation of American law, thereby undermining the ability of Americans to obtain good-paying jobs.

America is in uncharted waters when our own Federal Government aggressively undermines our rights to freedom of speech and association—rights won with American blood on the battlefields of Lexington and Concord, Trenton and Princeton, Saratoga, Cowpens and Kings Mountain, and Yorktown.

Mr. Speaker, America faces a policy debate between privacy and national security. Fifty years ago, our foes were well-known nation-states like Communist China and the Soviet Union. Now, our enemies may be foreign neighbors, foreign tourists, or even foreign students.

Foreign terrorists seek chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons of mass destruction that can destroy an American city or murder hundreds of thousands of Americans in a single attack.

As America seeks the proper balance between our privacy rights and national security, one thing stands out: Americans must be able to trust our

Federal Government to do the right thing with the privacy information Americans give up. If we cannot trust the Federal Government to use our private privacy information solely for antiterrorism purposes, then the balance shifts. We will not give up our privacy information, thereby increasing the risk of a successful weapon of mass destruction terrorist attack on an American city.

More and more, our own Federal Government disregards the rule of law that is essential to avoid the strife and bloodshed of anarchy. More and more, the Federal Government targets American citizens who differ politically with the White House.

While the IRS, Gibson Guitar, Benghazi, Fast and Furious, and numerous other scandals are troublesome, the bigger picture is that this White House, this administration, has breached the public's trust. The bigger scandal is that this White House, this administration, by their breach of trust, has undermined America's national security and thereby risked American lives.

Mr. Speaker, the White House can still do the right thing, but the right thing is not coverups. The right thing is not rewarding and promoting political cronies and lawbreakers. The right thing is, with full and open candor, telling the American people the truth about these scandals. The right thing is very publicly and aggressively firing offending Federal employees. The right thing is very publicly prosecuting lawbreakers. Then and only then will the trust of the American people in the Federal Government be restored. Then and only then can America fight the war on terror with certainty that we will win.

#### RICHMOND OFFICE OF NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY PEACEKEEPER FELLOWS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend two young men from Richmond, California, who will begin classes this fall at Tallahassee Community College in Tallahassee, Florida. Sounds pretty straightforward, I know, but these are no ordinary students.

What makes these young men from my congressional district stand out is their background. It's not just that most people thought they would never go to college—in fact, most people thought they would never make it out of the neighborhood. People thought they would end up in jail, or even worse.

D'vondre Woodard and Eric Welch are two senior fellows at the city of Richmond's Office of Neighborhood Safety Peacekeeper Fellowship, an office that does a remarkable job of changing violent lives. D'vondre and Eric are shining examples of what remarkable