

List is widely recognized as a powerful tool in the fight against terrorist networks around the world. Designating a terrorist group as an “FTO” makes it clear that organizations that engage in terrorist activity should not be welcome in any civilized society, while the wide-ranging effects of designation can hamper a network’s financing and operations. Often, when the United States adds an organization to the FTO List, they are leading the global community in taking on extremist groups willing to murder innocent civilians, and therefore, the value of a credible, potent, and reliable designation process is immense.

The Secretary of State’s role in managing the FTO List in accordance with Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act is complemented by consultation with the Attorney General and the Secretary of the Treasury. Each of these cabinet level officials plays a role in enforcing an FTO designation, and their assistance in considering potential additions to the list is absolutely vital. However, since the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)—which also has responsibility for many of the enforcement tools of FTO Designations—the role of the Secretary of Homeland Security in the FTO process has not been codified in statute.

As an example, DHS is the only Cabinet-level Department whose first three missions are the prevention of terrorism and enhancement of security; securing and managing borders; and enforcing and administering immigration laws. Each of these is a major component of the FTO List, which is designed to mitigate the terrorist threat and prevent members of designated organizations from entering the United States. Further, DHS already plays a significant role in assisting the Department of State in making FTO designations by providing information gathered by component agencies and DHS’ Office of Intelligence and Analysis. The Immigration and Nationality Act should codify the reality of the responsibility DHS has to assist in these designations.

Additionally, DHS personnel have a large presence in foreign countries, and DHS employees interact with individuals attempting to enter the United States thousands of times each day. DHS personnel contribute to screening FTO members who attempt to enter the United States.

Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), an office within U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), is the second-largest federal investigative agency in the country. The National Security Investigation Division of HSI “enhances national security through criminal investigations; prevents acts of terrorism by targeting people, money and materials that support terrorist and criminal activities; and identifies and eliminates vulnerabilities in the nation’s border, economic, transportation and infrastructure security.” This mission is intimately linked to the FTO list.

Many recent FTO designations have been issued for groups that have already attacked U.S. interests, U.S. citizens, or the U.S. Homeland. At the same time, many of these organizations engaged in terrorist activity and have been viewed as terrorist networks long before their inclusion in the FTO list. Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, Boko Haram, the Haqqani Network, and al Shabaab are some such examples. Yet the FTO list was intended to proactively respond to the threat of terrorism, and should be

utilized as a weapon in the fight against all terrorist entities, not merely a declaration of the obvious and measure of last resort.

With this in mind, it is important to balance the diplomatic concerns of the State Department with the law enforcement concerns of the Departments of Justice and Treasury, and the security concerns of the Department of Homeland Security. Terrorist groups, and their members, should be identified as terrorists and barred from the United States according to the threat they pose. Adding the Secretary of Homeland Security to the formal designation processes in statute will help achieve that goal.

The FTO Reform Act of 2014 will strengthen the FTO process and ensure all relevant considerations are taken into account when considering potential FTO designations. Lastly, the bill enhances Congressional oversight and creates greater visibility into the impacts of these designations and how they are used.

RECOGNIZING PHILLIP V.  
SANCHEZ

**HON. JIM COSTA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 31, 2014*

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Phillip V. Sanchez as he celebrates his 85th birthday. His many years of dedication to civil service deserve both acknowledgement and appreciation. Sanchez was a pioneer for the Mexican American community; he was the first Latino to serve in a Presidential administration as the Director of the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity, an impressive feat.

Sanchez was born on July 28, 1929. He is the son of Mexican migrant workers, who settled in the small town of Pinedale in California’s San Joaquin River Valley. A student at the nearby Clovis High School, he founded and edited the school newspaper. Graduating salutatorian in 1946, his accomplishments garnered the superlative “Most Likely to Succeed,” an obvious indicator of his future successes. Sanchez went on to earn both his Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in political science at Fresno State, where he chartered the school’s chapter of the Sigma Chi Fraternity and wrote for the school’s paper, *The Daily Collegian*. After graduating from Fresno State, he took the position of Fresno County Chief Administrative Officer, his first government position.

It was in 1971 that Sanchez was appointed as director of the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity under the Nixon administration, making him the first Latino to serve in a Presidential administration and thereby cementing himself in history. He served admirably in this position until 1973, when President Nixon appointed him as the U.S. Ambassador to Honduras. Sanchez also served as Ambassador to Colombia under President Ford’s administration.

Phillip V. Sanchez serves as a prime example of an exemplary citizen. Although not currently active in politics, he continues to contribute to his community, recently reading to children at the Mexican Consulate in honor of Children’s Day. His accomplishments have inspired numerous individuals, and his name

now graces the halls of the Ambassador Phillip V. Sanchez Public Charter School.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to recognize Phillip V. Sanchez on his 85th birthday. He serves as shining example of outstanding public service, and I thank him for both his dedication to the Mexican American community and to this nation.

RECOGNIZING ORGANIZATIONS  
LIKE YMCAS THAT PROVIDE  
CHILDREN WITH SAFE SWIM-  
MING SKILLS

**HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 31, 2014*

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remember the three children who die every day as a result of drowning—and to recognize organizations, like YMCAs across the country, that are working to give children and youth the skills to prevent these tragic accidents from happening.

Drowning is the leading cause of death nationally for children aged 1–4, and is the second leading cause of death for children aged 5–9. For children between 5 and 9, the drowning rate for African American and American Indian children is roughly 3 times that of white children, and African American children aged 11 and 12 are 10 times more likely to drown in pools than their white counterparts. Regardless of race, lower income populations disproportionately bear the burden of drowning in their communities.

During 2013, 7 children drowned in the Dallas metropolitan area. In Texas, 82 children were victims of drowning. During 2012, 66% of child drowning victims in Texas were male.

Both in Texas and across the country, there is an opportunity and a need to save these children’s lives—to reach out to communities that historically have not had access to swimming and drowning prevention programs. Many low-income children live in housing complexes with unguarded swimming pools, and in hot summer months, these pools may be the only way to cool down, as many of the housing units lack air conditioning.

The YMCA is one example of an organization that is changing statistics for children across the country. The YMCA is bringing swimming safety and drowning prevention programs to these community sites. YMCAs also partner with schools to bring kids to the Y for lessons and offer swimming lessons year-round. I am thrilled that the YMCA of Metropolitan Dallas is one of the 15 YMCAs across the country piloting a program to reduce youth incidences of drowning. The YMCA makes an effort to go into underserved communities to teach drowning prevention and water safety to children who otherwise would not have access to these life-saving skills. Moreover, the YMCA of Metropolitan Dallas is one of 103 Ys providing additional scholarships to children in their community that may not otherwise have access to swim lessons as part of a nationwide data collection project on effectiveness of skill instruction in all communities.

I would like to congratulate the YMCA of Metropolitan Dallas on its innovative efforts to save the lives of all our children, and to join

them in educating parents and providing children the skills they need to swim safely and avoid harm.

SECRET PROGRAM TO SUPPLY  
ARMS TO REBELS IN SYRIA

**HON. RICHARD M. NOLAN**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 31, 2014*

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply disappointed with the recent reporting of a new, covert, secret U.S. program—not secret to the intelligence communities throughout the world, but secret to the American people—to supply military weapons and equipment to arm the rebels in Syria.

Mr. Speaker, we've spent the last thirteen years sending arms into the Middle East, and now the region is blowing up.

I commend President Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry for their commitment to finding diplomatic solutions in preventing these wars and challenges—especially for their recent efforts to achieve an immediate ceasefire and settlement between Israelis and Palestinians.

However, I am deeply disturbed by these repeated undercover missions to fan the flames of foreign wars by inserting more military weapons and equipment into the conflicts. These efforts run contrary to our work of diplomacy and toward lasting peace—and what's more, are time and time again executed without seeking the Constitutionally-granted authority of the Congress of the United States.

I firmly believe that if the question were brought before the Congress, many of these programs would never be sanctioned.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, these are arms that all too often end up in the hands of our worst enemies. And this apparent determination on the part of the Administration to send weapons into so many regional conflicts only serves to escalate the violence, prolong the fighting, and stir feelings of ill will toward America.

Mr. Speaker, I've said this before—we have no friends in these fights.

We must get over the tired and fallacious notion that the enemies of our enemies are our friends.

I urge the Administration to remember that it is the Congress—not the President—that has authority over matters of war and peace.

I strongly urge my colleagues to remember our constitutional obligation to consider the future untold costs of these so-called wars of choice and nation-building abroad.

Those monies and resources are urgently needed here at home—in reducing the deficit, rebuilding America—creating good-paying jobs restoring our roads and bridges—and reinvesting in our people and our future by renewing our support for education, basic research in science, medicine, technology, and clean energy.

MEMBER ONLINE ALL-STAR  
COMPETITION

**HON. GREGORY W. MEEKS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 31, 2014*

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to have my office participate in the Democratic Whip Office's fifth annual "Member Online All-Star Competition." I applaud my colleagues for a friendly and spirited three week competition, and I congratulate the All-stars who led House Democrats in collectively acquiring over 213,000 new followers on social media.

I am always delighted to find new ways to engage my constituents and all Americans. To that end, my staff did an outstanding job making many new connections. I especially commend Ladan Ahmadi in my office for her tremendous effort to take us to the final round with our Vine video.

I thank the Democratic Whip for building on and fostering comity in the People's House. I know that we are all better off for it, and our work on the behalf of the American people is enhanced by it.

THE TROUBLING CASE OF MERIAM  
IBRAHIM

**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 31, 2014*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, for weeks this spring, the world watched as Meriam Ibrahim Ishag, a pregnant Christian woman in Sudan, faced flogging and the death penalty because her government would not accept that she had lived her life as a Christian and married a Christian man. Meriam has demonstrated both courage and grace under pressure—giving birth in jail in May while chained and caring for her two children, including her newborn, not only under restraints, but also without the normal amenities that any pregnant woman and nursing mother should expect.

The harsh application of Sharia law on non-Muslims was the trigger for a two-decade civil war in Sudan and the eventual secession of the South. Sudan is one of 20 countries in the world who have laws against apostasy—defined as the abandonment by an individual of their original religion. In Sudan, apostasy is effectively considered leaving the Muslim faith, particularly the interpretation of Islam followed by authorities. In Sudan, to leave the Muslim faith is an automatic death sentence. If you are considered an apostate, you cannot legally marry someone of another faith, and for this, Meriam also was charged with adultery and sentenced to flogging.

However, this story is not just about harshly applied religious and legal principles in violation of national and international law. Daniel Wani, Meriam's husband, is a Christian who is a dual American and South Sudanese citizen. He has lived in the United States for more than a decade. He married Meriam in late 2011, and they had a son a year later. Somehow, the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum could not find a way to help this American to get his family out of Sudan before a crisis developed,

even after she was arrested and released last year in charges involving apostasy.

A hearing that I recently convened was intended to examine the facts as we know them to determine how strictly applied rules almost led to the officially sanctioned beating and execution of a young woman who has lived as a Christian all her life, but who has now been told that she has no right to choose her religious belief.

This hearing was originally supposed to take place in June, but at the urging of both the U.S. Government and Sudanese officials, we postponed it to allow for quiet diplomacy to take place. However, prior to the hearing, Meriam's legal entanglements seem to be increasing rather than diminishing.

A Sudanese court initially ruled that the mere fact that her father was Muslim means that she should have been raised as a Muslim. She was given three days to convert to Islam, but she told authorities she would not abandon her Christian faith. Her refusal to leave the faith she had practiced her entire life led to her being in mortal fear for her life.

Fortunately, a Sudanese appeals court believed that she considered herself Christian and overturned her conviction on apostasy and adultery charges. However, members of her family have appealed the overturning of her conviction. Meanwhile, the Government of Sudan rearrested Meriam for using South Sudanese documents in an attempt to leave the country, and while she was released on bail. Fortunately, she was able to leave Sudan last week.

We cannot be absolutely certain of the exact chain of events that led to the situation that Meriam was in prior to her release. The Department of State understandably declined to testify last week because of the sensitive nature of the then ongoing efforts to end the matter satisfactorily. Daniel and Meriam were still in Sudan at that point. Daniel was free to leave with his children, but he chose, of course, to stay with his wife, until she too could leave with her family.

Since Meriam's conviction in May, a bipartisan, bicameral Congressional coalition worked to undo the harsh penalties for her under the apostasy and adultery laws and secure her family's repatriation to the United States. Contact was made with Daniel, as well as the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum and the Sudan embassy in Washington. Eventually, the headquarters offices of both the State Department and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services got involved.

Yet one wonders why this matter had to come to a crisis stage before a means could be found to avoid what now seems to have been an inevitable outcome in this case. Daniel told congressional staff that he sought help from the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum but was told that he should seek an attorney since the situation was mostly focused on his wife, who was not an American. This was the advice he received even when he was arrested and had his passport seized. An American citizen should expect more from his government's representatives in a foreign country when that country's government has taken action against them.

Under the principles of natural law, which are the basis of our governing documents and those of countries around the world, there are certain inalienable rights endowed by Our Creator. The decision on how to worship Our Creator is one of them.