

where the Supreme Leader will see what is happening in Cuba and says: Hey, we can get away with that as well.

Both have serious consequences for our national security as other nations see that we lack the courage of our convictions, and they will be willing to test us. In fact, Nicolas Maduro after the prisoner exchange said, “We will exchange Leopoldo Lopez,” a human rights activist whom Nicolas Maduro has imprisoned in Venezuela, for one of the criminals in prison here in the United States. They want to test us; they want to see what they can get for holding innocents in prison.

Just look at the appeasements that this administration has made to Russia, to Iran, to North Korea. These rogue regimes will continue to act with impunity, and our allies have turned away from us because, instead of working with our allies, we have been appeasing our enemies.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like for this Congress to take a close look at that list of 53 prisoners and remember that even if that were a true list, which it is not, it is not about 53. It is about freedom for all political prisoners, some of whose names we will never know.

WE NEED A NEW AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCE

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, we are now in our 6th month of war against ISIS, and make no mistake about it, we are at war in Iraq, though I do not recall a debate or a vote in this Chamber authorizing that.

I would respectfully remind the President, who is well-versed in constitutional law, of something he already knows but appears unwilling to address: the executive is not permitted under the articles of the Constitution to unilaterally authorize military action in a situation that does not constitute an imminent threat.

There is no doubt that ISIS is a depraved and repugnant organization, but our intelligence community has repeatedly said it does not imminently threaten the United States. Even if that assessment were to change following the horror we witnessed in Paris, we would still need a clear authorization and a serious debate about yet another American war in Iraq.

I and several of my colleagues in both Chambers have been calling for such a debate since last August. In November, the President said he intended to work with the Congress to craft a new Authorization for Use of Military Force, or an AUMF, in the anti-ISIS campaign.

Before it adjourned last year, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations drafted and passed a new, if vague, AUMF against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

Mr. Speaker, the 113th Congress abrogated its responsibility to acknowledge that the ongoing military campaign in Iraq and Syria cannot be sustained on the back of war powers notifications of two outdated AUMFs.

The start of this new Congress is a perfect time to actually do something about this urgent need by debating and voting on something required of us 6 months ago. Over 3,000 American troops have been deployed to retrain Iraqi Army brigades that will allegedly be the new and improved force to take over against ISIS.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff declined to say over the weekend how long this training would take, so the Prime Minister of Iraq volunteered a guess: 3 years. In 3 years, which seems awfully optimistic, Iraq may be able to rebuild and restructure its military.

Does this mean 3 more years of coalition airstrikes, if we even have a coalition by then? Does that mean 3 more years of military advisers to train forces that will never be ready? Does that mean 3 more years of American troops sent out to reoccupy those decrepit bases that served as a stark reminder of the last time—more than 10 years ago—we went to war in Iraq without a strategy?

Mr. Speaker, apparently, the reading of the Constitution on the House floor last week was gratuitous, since the Congress has no intention of following a key section of the Constitution. When it comes to war and peace, Mr. Speaker, the authority remains firmly with the Congress; yet we have sent our country's sons and daughters to war without a new bill, a serious debate, or a proper vote.

Where is our sense of priority, reading the Constitution or obeying it? Where is our sense of responsibility? We have already had 6 months of unilateral war against ISIS. Another 3 years is intolerable.

Mr. Speaker, it is up to you to invite the President to come up here and address this House, all 535 Members of Congress, to tell us what he needs and what he has decided is worth the sacrifice. It cannot be done, it should not be done, without an authorization from this Congress. To fail to do that is eroding to the very Constitution that we say we support in this House.

We have a civilian control of the military, not by one man, but by 535 Members of Congress. That is the way it is supposed to work. We need to have this debate now.

HELP FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

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

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, we were sent to Washington by our constituents to work together to encourage accountability, transparency, and limited government. Big-

ger government does not necessarily mean more responsive government, but it has come to mean more costly government.

When our small businesses and entrepreneurs, the backbone of our economy, are forced to divert resources to costly new mandates, it means less capital for growing their business, less capital to hire more employees, less money to raise employee wages.

Two statistics, to me, jump out. First, 64 percent of the new jobs created in this country in the past 15 years have been through small businesses. Last year alone, new regulations cost our economy \$67 billion.

We are going to be dealing with several regulatory reform measures this week, bipartisan pieces of legislation that will modernize the Federal rule-making process and put more power back in the hands of job creators.

We need to help those who are too often squeezed by regulation the most: small businesses. We need to give them a larger voice in the process. We need to be a country that continues to welcome new ideas and innovation, not a nation that overregulates from Washington and inhibits our full economic potential.

I look forward to forthcoming regulatory reform measures to help streamline our government, get Washington out of the way, bring stability and certainty to small businesses, and help grow our economy.

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END HUNGER NOW

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I have come to the floor today to give a voice to those who are hungry, to share their struggles, and to challenge my House colleagues to take meaningful action to end hunger now.

Last week the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities released a troubling new report estimating that roughly 1 million unemployed Americans will be cut off from SNAP benefits over the course of 2016. The report anticipates that those affected will lose between \$150 and \$200 per person per month in food benefits—cuts that will cause serious hardship. Mr. Speaker, this is shameful, and it deserves our attention. We should be working to end hunger now, not making it worse.

The 1996 welfare law limits individuals aged 18 to 50 who are not disabled or caring for young children to 3 months of SNAP benefits in any 36-month period if they aren't employed or in a work training program for 20 hours or more a week. That sounds reasonable, but when jobs and job training are not available, it isn't so reasonable.

During times of high unemployment, Governors can request a waiver to the 3-month time limit for their State.