

religious convictions without government interference or persecution.

We may take this idea for granted today, with 250 years of history at our backs, but at the time of our Nation's founding, the idea of religious freedom was radical. The world was a different place then. God-fearing, peaceful citizens around the world were commonly persecuted for their beliefs. They were tortured and thrown in prison without a fair hearing. In short, they did not have freedom. These are rights and freedoms that many in our country take for granted. They were denied what our Founders held to be basic human rights.

So at a great risk to themselves and their families, but with deeply held optimism for a new and better future, they sailed the Atlantic Ocean for the shores of the New World, for America.

Here they planted a new society based on freedom. Centuries later, we in this legislative body, are the guardians of this legacy. We are here to advance freedom and protect liberty. But we must be vigilant in this task.

President Ronald Reagan once said:

Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men were free.

I agree with President Reagan, and that is why I rise today. Our basic freedoms are under attack. We must stand up and fight. We don't need to search long to find the wreckage of a society that does not value freedom.

I recently met with a group of constituents, Syrian Americans who live in Charleston, West Virginia. Many of them have family members and loved ones in Syria. Their stories provide a strong warning to us. In Syria, a cruel and brutal dictator, al-Assad, is attempting to silence opposing views. He has resorted to chemical weapon attacks on his own people. He has gunned down his own citizens. He has bombed hospitals and apartment complexes full of women and children. We can learn an important lesson from Syria: once tyranny grabs hold, it will grow and expand its reach. And the consequences can be drastic. In Syria, 4 out of 5 people live in poverty, more than 200,000 have been killed, a million wounded, and more than 3 million have fled the country.

But we should not be so arrogant as to think that our liberties here at home in the United States are safe. The evidence that our basic freedoms are under siege is growing, and I would like to share just a few stories that have recently come to my attention. For example, an 8-year-old second grade student in a New Jersey public school wanted to sing "Awesome God" at her after-school talent show, but she was told she couldn't because of the song's religious lyrics.

The Arizona Republic reported in July of 2012 that the pastor of a church

in Phoenix, Arizona, was jailed and fined \$12,000 for hosting a Bible study meeting in his private home. They outrageously claimed it violated zoning and fire code ordinances.

Five men in Richmond, Virginia, were threatened with arrest by local police officers for sharing their faith on a public sidewalk.

The University of Missouri threatened to withhold a student's diploma because she refused to participate in a class assignment that required her to write a letter to the Missouri legislator in support of homosexual adoption.

In a New York hospital, a pro-life nurse was coerced into providing a late-term abortion, even though her workplace had agreed in writing to honor her religious beliefs.

And in the beautiful Second Congressional District of West Virginia, which I have the honor of representing, Joe Holland, a businessowner, is currently being pushed to violate his religious views and values by an ObamaCare regulation that requires him to provide abortifacient drugs to his employees as a part of so-called health care. A regulation commonly known as the HHS mandate requires him to provide the drugs or face a penalty of \$100 per day per employee. For a company of 150 employees, that is about \$5.5 million a year, or about \$36,000 per employee.

These are just a few of the alarming stories about the religious freedoms of peaceful, God-fearing Americans being snatched away by a government that has lost its way. It is no coincidence that the very First Amendment to the United States Constitution says: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

Religious freedom was protected in the First Amendment to the Constitution. Our Forefathers valued that. They knew what could happen if we didn't protect our religious freedom.

We must take action and recommit ourselves to this basic right. Congress actually has taken action in the past on a bipartisan basis. In 1993, Congress passed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, signed by President Clinton. The law says the government should not force anyone to violate their sincere religious beliefs, whether those beliefs are considered widely shared or not. This legislation unanimously passed this Chamber, United States House of Representatives, and it passed the Senate by a vote of 97-3 on October 27, 1993.

The broad support is because the legislation simply affirms our constitutionally endowed rights. But now support for this formerly bipartisan, widely supported law is eroding to the point that it has come under attack around the country, the recent events in Indiana being the recent highest profile example.

I believe that this Congress must be a Congress of action in defending religious freedoms. I understand that my good friend and colleague from Idaho, Mr. LABRADOR, is working on a bill to protect institutions and individuals who believe that marriage is between one man and one woman. I support this effort, and I look forward to being an original cosponsor when he introduces the bill.

I am also a proud cosponsor of the Child Welfare Provider Inclusion Act, which will ensure that adoption and foster care providers are not excluded by States for offering their services based on their religious beliefs. Unfortunately, some States have already begun punishing faith-based organizations that provide these services because of their religious beliefs. These religious freedom protections are needed now, and I hope they will be allowed a vote in this Chamber.

We can't do this alone. We do need the President, President Obama, to join with us to protect religious freedom. The President said on June 26, 2013, regarding the U.S. Supreme Court decision to strike down the Defense of Marriage Act the following about religious freedom: "On an issue as sensitive as this, knowing that Americans hold a wide range of views based on deeply held beliefs, maintaining our Nation's commitment to religious freedom is also vital."

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If the President really believes that religious freedom is "vital," he must back his words up with action. That hasn't happened. In fact, just the opposite has occurred, with the administration's attack on the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which attacks those who believe in religious freedom, through its HHS mandate and its attack on the Defense of Marriage Act. He is not protecting religious freedom. We have to do that here.

We have a sacred obligation to pass on to our children and grandchildren a country that has the same love for liberty and religious freedom as the one we inherited, but this won't happen on its own. We need to stand up and fight with courage and conviction, fight right here and right now.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 2:30 p.m. tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from West Virginia?

There was no objection.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF ALBERT MELVIN MILLER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the

gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) for 30 minutes.

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the remarkable life and accomplishments of Mr. Albert Melvin Miller, who passed away on Sunday, May 10, at Inova Alexandria Hospital.

Melvin was a well-known political and community leader in the city of Alexandria, Virginia. One of his crowning achievements was his work with the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority, protecting and expanding affordable housing programs across the city.

Mel was a civil rights advocate, a mentor, and a beloved father. He was also a character: kind, interested, ever present, honest, hard-working, inspirational, and—above all—witty. Mel Miller was a person you wanted to spend time with.

Mel grew up in Haddonfield, New Jersey, but his heart belonged to Raleigh, North Carolina, where his alma mater, Saint Augustine's University, is located, and to his adopted hometown of Alexandria, Virginia.

Graduating from Saint Aug's in history and political science, he remained deeply involved with the school by serving on the board of trustees for 35 years and encouraging Alexandria's students to attend his beloved university.

After earning his JD from Howard University School of Law, Melvin was admitted to the Virginia State Bar and moved to Alexandria in 1958. Early in his Alexandria life, Melvin began his civil rights activism and community involvement by doing pro bono work on school desegregation issues.

This work led him to join an underground association unofficially named the "Secret Seven," which met to discuss possible ways to discuss civil rights and liberties in Alexandria and the surrounding areas. This early local involvement led him to become a prominent figure in Alexandria's education system and the authority and champion for affordable housing.

Melvin's work for the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority helped to provide housing for hundreds of Alexandria's poor. His crowning achievement was a deal by Melvin between the city of Alexandria and ARHA, which required any affordable housing that was destroyed to be matched one-for-one with new developments. That deal still stands largely untouched today.

Mel was a tireless mentor of Alexandria's students and an avid high school sports fan. He could often be seen and heard giving advice to local students and cheering at high school sporting events. He also served on the Alexandria school board from 1986 to 1993, serving as board chair from 1990 to 1992.

Mel is survived by his daughter, Ericka Miller; his son, Marc Miller, and wife, Mary; his grandchildren, Max, Chris, Zachary, and Bennett Mil-

ler; his daughter-in-law, Vicky McCauley; and a host of other relatives and many friends.

Melvin was preceded in death by son, Eric. His wife of nearly 5 years, Eula Miller, passed away in 2011. Eula was also a tremendous advocate for education in northern Virginia, having helped create many programs supporting caregivers and young mothers in local high schools and Northern Virginia Community College.

I offer my condolences to his family and all the people who have been affected by the loss of this amazing man. Mr. Albert Melvin Miller is a shining example of the effect one person can have on so many local lives. I hope his memory lives as an inspiration for local leaders to come.

At his funeral yesterday, former T.C. Williams High School legendary football coach Herman Boone ended his eulogy with the call to "Remember the Titan," Melvin Miller.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mrs. NAPOLITANO (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

#### SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 178. An act to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

#### BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on May 18, 2015, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bills:

H.R. 1191. A bill to provide for congressional review and oversight of agreements relating to Iran's nuclear program, and for other purposes.

H.R. 606. To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude certain compensation received by public safety officers and their dependents from gross income.

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, further reported that on May 19, 2015, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 2252. To clarify the effective date of certain provisions of the Border Patrol Agent Pay Reform Act of 2014, and for other purposes.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, May 22, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

#### PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. JEFFRIES:

H.R. 2487. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend the Yellow Ribbon G.I. Education Enhancement Program to cover recipients of Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry scholarship, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. ROTHFUS (for himself, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. BRADY of Texas, and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana):

H.R. 2488. A bill to preserve Medicare beneficiary choice by restoring and expanding the Medicare open enrollment and disenrollment opportunities repealed by section 3204(a) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York (for himself and Mr. GIBSON):

H.R. 2489. A bill to amend the National Dam Safety Program Act to establish a program to provide grant assistance to States for the rehabilitation and repair of deficient dams, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. BARLETTA (for himself, Mr. MARINO, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. PERRY, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, and Mr. SHUSTER):

H.R. 2490. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure that the prohibition against interment or memorialization in the National Cemetery Administration or Arlington National Cemetery of persons committing Federal or State capital crimes is consistently carried out, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to disinter the remains of George E. Siple from Indiantown Gap National Cemetery, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. OLSON (for himself, Mr. SANFORD, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. CULBERSON, and Mr. MULLIN):

H.R. 2491. A bill to amend the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 to require consultation with State and local elected officials and a public hearing before awarding grants or contracts for housing facilities for unaccompanied alien children; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. GRAHAM (for herself, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. JOLLY, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. GRAYSON, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. YOHO, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. NUGENT):

H.R. 2492. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Army to provide for modification of certain Federal water resources development