

with a Bachelor of Business Administration with a major in Accounting. Among other admirable ventures, he co-founded a CPA firm, Johnson Kubica & Co. that later merged into Arthur Young, and served as Chairman of the Board and President of the Western State Bank of Midland.

Billingsley founded Tri Global Energy in January of 2009 when a few wind developers approached him asking to lease his land. Tri Global Energy now leases land in Texas to a renewable energy developers and has become a solar energy developer and provider as well. The company's "Wind Force Plan" allows for ownership and partnership for landowners, stakeholders, and local communities who are involved in their wind projects—creating a strong community within the company.

Tri Global Energy is now the top developer of wind energy projects in Texas, and reflects the growing diversity of energy production in the state of Texas. Billingsley has wind generation projects under development in Texas and New Mexico that could potentially produce some 6,600 megawatts of power when they become fully operational. He has proven himself to be a valuable member of the North Texas business community and leading energy entrepreneur in the state of Texas, and I am honored to recognize him as a constituent of my district.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to recognize the career of John Billingsley. I ask all of my distinguished colleagues to join me in celebrating this milestone in his remarkable life.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF VIVIEN HAIG

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the achievements and contributions of my good friend Vivien Haig as she steps down from her position as director-general of the Transatlantic Policy Network.

Over the years, Vivien has encouraged international cooperation through her work with the Transatlantic Policy Network (TPN), the Transatlantic Business Dialogue, the Atlantic Council, the Global Business Dialogue on Electronic Commerce, and the Hong Kong—Europe Business Cooperation Committee. Vivien has served as director-general of TPN since its founding in 1992. A natural communicator with experience in non-profit entrepreneurship, Vivien understood TPN's potential to strengthen the transatlantic partnership and worked diligently to turn TPN into a highly effective network with a reputation for getting things done. She focuses on bringing together business leaders, think tank contributors, and elected officials for constructive dialogue on policy issues important to both sides of the Atlantic.

Another example of Vivien's leadership is the annual success of TPN's Transatlantic Week in Washington, DC. Each year, Transatlantic Week has been an unprecedented opportunity to engage in candid conversations with policy leaders at the highest level. Vivien played an invaluable role in convening a diverse group of people dedicated to the success of our transatlantic partnership. Partici-

pants appreciate the chance to dive into timely discussions with Members of Congress, Members of European Parliament, industry leaders, and prominent officials such as U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman, former World Bank President Robert B. Zoellick, EU Ambassador to the U.S. David O'Sullivan, U.S. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman, and many more.

Leaders around the world have commended Vivien for her capacity to build relationships based on trust and mutual understanding. Regardless if Vivien holds an official position or provides informal advice, anyone who has worked with Vivien knows they can rely on her quick wit, attention to detail, and practical approach to develop innovative ideas. It is no surprise the European American Business Council honored Vivien by naming her as the 2008 private sector recipient of the Atlantic Leadership Award. Her innate ability to bring people together will continue to reap benefits for the transatlantic relationship in years to come.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor and respect that I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Vivien Haig and her many contributions to the U.S.-European partnership. Most importantly, I want to personally thank Vivien for her friendship over the years. We would not be where we are today without your vision and leadership.

HONORING MR. KENNETH H. HOFMANN

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Kenneth Hofmann, owner of the Rancho Esquon Wildlife Area and wetlands steward par excellence, for his commitment to community development and wildlife preservation.

Mr. Hofmann, a lifelong Californian, has spent most of the past three decades working to promote philanthropy, educational and artistic initiatives, and wildlife conservation. In 1990, Mr. Hofmann purchased Rancho Esquon, a sprawling agricultural property in Butte County, and began working to restore its natural habitat. Today, the ranch boasts over 900 acres of wetlands, is home to more than 20,000 trees and 173 species of birds, and serves as a valuable educational resource. Over 4,000 students have taken class field trips to Rancho Esquon, many of whom have returned to visit the site's egg salvage facility.

Today, to further expose and educate regarding the importance of our wetlands, Mr. Hofmann is in the process of building the Pacific Flyway Center, a world-class museum and zoo facility in Suisun Marsh. The Center is dedicated to inspiring conservation of the Pacific Flyway, a critical migratory route stretching from Alaska to Patagonia. Every year, at least one billion birds migrate along the Flyway, and its importance to waterfowl populations cannot be overstated. Upon completion, the Center will offer educational opportunities for local students and citizens.

Mr. Hofmann's charitable organization, The Hofmann Family Foundation (HFF), has worked for over 20 years to help young people

in need. In 1995, a \$1 million donation from the HFF created the Concord Community Youth Center, which today provides educational and athletic opportunities for 1,900 underprivileged young people. And in 2014, Mr. Hofmann donated funds to create the De La Salle Academy, a division of De La Salle High School dedicated to providing high-quality education for boys whose financial circumstances would otherwise prevent private schooling. By the end of 2016, the Academy will have 80 students enrolled in the fifth and sixth grades.

Mr. Speaker, Kenneth Hofmann has dedicated his time and resources for nearly 40 years to enriching the lives of California's young people and protecting its environment. Mr. Hofmann's efforts have benefitted our community enormously, and it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

ELUSIVE CRIME WAVE DATA SHOWS FRIGHTENING TOLL OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT CRIMINALS

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following:

[From FoxNews.com, Sept. 16, 2015]

ELUSIVE CRIME WAVE DATA SHOWS FRIGHTENING TOLL OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT CRIMINALS

(By Malia Zimmerman)

The federal government can tell you how many "Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders" stole a car, the precise number of "American Indian or Alaska Natives" who were arrested for vagrancy or how many whites were busted for counterfeiting in any given year. But the government agencies that crunch crime numbers are utterly unable—or unwilling—to pinpoint for the public how many illegal immigrants are arrested within U.S. borders each year.

In the absence of comprehensive data, FoxNews.com examined a patchwork of local, state and federal statistics that revealed a wildly disproportionate number of murderers, rapists and drug dealers are crossing into the U.S. amid the wave of hard-working families seeking a better life. The explosive figures show illegal immigrants are three times as likely to be convicted of murder as members of the general population and account for far more crimes than their 3.5-percent share of the U.S. population would suggest. Critics say it is no accident that local, state and federal governments go to great lengths to keep the data under wraps.

"There are a lot of reasons states don't make this information readily available, and there is no clearinghouse of data at high levels," said former Department of Justice attorney J. Christian Adams, who has conducted exhaustive research on the subject. "These numbers would expose how serious the problem is and make the government look bad."

Adams called illegal immigrant crime a "wave of staggering proportions." He and other experts noted that the issue has been dragged into the spotlight by a spate of cases in which illegal immigrants with criminal records killed people after being released from custody because of incoherent procedures and a lack of cooperation between local and federal law enforcement officials.

The murders, including the July 1 killing of Kathryn Steinle, allegedly by an illegal immigrant in San Francisco, have left grieving loved ones angry and confused, local and federal officials pointing fingers at one another and the voting public demanding secure borders and swift deportation of non-citizen criminals.

"Every one (of the recent cases) was preventable through better border security and enforcing immigration laws," said Jessica Vaughan, director of policy studies at the Center for Immigration Studies. "They should have been sent back to their home country instead of being allowed to stay here and have the opportunity to kill Americans."

A spokesperson for U.S. Customs and Immigration Enforcement told FoxNews.com that comprehensive statistics on illegal immigrant crime are not available from the federal government, and suggested contacting county, state and federal jail and prison systems individually to compose a tally, a process that would encompass thousands of local departments.

FoxNews.com did review reports from immigration reform groups and various government agencies, including the U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Sentencing Commission, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Government Accountability Office, the Bureau of Justice Statistics and several state and county correctional departments. Statistics show the estimated 11.7 million illegal immigrants in the U.S. account for 13.6 percent of all offenders sentenced for crimes committed in the U.S. Twelve percent of murder sentences, 20 percent of kidnapping sentences and 16 percent of drug trafficking sentences are meted out to illegal immigrants.

There are approximately 2.1 million legal or illegal immigrants with criminal convictions living free or behind bars in the U.S., according to ICE's Secure Communities office. Each year, about 900,000 legal and illegal immigrants are arrested, and 700,000 are released from jail, prison, or probation. ICE estimates that there are more than 1.2 million criminal aliens at large in the U.S.

In the most recent figures available, a Government Accountability Office report titled, "Criminal Alien Statistics," found there were 55,000 illegal immigrants in federal prison and 296,000 in state and local lockups in 2011. Experts agree those figures have almost certainly risen, although executive orders from the Obama administration may have changed the status of thousands who previously would have been counted as illegal immigrants.

Hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrant criminals are being deported. In 2014, ICE removed 315,943 criminal illegal immigrants nationwide, 85 percent of whom had previously been convicted of a criminal offense. But that same year, ICE released onto U.S. streets another 30,558 criminal illegal immigrants with a combined 79,059 criminal convictions including 86 homicides, 186 kidnappings, and thousands of sexual assaults, domestic violence assaults and DUIs, Vaughan said. As of August, ICE had already released at least 10,246 criminal aliens.

David Inserra, a policy analyst for Homeland Security and Cybersecurity at The Heritage Foundation, said letting illegal immigrants convicted of crimes go free while they await deportation hearings is putting the public at risk.

"While it is not certain how many of these individuals were here illegally, most of these individuals were in deportation proceedings and should have been detained or at least more closely supervised and monitored until their deportation order was finalized and executed," Inserra said.

Adams opened a rare window into the dearth of public data when he obtained an in-

ternal report compiled by the Texas Department of Public Safety and revealed its contents on his Pajamas Media blog. The report showed that between 2008 and 2014, noncitizens in Texas—a group that includes illegal and legal immigrants—committed 611,234 crimes, including nearly 3,000 homicides. Adams told FoxNews.com that other states have also closely tracked illegal immigrant crime, especially in the wake of 9/11, but said the statistical sorting "is done behind closed doors." States closely guard the statistics out of either fear of reprisals from the federal government or out of their leaders' own insistence on downplaying the burden of illegal immigrant crime, he said.

"There are a lot of reasons states don't make this information readily available and there is no clearinghouse of data at high levels," Adams said. "These numbers would expose how serious the problem is and make the government look bad."

A smattering of statistics can be teased out of data made public in other states heavily impacted by illegal immigration, although a full picture or apples-to-apples comparison remains elusive.

In Florida, there were 5,061 illegal immigrant inmates in state prison facilities as of June 30, but neither the state Department of Corrections nor the Florida Department of Law Enforcement track the number in county prisons, spokesmen for those agencies told FoxNews.com.

In Illinois, where state prisons house 46,993 inmates, some 3,755 are illegal immigrants, according to Illinois Department of Corrections figures. Once again, state officials do not compile figures for county jails, although a Cook County official estimated that nearly 6 percent were illegal immigrants.

In Arizona, neither state public safety officials nor the governor's office could produce figures showing the number of criminal illegal immigrants held in county jails, but state prison figures released by the Arizona Department of Corrections show out of 42,758 prisoners held in state facilities in July, about 10.8 percent were illegal immigrants.

In California, there were 128,543 inmates in custody as of Aug. 12, but the state, which has been criticized for its leniency toward illegal immigrants, no longer keeps track of the citizenship status of inmates. As of July 31, 2013, the last time figures were documented, there were as many as 18,000 "foreign-born" citizens in California state prisons of 133,000 incarcerated. The Board of State and Community Corrections provided figures to Fox News from 2014, showing there were 142,000 inmates in 120 county prisons, but while everything from mental health cases to dental and medical appointments are closely tracked, the number of illegal aliens—or even non citizens—is not.

"Frankly, this is something every state should track, but they don't. Not even ICE publishes this much information on offenders and immigration status," Vaughan said.

Several pro-immigration groups contacted by FoxNews.com declined to comment on the outside role illegal immigrants play in the U.S. criminal justice system. One group that did insist that even illegal immigrants provide a net benefit to the U.S.

"Immigrants, regardless of their legal status, make valuable contributions to our economy as workers, business owners, taxpayers and consumers," said Erin Oshiro, of Asian Americans Advancing Justice. "We need an immigration system that keeps families together, protects workers, and prioritizes due process and human rights."

SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Connor Cerda attends Seven Lakes High School in Katy, Texas. The essay topic is: Select an important event that has occurred in the past year and explain how that event has changed/shaped our country.

On June 26, 2015, the Supreme Court ruled that state level bans on same-sex marriage was unconstitutional. It also ruled that the denial of same-sex marriage licenses and the refusal to perform same-sex marriages was no longer allowed. This has been a very controversial topic for decades and through this ruling, it truly showed where America as a country is heading.

In the eyes of Christians and pastors around the U.S., this ruling spat in God's face and in the founding fathers' faces of this great nation. They founded this nation on the teachings of the Bible, but every generation since has fallen away. The Bible specifically describes marriage as the unity of man and woman and that is what it was intended to be for all of eternity. Christians, by no means, hate homosexuals or those who practice same-sex marriage; but rather, Christians hate the practice of it. It breaks the hearts of Christ followers to see people fall into this sin and false illusion that this practice is okay. As for pastors, this ruling is even more troubling to them. They are now under pressure from the public to perform these marriage ceremonies and recognize these same-sex couples even though it goes against all that they stand for and believe in. However, those who refuse often face harsh public criticism. On a religious standpoint, this ruling has affected the relationship between church and state. Although separate, it is hard to trust a government to protect one's religious rights if they make decisions that directly oppose what this country was so proudly founded upon and what people strongly believe in.

This nation was founded on strong and bold principles that not many countries share. The fact that the U.S. is changing these principles is disturbing. And for what benefit? There is no clear reason or purpose to pass this ruling besides it was what a group of people wanted and the U.S. government gave in. There is no positive outcome or benefit that has been reaped from this ruling. It is scary to think about what other principles this nation is willing to sacrifice. If anything, it created a gap between the citizens of this nation and the country as a whole. A certain level of trust was lost that will be extremely hard to gain back. It also creates a messed up view from the perspectives of other countries. They look at the U.S. and see a screwed up society that believes