

It is time to stop playing politics with our military. I urge my colleagues in the House and Senate to join together to override this veto.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, I stood on the floor of this Chamber and shared the stories of my constituents who have family members in Syria who are experiencing the political turmoil that is seen on the news daily. These stories paint a disturbing picture of what life is like in Syria right now.

Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad is inflicting a reign of terror on his own people that include the worst kinds of torture, the repeated uses of chemical weapons bombardments, and the siege and starvation of innocent people. Assad has killed more than 130,000 of his own people and has forced an additional 3 to 4 million to flee the country.

These problems have been exacerbated by the failure of leadership from the United States of America. It is not just that Obama has a bad plan for how to handle the crisis in Syria. It is that he has no plan at all.

Edmund Burke once said: "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."

That is exactly what the Obama administration has done: nothing. Evil is triumphing because of it. Innocent people will continue to die if we do not act now. We must take the first step and establish a no-fly zone so that Assad cannot continue to bomb his own people from the sky. It is so photos like these won't be commonplace in our news.

This critical action will help, but we have to do more. I call upon this administration to wake up to that fact.

□ 1015

A POWERFUL COALITION

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, over the last several weeks, I visited six high schools in my district to meet with juniors and seniors, about 2,000 students in total.

Almost all of the students I meet are U.S. citizens. The majority are Latinos. Some have immigrant parents, and most will soon be eligible to vote.

All of them have one question for me. It starts every Q and A at every high school I visit. The questions are about Donald Trump. Is he going to be our next President? Is it true that he wants to revoke our citizenship and deport us to the countries our parents came from? Is it true he wants to round us up, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, and deport us all?

It is very sad when the questions a Congressman gets from American high school students are about how much they should fear their own government, whether their own government is going to break up their families, whether their own government is going to treat

them not as citizens and as equal partners, but as outsiders and pariahs in their own country.

When they hear that Trump is "leading in the polls," they think that means there is a pretty good chance that he will be the next President. When they see him on TV shows like Jimmy Fallon, not to mention CNN and Fox News, they get the feeling that he is a celebrity that all of us in America admire.

When they hear that Trump is hosting "Saturday Night Live"—not just being a guest but actually hosting, even after saying Mexican are mostly rapists, criminals, and drug dealers—they get the impression that calling whole groups of people rapists, criminals, and drug dealers based on their ethnicity or national origin is basically okay with us in America.

The real question these Chicago-area high school students have is: Hey, GUTIÉRREZ, what are you going to do to defend us from Donald Trump? What are you going to do to stand up for us?

This leads to an intense discussion about American politics. And I ask the students right back: What are you going to do to stand up for yourselves, for your community?

Look, motivating 17- and 18-year-olds to do something is not always easy, including motivating them to register to vote when they are old enough and to actually go out and vote. But when I ask these young Americans whether they plan to get registered and vote, every hand goes up in the classroom.

Donald Trump is spurring youth voter mobilization like I have never seen before. Nationally, we know that 93 percent of Latinos under the age of 18 are citizens of the United States and that every 30 seconds a Latino citizen turns 18. That is about a million a year for the next decade or so. If they are half as motivated as the young people I am talking to in Chicago, Donald Trump could have a tremendous impact on the youth vote in the coming election.

But let's be honest, do we really want to motivate civic participation through fear of deportation, racial profiling, and families being broken up? These are American teenagers growing up to distrust their government.

Trump wants to take us back to the good old days of race relations, which apparently means the 1950s, when President Eisenhower evicted millions of immigrants and U.S. citizens from the United States. Dr. Carson, who believes that human history is only about 5,000 years old—that is what he says, we have only been around 5,000 years—says of mass deportation schemes: "I think it's worth discussing."

Here in the House, we have considered measures to deport children more quickly, to make groups more distrustful of the police, and to delay Homeland Security funding.

Testifying on one of these bills before the Rules Committee last year, I made

the unfortunate but real suggestion that Republicans were gravitating toward mass deportation policies, which provoked a response from the chairman, Mr. SESSIONS. He said: GUTIÉRREZ, "there is no one in responsible Republican leadership that has said we should deport 13 or 11 million people. And I find it extremely distasteful that people would come here and suggest things that we have not suggested."

Well, now that people are suggesting mass deportation openly and are gaining in the public opinion polls in the Republican Party, I wonder why there is so much silence from the Republican Members of this body.

But it is not just young Latino voters in Chicago that are being motivated by Republican attacks. When Republicans attack Planned Parenthood and block laws to guarantee equal pay for women, that motivates women to register and vote. When Republicans celebrate people who will not issue marriage licenses to two men or two women, a lot of people in the LGBT community get motivated to register and vote.

When Republicans rail against unions and block increases in the minimum wage, while, of course, they earn \$174,000 a year, and block environmental standards and block sensible gun laws, a lot of working class and middle class Americans get motivated to register and vote.

Together with those young people I talked about at those high schools, we are forming a very, very powerful coalition, a coalition so powerful that some day, even Republicans themselves will want to be part of it.

HOLDING THE EPA ACCOUNTABLE

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

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring awareness to the reckless acts of the Environmental Protection Agency.

On August 5, 2015, the EPA triggered the release of millions of gallons of toxic waste into the Animas River near Durango, Colorado, containing lead, arsenic, and other pollutants.

Originally, contaminated water was seeping into the Gold King Mine from another nearby mine. When the Gold King Mine owner refused to allow the EPA on his property, the EPA threatened to fine him up to \$35,000 a day—let me repeat—\$35,000 a day for a leak that wasn't coming from the owner's mine. It was only after these thuggish threats that he was forced to let the EPA on his property.

In fact, as recently as last week, investigators from the Interior Department concluded their independent investigation into the August spill and determined that the spill was preventable and occurred due to the actions of the EPA. The best that EPA administrator Gina McCarthy could do is say

that she was “deeply sorry” and that the spill was a “tragic and unfortunate accident.” That is not all: there was no accountability, no reparation, nothing.

How can the American people trust a government agency charged with protecting our environment when the same Agency is responsible for causing even more damage? Actions speak louder than words. This is more of the same from the EPA. They are another arm of the Federal Government looking to bully private citizens, but this is nothing new from the EPA.

Almost a decade ago, a gentleman from my district faced a costly, almost devastating battle with the EPA. Mr. Paul McKnight owned an old cotton warehouse in Senoia, Georgia. After a former deadbeat tenant of Mr. McKnight, who had already been responsible for the EPA spending \$1.6 million in a brownfield cleanup, could not afford to remove 2,000 barrels of toxic waste from this warehouse that Mr. McKnight knew did not exist, the EPA was called in to inspect the building by some anonymous caller who said that they could smell a leak. Once the EPA got there, their inspector said they couldn’t smell a leak. There was no leak, but they did find 2,000 barrels containing toxic material.

Without Mr. McKnight’s knowledge, the EPA declared this warehouse an “imminent fire hazard” and cleaned up the chemicals at a cost of \$800,000, even though the previous tenant had a bid of 170. Later, at a public forum, an EPA representative stated that the EPA had the funds to clean up the warehouse, only to bill Mr. McKnight later for that overpriced cleanup. Not only did they bill him for the overpriced cleanup, but they sought over \$1 million in cleanup fees and placed a lien on his real estate holdings, including his farm and his home.

I helped Mr. McKnight to get the case reconsidered. After 8 years in court, he was able to get it reduced down to \$600,000.

The EPA shouldn’t use legal loopholes and cower behind exemptions at the cost of taxpayers and, not only that, to charge somebody that had no knowledge of the barrels even being there, rather than the man who put the barrels there. This gentleman served 1 year and 4 months in Federal prison for this. It was his second offense, and yet Mr. McKnight was fined over \$1 million.

That is why I have introduced three bills over the last 2 months targeting the EPA. My bills: H.R. 3531, No Exemptions for EPA Act; H.R. 3655, EPA Pays Act; and H.R. 3699, Judgment Fund Taxpayer Accountability Act are all aimed at holding the EPA to the same standards and requirements as private citizens.

My bills remove these legal loopholes for the EPA and force them to repay the Federal Government for any damages the EPA causes. If I were to accidentally cause the same disaster, do you think that I would get off by just

saying “I’m sorry and I promise not to do it again”? That is why we have introduced these three bills.

So I ask my colleagues to, please, join me in holding the EPA accountable in any future accidents by supporting H.R. 3531, 3655, and 3699.

DEBT CEILING

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, in 1983, President Ronald Reagan wrote to then-Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker, urging him to raise the debt ceiling. In his letter, he said: “The risks, the costs, the disruptions, and the incalculable damage lead me to but one conclusion: The Senate must pass this legislation before the Congress adjourns.”

Twenty-three years later, we now find ourselves 1 week away from defaulting on our debt for the first time in our Nation’s history. Instead of making sure we preserve the full faith and credit of the United States, as President Reagan had done 18 times during his tenure, some want to hold our economy hostage to extract ideological wins.

This is not the time for partisan bickering and political gamesmanship, not when it means delaying Social Security benefits for seniors and those with disabilities, withholding paychecks from our brave Active Duty servicemembers, and postponing interest payments on government-issued bonds.

We have a responsibility to live up to our obligations no matter what. That is not politics; it is basic governing.

The longer we wait to meet our obligations and raise the debt ceiling, the closer we get to another credit rating downgrade, a spike in interest rates, and a severe slowdown in economic growth. This is not an overstatement.

Let’s look back at what happened in 2013 during the last debt ceiling standoff. Just the possibility of default caused rates on Treasuries to rise by almost half a percentage point. That cost taxpayers as much as \$70 million.

This time around, if we actually default, market forecasters estimate that interest payments on Treasuries would increase Federal deficits by \$10 billion over the short term and by \$70 billion a year after that. That is money that wouldn’t be going to critical investments in research and development, education, and infrastructure.

On top of that, higher interest rates on Treasuries could lead to a 1 percent reduction in GDP. That would mean the loss of almost 700,000 jobs, and that is just a conservative estimate.

Make no mistake, every American would be impacted. Middle class families looking to buy a home would face higher mortgage rates. A half a percentage point increase in mortgage rates would increase the lifetime cost of an average home loan by almost

\$19,000. Small-business owners would face difficulties trying to secure new loans as lending tightens up. And students will have an even harder time trying to pay for college as student loan rates skyrocket.

We owe it to our constituents to move toward responsible governing and away from governing by crisis, which has become all too common around here.

The bipartisan budget package unveiled last night affirms the full faith and credit of the United States and represents real progress for hard-working American families who are tired of threats of default and partisan gridlock.

Now is not the time for politics. Now is the time for thoughtful consideration, bipartisan compromise, and, most importantly, finding a path forward for the American people.

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, this is the last week of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Before it ends, I would tell the American people about two amazing women from Sugar Land, Texas, two good friends of my family, two women who are here for a reason, two people who are touching others in need, two people who are making a difference.

□ 1030

Meet Irma and Sasha. Stunning, aren’t they? They are related. They look like sisters, but they are not. They are mother and daughter. The mom, Irma, is on the left. Her baby girl, Sasha, is on the right. Irma and Sasha are sisters in a cause. Both have fought breast cancer, and both have won.

Each year over 200,000 American women hear four crushing words: You have breast cancer. Irma feared those words because she knew they may be coming. Both of her sisters heard those four words. One died.

Irma beat her cancer, but lived in fear. With her family’s history of breast cancer, her daughter had a good chance of hearing those four terrible words. Five years after Irma beat breast cancer, Sasha banged on her door, crying without end. She was 31, and she had aggressive breast cancer.

Irma was by Sasha’s side every second of her fight against cancer. Mom watched her daughter lose each breast. Mom watched her daughter go through 16 rounds of harsh chemotherapy. Mom watched her daughter lose all of her hair, her eyebrows, her eyelashes. Mom watched her daughter lose that smile. Sasha thought that she was no longer beautiful. Her will to fight was decreasing.

Irma took charge. She told Sasha that “no matter how sick you feel, get