

There have been many comments made that we somehow do not treat this urgent matter with the due diligence that it deserves; and I want to underscore, as chairman of the Travel and Tourism Caucus, the co-chairman along with the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR), that we take this very seriously; and I want to also underscore as a Floridian, tourism is our number one enterprise in our State.

It seems like we are all bickering over a potential whether we should hire 28,000-some workers and whether those workers be part of the Federal system. Let me suggest to my colleagues that under the Republican version of the bill that is languishing in the other body for failure to compromise on some other positions, we suggest that we could do a blending at the discretion of the President and the Transportation Secretary, former Democratic Chairman Norman Mineta, that we look to see what is most appropriate for securing the terminals at our airports throughout our Nation.

Let me ask anybody who has owned a business or hired people before how long it takes to do background and training to get a workforce ready. Multiply that by 28,000 individuals, and my colleagues will see the complexity of the problem. It may not be a big problem for LaGuardia or JFK or Washington Reagan National or John Wayne and some of the larger airports in our country; but think of some of the smaller regional and rural airports where we must man that same security checkpoint.

Every Republican supports strict Federal rules and regulations. Every Republican is not satisfied with the status quo. Those that have accused us of somehow trying to be supportive of the current contract holders of this service are absolutely unequivocally wrong. In my case in Palm Beach County, I would love for the President of the United States and Mr. Mineta to contract with the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Department professional law enforcement officers, members of the Police Benevolent Association Union or Fraternal Order of Police Union, allow them to be contracted with to be on-site security screeners for our airports.

We can do that in a matter of 72 hours, deploying those people to that important checkpoint. That is what the flexibility provides the President the right to do; but under their version, it cannot be done that way.

We may hire 28,000 people ultimately, who knows. We will continue to negotiate and try and prevail in the opinion which we believe is the correct one, that we have a blending of responsibilities; but if we do not secure the entirety of the airport system, including those who work at the ramps, those who load the luggage, those who bring in the food carts, or those who clean the planes, we will have left a gaping hole in the security of our airplanes and our airports.

I applaud everyone in this Chamber who has worked hard on trying to get an aviation safety bill passed. I regret some are using false rhetoric in describing our leadership and others as not caring about public safety. I take umbrage and challenge those types of statements because they are absolutely, factually incorrect. We want safety. We want security. We prioritized these issues. We will not back away from these issues; but when my colleagues use one little political call that by hiring these 28,000 we have ensured some degree of safety, we are misleading people because it will take far too long, potentially 3 to 5 years, to even get this workforce up and running, and that in fact does not bring security to date. Our bill does.

I urge the other body to act. I urge them to compromise. I look forward to a bill for the President to sign and returning safety to our skies.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Ms. MCKINNEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. MCKINNEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO CYNTHIA PLASCENCIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

#### RESPONSE TO REPUBLICAN'S POSITION ON AIRLINE SECURITY

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I will respond to my colleague from the other side of the aisle. I am not here for that purpose, but just to say that it took 3 weeks to get a bill on the floor of the House, and we were in a parliamentary situation where we did not have any choice but to try to keep it out of conference committee. We lost and so it is still in conference committee. It is almost 2 weeks now since it went in there.

I do not necessarily think they all ought to be federalized either, but I think we should have moved on it a month ago, and we are not in charge. The Republicans are. And it took 3 weeks to get a bill on the floor of the House.

Let me get back to what I really wanted to talk about, Mr. Speaker.

This last week, last Monday on Veterans' Day, our holiday, I had a chance to go to one of our middle schools in my district, Burbank Middle School, and I rise to congratulate a young Burbank Middle School constituent, Cyn-

thia Plascencia, for winning the Burbank Middle School essay contest on why tobacco is not for her. This contest is sponsored by the Texas Department of Health; and it is called A Week Without Tobacco or, in Spanish, *Semana Sin Tobacco*. I would like to submit a copy of Cynthia's essay for the RECORD.

Cynthia's essay gets to the real reasons why she does not smoke and why she does not want to let anything come between her and her dreams. Cynthia is not swayed by statistics, but I think I need to mention just a few because they highlight just what we are up against.

#### TOBACCO: WHY IT'S NOT FOR ME

Tobacco. A pleasant get away for some people, a disgusting habit for others. Now most 13 year old nerds, ahem, I mean, kids would argue that tobacco is bad. I'm cool with that, but when they are asked why it's bad, some would probably respond, "Uh, I dunno. My dad told me it was." At least to me that isn't enough evidence to argue with. But I am not one of those kids who sit there and say, "Well, 14,000,000 people die every day of lung cancer. 7,000,000 die every hour. 100,000 die every minute." That may be more evidence, but statistics isn't going to stop a 14 year old from smoking a cigarette. There's more to it than that. Enter my mind, and learn about what goes on in a kid's head; what we think, what we know, what we are. After all, no one knows what a kid thinks, but a kid.

Maybe the main reason why I don't smoke is because of my family. Everyone thinks they should look out for number 1, but with me it's never been like that. My family has always been my main priority. I needed guidance, it came from my family. I needed family support, it came from my family. I needed money—Well you get the point. My family comes first, and I would never do anything that would disappoint them. By smoking I would make myself feel great for, what, 5 minutes. Then what? Mood swings, head aches, smelly breath, yellow teeth, asthma, and by the time you realize the mistake you've made, it's too late. You're at the end of your rope. And I think the biggest devastation for me is seeing my parents mourn the death of their daughter. It pains me to see my family suffer. And for what? A cigarette? It's not worth it.

My education. A biggie in my life. At times a burden, but it's all right. It's important that I finish my education and get a good career. You see, I come from a big family. I have about 19 cousins. All of my cousins that are older than me, and my brother, haven't succeeded in life. Either they don't have the economic support, or they just don't want to do anything with their lives. There's seven of them. What about the other 11? Who is going to be their role model? In the end I am the one they're going to look up to. And if tobacco ever got involved in my life, I don't think I would be able to carry out my purpose. No one in my family has graduated high school with honor. And I'm not going to let tobacco stop me from being the first.

Now, I see that I have to be my own person. I'm not my brother. I'm not my father. I am me. If I smoked, I would be less than what I am. And I've never demeaned myself for anyone, or for anything. So, I guess what I'm trying to prove is that tobacco is not going to stop me from the best. And I don't need statistics to tell me that.

□ 1445

Forty-seven million American adults are smokers. Ninety percent of them