

country. The organization is called Luke's Wings, and it has a simple mission: to bring wounded warriors and their families together.

For many families of those wounded in combat, traveling to where their wounded spouse or parent or sibling is can be difficult and cost prohibitive. Luke's Wings was established to help families of these servicemembers travel to be with their loved one during his or her hospitalization or rehabilitation.

Luke's Wings aids families of wounded servicemembers by purchasing airline tickets so that they can help support and care for their family member while they are receiving treatment.

Not only does the assistance that Luke's Wings provides to families of wounded warriors bring these families together, it also helps boost the spirits of and provide additional motivation to recovering servicemembers while their families are at their sides.

Especially during this holiday season as we approach Christmas, the work that Luke's Wings is doing is priceless. Not only does it help families visit recovering troops, but they're also helping these same wounded warriors get home for Christmas. For just the price of a plane ticket, Luke's Wings is able to make this holiday season one that many combat-wounded servicemembers will not soon forget.

It's always inspiring to see the different ways that Americans from so many walks of life find to support our men and women in uniform. Luke's Wings is a volunteer organization that is taking its place in the ranks of compassionate and patriotic groups that are dedicated to giving our troops the best.

During this season of joy and thankfulness when many brave men and women are deployed and apart from their families, Luke's Wings reminds us that we must not forget those who serve, and particularly those who have been injured in that service. Luke's Wings reminds us that even something such as bringing family and servicemembers together will make a tremendous impact for them.

May God continue to bless those who serve and especially those who have suffered physically and mentally, and may God bless the efforts of Luke's Wings, particularly in this season.

ANTI-MUSLIM BIGOTRY

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

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, last week the giant home improvement chain Lowe's decided to pull their ads from a new show on The Learning Channel called "All-American Muslim."

Now, this show depicts five Muslim American families of Lebanese descent from Dearborn, Michigan, and highlights how their faith affects their lives and their families.

The show is aptly titled because it shows Muslim families to be exactly what they are in this situation, and millions like them around the Nation. They're Americans. They face problems just like the rest of us. The only difference is that they worship at a different church.

□ 1010

Lowe's pulled these ads because one right-wing anti-Muslim group in Florida said that the show hides the "true agenda" of Islam, which, according to this group, is to destroy America.

Now, this kind of anti-Muslim bigotry isn't new. It seems like every month we're being warned by a new radical group about the creep of sharia law or that a peaceful mosque is being run out of a community or that a radical pastor is burning the Koran on television. It's one thing when a fringe group or a radical, unhinged pastor is doing it; but it's quite another when a Fortune 100 company is endorsing this nonsense.

Lowe's defends itself by saying it's pulling these ads because some of their customers had "strong political and social views on this topic." Well, congratulations to Lowe's for acknowledging that there are some really bigoted people in the world, but that doesn't mean that Lowe's or any other company should acquiesce to this kind of behavior. For instance, there are, unfortunately, a lot of people out there who still hold racist views about African Americans, but I don't think that that means Lowe's is going to be pulling its ads from television shows featuring African Americans.

Lowe's also says it's sorry for walking into a "hotly contested debate." Well, what debate are they talking about? Yes, we face threats from a fringe sect of radical, anti-American Islamists; but there is no debate that the millions of patriotic, peace-loving Muslims who live in this country have no connection to that movement and do nothing except strengthen the fabric of our Nation.

Now, maybe you think this is just a minor sideshow and that Congress shouldn't be talking about it on this floor. I submit to you that you're dead wrong. This is a major American company that is rubber-stamping basic, foundational bigotry against a major American religious group. This Nation was founded on the principle of religious freedom, and this body should never remain silent when a group of people is marginalized just because it worships a different God.

Though we've certainly got more important things to worry about, like fixing the economy, it has traditionally been during bad economic times that this kind of social marginalization has been at its worst because people don't speak up against it. Further, this kind of bias endangers our national security. Denis McDonough, the President's deputy National Security Adviser, recently said that al Qaeda's core re-

cruiting argument is that the West is at war with Islam. With this action, extremists can say, Look, we're already being run out of their neighborhoods. Now we're being run off of their television sets.

This kind of anti-Muslim sentiment doesn't just endanger our Nation's soul; it endangers our national security. So here is my message for the folks at Lowe's who made the decision and, frankly, for anybody out there of sound mind who has considered getting behind this growing anti-Muslim bias:

You're better than this. You know that the history of this country and of this world never, ever looks kindly on this kind of marginalization that you've endorsed with your actions. Whether it is against Irish Americans or Jewish Americans or African Americans, the history books make sure that this kind of exclusionary politics becomes a stain on the reputation of anyone who takes part in it.

Today, I'm leading a group of Member of Congress, calling on Lowe's to reconsider its decision. Listen, we do have a lot to fear when it comes to Islamic groups that seek to do harm to America; but we have nothing to fear from a TV program called "All-American Muslim," and we have nothing to fear from the tens of millions of peace-loving, patriotic Muslim Americans who are just like those who are portrayed in that show.

This is America. While we have never been perfect at living up to our founding ideals, we've gotten pretty good at calling out bigotry when we see it and at stamping it out before its mark becomes indelible. This can be one of those moments.

ARIZONA VS. THE FEDS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government is at war with the States over illegal entry. There is a real problem in this country: millions of people are living here illegally, and more illegally cross into America every day.

Schools, hospitals, and the justice system are burdened with the cost of supporting illegals, who do not contribute to our system. They reap the benefits and services off the backs of American citizens and legal immigrants. Twenty-seven percent of the people in U.S. prisons are illegals. In the border counties in Texas, according to the border sheriffs, over 30 percent of the people in those jails are foreign nationals.

All of this costs money. The safety of our citizens is also at risk, but the Federal Government chooses not to adequately enforce the law. The Federal Government is focused more on finding reasons why the law of the land should not be enforced. Case in point: the 20-point memo released this summer by ICE listed the criteria for illegal migrants who have been detained but

should not be deported. In other words, let them go.

As a result of Washington's inaction, several States have been burdened with the costs of illegal entry, from health care to incarceration costs. Arizona, South Carolina, Utah, Georgia, and Indiana have been forced to do the job the Federal Government just won't do—protect the citizens from the costs of unlawful entry into America.

Arizona implemented a law that requires authorities to check the immigration status of anyone who is already legally detained for some offense and when there is a "reasonable suspicion" the person is in the country illegally. But the administration says not so fast, that immigration enforcement is their job.

They just refuse to do it.

It also seems the government is more interested in smuggling guns to Mexico under the botched Operation Fast and Furious than it is in preventing the smuggling of people and drugs into the United States. Now the Department of Justice has gone into the business of using taxpayer dollars to actually sue States for doing the job the Federal Government won't do. Yesterday, the Supreme Court agreed to hear the case of *Arizona v. The United States*. Governor Brewer of Arizona has said, "Arizona and its people suffer from a serious problem without any realistic tools for addressing it."

The Federal Government leaves States with no other choice than to do the job the Federal Government refuses to do. If Arizona is not allowed to enforce immigration laws and if the Federal Government does not enforce immigration laws, then Arizona and other States will continue on a dangerous path to becoming lawless territories with rampant illegal entry. Ignoring laws and open-door policies will only entice more people to come to this country illegally instead of using the front door.

Now, I fully support legal entry into America, and my staff spends a lot of time helping people come to the United States legally. The immigration model we have is a mess, and it needs to be streamlined and more efficient; but people should come here the right way or not come at all. After all, it is the law.

But the defiant Attorney General has made it clear that he will continue his crusade against the States that try to crack down on illegal entry. Why? Because the States want to uphold the law. Meanwhile, sanctuary cities get a pass from the Federal Government for ignoring the law.

We hear the rhetoric that illegals are here to do the jobs Americans won't do. Now State after State is getting sued for doing a job the American Government won't do—protecting the security of the Nation and enforcing the law. Arizona had to enact this law to protect itself because the Federal Government doesn't adequately secure the border.

It is time for Washington to stop its war on the States and to join with the States in enforcing the law of the land. Hopefully, the Supreme Court will rule the Arizona law to be constitutional.

And that's just the way it is.

THE CARIBBEAN BORDER INITIATIVE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, American citizens in the Caribbean are facing a security crisis. While the national murder rate has declined in recent decades, the number of homicides in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands remains unacceptably high. Since 2008, the murder rate in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands has been about five times the national average and about twice as high as that of any State.

Most of the murders committed in Puerto Rico and the USVI are linked to the drug trade. As Attorney General Holder and other officials have acknowledged, the Federal Government's effort to prevent traffickers from transporting drugs across our Nation's southwest border is causing traffickers to turn increasingly to the Caribbean to ship drugs into the United States. As the National Drug Intelligence Center recently observed, violence by traffickers in the two territories has "become indiscriminate, endangering the lives of . . . innocent bystanders."

In response to questions I posed, Attorney General Holder recently called drug-related violence in Puerto Rico and in the USVI a national security issue that we must confront. At my urging, Congress has also taken notice of the problem, directing Federal law enforcement agencies on three separate occasions to devote more attention to the Caribbean region.

According to briefings provided to my office, 70 to 80 percent of the cocaine that enters Puerto Rico is transported to the U.S. mainland. Because Puerto Rico is a U.S. jurisdiction, once drugs enter the island, they are easily delivered to the States through commercial airlines and container ships, without having to clear customs or having to otherwise undergo heightened scrutiny. Once in the States, these drugs destroy lives and communities in my colleagues' districts. So this is a problem of national, not simply regional, scope.

That said, the primary reason the Federal Government must do more to reduce drug trafficking in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands is that U.S. citizens in these two territories are dying in unprecedented numbers. Our Nation has devoted considerable resources in confronting drug gangs that are operating along the southwest border, and rightfully so. Yet Puerto Rico's murder rate is four to five times higher than that of any Southwest border State.

According to a recent piece in *The Washington Post*, since 2008 the island has received less than one-fifth of the funding that the Federal Government has provided to combat the drug trade and associated violence in Mexico and Central American nations.

□ 1020

The number of authorized positions at key Federal law enforcement agencies in Puerto Rico is too low. The number of vacancies is too high. And interdiction assets, like planes and boats, are in short supply.

Since taking office, I have urged the Federal Government to devote resources to Puerto Rico at a level commensurate with the severity of the problem it faces. Specifically, I have asked the White House drug czar to establish a Caribbean border initiative modeled after the successful Southwest Border Initiative.

The time for half measures and piecemeal efforts has passed. What is needed instead is a well-planned, well-funded, well-executed, governmentwide strategy that will encompass all Federal agencies charged with fighting drug trafficking and related violence. To protect the lives of the U.S. citizens in the Caribbean and to reduce the flow of drugs headed to the States through that region, the Federal Government must make a commitment of resources to Puerto Rico and the USVI that is similar to the commitment it has made to the southwest border.

The challenge we face today is similar to the one we faced back in 1994. I was Puerto Rico's attorney general back then and lobbied successfully for Puerto Rico and the USVI to be federally designated as a high-intensity drug trafficking area, which contributed to a significant reduction in the island's violent crime rate. The problem has evolved over time, and the Federal response must evolve along with it. I will not rest until it does.

DIGGING OURSELVES OUT OF THIS RECESSION

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

Mr. CRAVAACK. Mr. Speaker, my message is simple and direct: Last month, this administration put yet another hold on implementing the Keystone pipeline project and adding tens of thousands of American jobs to our fragile economy. This decision is bad news for laborers in the great State of Minnesota and around the country who were eager to begin working on the project next year. If we do not approve this deal and put people back to work, the jobs and the oil will simply go another direction—such as China—and they will not be coming back to the United States.

What part of this bill just doesn't make sense to the folks in the White House and the Department of State?