

issue of great national importance: immigration reform. I clearly recognize what a contentious issue this is, pitting two fundamental American values—rule of law and compassion—against each other, but I would suggest that making this effort is crucial to America's future.

We need a sustained commitment to afford opportunity for all Americans, at least for young people, young people who, through no fault of their own, are now in limbo due to their undocumented status; young people who have been educated in our school systems; young people who are willing to achieve further academic excellence, who are willing to serve in our military and risk their lives. Can we not at least say that, if somebody is willing to die for America, the least we can do is give them a chance at life in America? I hope in the 113th Congress the answer to that question will be "yes."

So, Mr. Speaker, I end my remarks where I began, expressing my deep sense of gratitude for the honor and privilege granted me to serve in the 112th Congress. I have been blessed with a superb staff of dedicated professionals: my previous chief of staff, Steve Vermillion, may he rest in peace; my current Chief of Staff, Javi Correo; and my entire D.C. office staff. My district director, Alina Garcia, and my entire district office staff have all served this Congress, the people of Florida's 25th Congressional District, and our Nation with honor and distinction. My friends, supporters, and constituents have blessed me with their confidence.

And finally, my gratitude to my family, and particularly my mom, Daisy, who is a saint, whom I love dearly, and who has sacrificed everything so that I have the opportunity to serve and achieve the American Dream. Only in America can a child of a political refugee, a kid born on the wrong side of the tracks, grow up and be elected to serve in the United States House of Representatives. America is indeed the greatest country mankind has ever known.

May God bless you, Speaker, and my colleagues. May God bless the United States House of Representatives. May God bless the United States of America.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP) for 2½ minutes.

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in solidarity with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle against the House Republican leadership's outrageous decision to refuse emergency assistance for our States to recover from the strongest storm to ravage our region in generations.

It's simply unconscionable that this Chamber would walk away from a region desperate for assistance in its greatest hour of need. We cannot ac-

cept this shockingly callous indifference of the leadership to the human suffering that our constituents and their fellow citizens continue to endure.

The leadership's decision stands in stark contrast to the immediate decisions to provide relief in the wake of every disaster that has befallen this Nation over the past many years. It comes in stark contrast to our Nation's call to provide well over \$100 billion to Louisiana and the Gulf States following that tragedy, the first \$62 billion of which was on its way to the Gulf States within 2 weeks of the storm.

More than 2 months after our region was struck, our constituents are still waiting for help. Our States are overextended and our constituents have reached the limits of their tolerance. They deserve more than the Federal Government's refusal to help, particularly after the Senate's strong bipartisan approval of the aid we need.

Our leadership has decided to pass up an important investment against future losses. Many of our districts remain exposed to future damage. My own district, for example, experienced two relatively routine storms in late December, but, nonetheless, those storms compounded the massive erosion along the south shore of Long Island. We simply cannot afford any further breaches, flooding, overwashing, or storm damage without incurring significant losses to our infrastructure and to our economy.

Mr. Speaker, let me close with this:

What do I say when I go home to my constituents in Mastic Beach, a working class community on Moriches Bay with a little over 5,000 homes, about a thousand of which sustained damage, a great many of which are unrepairable? Do I tell them that the Republican leadership of the House considers it entirely appropriate for their tax dollars to be used for recovery and repair in New Orleans, in Tuscaloosa, in Joplin, or anywhere else in this country where a natural disaster has occurred? Or do I tell them that when it's in their hour of need, the Republican leadership has decided to simply walk away? That's precisely the message that the Republican leadership is sending to my constituents.

They deserve better. The residents of all of the States that were ravaged by this storm deserve better. We must bring this bill to a vote immediately.

HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RIVERA). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 2½ minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, as the 112th Congress ends with a whimper, not a bang, not so much finished as worn out, I was prepared to come to the floor this morning and talk about some of the unfinished business that we kicked down the road with a pro-

posal last night: a serious deficit reduction, the debt ceiling, tax reform. One thing I didn't expect to be confronted with is what you have been hearing from my colleagues today, that we do not have the time to address the disaster relief for Hurricane Sandy, which everybody thought was a given.

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This is the crew that came to town shouting "read the bill," that they were going to have 72 hours' regular order to move in a fashion. They gave us 154 pages, 24,000 words nobody had read, but we at least thought we would be dealing today with this emergency assistance.

I am stunned, frankly, that we find ourselves in this situation, but we have 24 hours left. How hard would it be to take up a bill that was already overwhelmingly passed by the Senate? How hard could it be, based on the bipartisan expression last night of support for a bill that almost everybody hated and had reservations about but would come together for something they thought was important for the country?

Remember when rebuilding and renewing America was a bipartisan objective? Maybe we could take a little bit of that spirit of bipartisanship and cooperation last night and rise to the occasion in the next 24 hours to do something for the people who deserve our help and support. If not, then it ought to be the first order of business of the new Congress, and we ought not to go home this week until this matter is addressed.

THE POWER OF UNITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) for 2½ minutes.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking my wife, Elizabeth, who is here in the gallery, for her constant support during my service in the United States Congress and to thank the people of Ohio's 10th Congressional District for their constant support, as well as the great congressional staff both at the district and at the D.C. level. I also, before I make further remarks, want to express my support for my colleagues from New York and New Jersey in their tireless efforts on behalf of their constituents who have suffered so grievously from Hurricane Sandy.

We must unite for the people, and that's really the idea of the United States. It's the unity of States, but it's even deeper than that. It's expressive of the unity of people that it's all for one and one for all. Our Nation's first motto, "E Pluribus Unum," out of many we are one, stresses the power of unity. The idea of human unity is implicit in this Nation.

In my visits across America, I discovered that there is an underlying unity which binds us as Americans and which calls us forward to a higher purpose. I