

years that Lanier had been successful in scheduling a tour of the White House. Then last week, 2 days before they were set to go on their tour, they got the bad news. They were no longer welcome in the people's house.

Mr. Speaker, I know one of the parents of the kids at Lanier Middle School. Here's what she said:

It's disappointing. But it is particularly disappointing to me because I think it teaches the kids a bad lesson of not keeping your word. I think that's bad for the kids.

Harvin Moore, a trustee from the Houston Independent School District, wrote the White House when he got the bad news, and here's what he said:

Next week, 80 students from Lanier Middle School will be spending their spring break touring our Nation's capital.

They have been planning the trip for a year. They have completed background checks and received confirmation that they would be welcomed to the White House and, as you can imagine, were very excited about that.

Now we find ourselves in the position of having to explain to them that their plans have been abruptly canceled and they will not be welcome at the White House after all.

Frankly, that's a hard thing to do as we don't understand the reason ourselves.

We don't understand why, out of a \$1.6 billion Secret Service budget, the administration believes that 1/20th of 1 percent that is required to fund the White House tours is one of the first things to go.

We don't understand why the administration would choose to cancel the program that touches the public the most, in return for a truly minuscule budget savings.

We don't understand, Mr. President, why you have chosen to disinvite schoolchildren from their White House.

The First Lady has referred to the White House as the "People's House." I agree with her. It is the "People's House—it is our house."

Mr. Moore continued in his letter:

One Lanier parent described having to tell her son he was no longer welcome at the White House: The word "sequester" doesn't mean anything to this student. First Lady Michelle Obama said that the White House is our house. Well, it doesn't feel like it anymore.

Mr. Speaker, Lanier students from Texas are not alone. Thousands of students nationwide are gearing up for spring break, and the cherry blossom festival is just a few weeks away. These trips require planning, time, and, yes, even money. Bake sales, car washes, parents taking time off of work were all involved so kids could come to Washington to tour the White House.

But the President, unfortunately, has punished the people for the sake of a few nickels. Perhaps the White House forgot what the First Lady has said, which is posted on the home page of whitehouse.gov:

This is really what the White House is all about. It's the "People's House."

Well, Mr. Speaker, if this is true, the President should take the padlocks off the White House doors, put the welcome mat back on the front porch, because America's kids should not be evicted from their White House.

Mr. Speaker, the open-door philosophy of the White House is a uniquely

American idea where the people of the country can come see where the President of the United States, the most powerful person in the world, actually lives.

□ 1010

This is uniquely American. You go to other countries and, whether they're democracies or not, they don't let you near the home of where the head leader lives. But only in America have we done this.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would encourage the President to keep his word. Let the people back in. And as students come to Washington, D.C., they should know that the U.S. Capitol is open for business and that Members of Congress, their staff, and the tour guides at the Capitol Visitor Center will be glad to take them through the Capitol. In fact, earlier this morning, there were about 70 kids from Westchester, New York, seated here before we opened for business, getting a history lesson from one of our Parliamentarians.

Mr. Speaker, the Capitol is open, but neither the White House nor the U.S. Capitol should ever close its doors and ban the people from the people's houses.

And that's just the way it is.

IMMIGRATION

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

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to talk about the important, compelling issue of illegal immigration.

We've heard from the Gang of Eight in the Senate and now the Gang of Eight in the House. When we talk about illegal immigration, as a mayor I know what it did to my city. Aside from the crime and violence, it took a great toll on the economic vitality of the population. Our population grew by 50 percent but our tax base stayed the same. People who are here legally, especially the new American citizens, are looking for jobs. And they are scarce. Twenty-two million Americans are out of work. And now the proposal is to wave the carrot of citizenship to millions more? And when we are talking about giving amnesty to millions—maybe 20 million illegal aliens—how much more scarce will those jobs become?

Mr. Speaker, we have heard these proposals before. In 1986, we said that if we granted amnesty, there would only be about 1.5 million people who would be included. In truth, it turned out to be twice that amount. We were also told that it would never happen again. Our borders would be secure and this problem would never occur again. In truth, it was not true.

So now, 27 years later, our borders still aren't secure and here we are doing this all over again. Well, we got fooled once. By news reports, we are told that there are 11 million illegal

immigrants in this Nation right now. By using 1986 as a yardstick, we can guess that by offering amnesty there might be twice that many.

Mr. Speaker, we were told in 1986 that none of this would happen. But it did. Now we're talking about brand new expenses at a time when we really have no money to spare. This means Social Security, Medicare, unemployment compensation, ObamaCare, welfare, food stamps, you name it. The Heritage Foundation projects that currently illegal immigration today costs us \$55 billion a year, or \$550 billion over 10 years. Illegal immigrants today receive \$55 billion more in government benefits than they pay in taxes, based on the 2010 census. Worse, after so-called "amnesty," the net deficit resulting from illegal immigrants will be \$75 billion a year, or three-quarters of a trillion over 10 years.

We have no guarantee that these new millions of legalized aliens will not be on the public social programs. Nothing in any of these proposals from these "Gangs" or the White House can convince me otherwise. All told, The Heritage Foundation projects that if that's true, it will mean \$2.5 trillion in new costs to the taxpayers over the next 20 years.

Mr. Speaker, I submit that in this time when we are looking for every dollar to save, we should not be giving away the bank at the same time that our borders are not secure and 22 million Americans are out of work. We should be talking about border security first. There should not and cannot be a discussion of amnesty until we secure our borders first.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 15 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Dr. Ezekiel Pipher, Heartland Evangelical Free Church, Central City, Nebraska, offered the following prayer:

Our Father in Heaven, by Your sovereign hand, You make all nations, kingdoms, and empires. You raise up their leaders and ordain the rules by which they govern. You alone are righteous in all Your judgments, so it is You that we trust and desire to imitate.

Lord, help the honorable men and women of the House of Representatives