

Walmart, the Gap, JCPenney, and The Children's Place, just to name a few. They refuse to accept responsibility.

So what can be done to improve the Bangladeshi factory safety? Certainly there are things local government can do: address corruption that allows unsafe, dangerous structures; enforce safety codes; defend the right of workers to form unions and to have workers be able to refuse unsafe work.

The Bangladeshi Government is scrambling to implement limited reforms, hoping to keep the industry that is critical to its economy, but only the retailers and brands can put a floor under this race to the bottom. The economic power rests with them. That is why the announcement this week by major European companies and one American company that they have signed a binding and enforceable fire and building safety agreement for Bangladesh factories is so significant.

H&M, Zara, Primark, and C&A are to be applauded for their unprecedented and bold steps. They have been joined by only one American company, Phillips-Van Heusen, which has Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger among its brands, and one major German retailer. But now El Corte Ingles, Marks & Spencer, Mango, and Benetton have also agreed to sign this enforceable agreement.

The agreement provides for independent safety inspections with public reports, mandatory repairs and renovations, money to fund the necessary safety upgrades, the right of workers to refuse unsafe work, and the vital role of workers and unions. This agreement is truly unprecedented.

But where are the other American companies? Where are the American retailers? Where are the American clothing brands? Where is Walmart? Where is JCPenney? Where is the Gap? Where is The Children's Place? Their silence in the face of this tragedy is inexcusable. They should sign the binding safety agreement to protect Bangladeshi workers. They should sign it now.

Experts estimate safety improvements under this plan would cost about a dime a garment. A dime for the life of these women.

I urge all Americans to join in demanding that the American retailers and fashion brands stop selling their bloodstained labels and sign the enforceable agreement to protect these Bangladeshi women.

AMNESTY BILL HARMS VULNERABLE WORKERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, the President and Senate Gang of Eight amnesty bill is not only bad for America, it is a disaster for American workers who are pitted against millions of illegal aliens in the competition for scarce jobs.

On April 24, 2013, Dr. Frank Morris, former executive director of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation and now leader for the African American Leadership Foundation, stated, "The Senate Gang of Eight's immigration bill is not only impractical, but immoral. Increasing immigration levels through amnesty and new visa programs, particularly at the low-skilled level, will flood the labor market with millions more people, leading to higher unemployment, more poverty, and a lower standard of living for many in the Black community."

Dr. Morris is right. Amnesty undermines millions of African-American workers' incomes and job searches by flooding the American market with cheap labor.

In an April 23 news release, the African American Leadership Foundation stated, "Blacks have an unemployment rate nearly twice that of the national average. The Senate's immigration plan to drastically increase the immigrant workforce will continue to keep that number high."

Dr. Morris emphasized that illegal aliens have huge advantages over American job seekers. "Immigrants are the preferred employees because they are more vulnerable, you can cut them out of overtime, you can cut them out of safety measures, you can cut them out of anything and they have no recourse."

Charles Butler, also of the African American Leadership Foundation, added that the amnesty bill would "provide green cards and residency benefits to illegal aliens when many Americans are hurting the most. What makes sense is for America's jobs to be reserved for people who are legally entitled to compete for them."

In 2007, T. Willard Fair, president of the Urban League of Greater Miami emphasized that, "Amnesty for illegal workers is not just a slap in the face to Black Americans. It's an economic disaster."

"I see illegal immigration and the adverse impact that it has on the political empowerment of African Americans and the impact it has on the job market."

□ 1020

How bad does illegal immigration hurt American workers?

Harvard Professor George Borjas found in a study released in April 2013, and I quote, "Illegal immigration reduces the wage of native workers by an estimated \$99 to \$118 billion a year, and generates a gain for businesses and other users of immigrants of \$107 to \$128 billion."

Who is hurt the most by illegal aliens? American workers who lose \$99 to \$118 billion in badly-needed income.

Who is helped the most by illegal aliens? Employers who pad their profits to the tune of \$107 to \$128 billion when they hire illegal aliens over Americans. Dr. Borjas adds that "immigration has its largest negative im-

pact on the wage of native workers who lack a high school diploma, a group that makes up a modest . . . share of the workforce. These workers are among the poorest Americans."

Who do American workers compete against for jobs? Per a 2010 Pew Hispanic Center study, 7.8 million illegal aliens hold jobs in America. That's 7.8 million job opportunities that would be opening up for American workers if the President would enforce Federal immigration laws.

The way to help our blue-collar and low-wage workers is not to flood the market with illegal aliens. The way to help America's blue-collar and low-wage workers is by denying American jobs to illegal aliens, thus forcing blue-collar wages up and helping workers and their families pursue the American Dream.

Mr. Speaker, we must return American jobs to American citizens. The White House and Congress should be fighting for American jobs for American citizens, not jobs for illegal aliens.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot, in good conscience, ratify illegal conduct with my vote, and I hope other elected officials in Washington will represent Americans seeking jobs, not foreigners illegally on American soil.

THE PARTNERSHIPS FOR ACHIEVING STUDENT SUCCESS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. CHU) for 5 minutes.

Ms. CHU. Last month, Galway Central School District in New York considered outsourcing the roles of their school psychologist and social worker. After all, budgets are tight, and what harm could come from this?

Andrew Huzsar, the district psychologist, and Christine Bornt, the school social worker, had already faced an uphill battle helping their students. Although the district has only 900 children in attendance, Galway is geographically one of the largest school districts in New York State. And as the only school psychologist and social worker, Andrew and Christine struggled to meet the needs of their students, facing more than double the recommended ratio of students to mental health professionals across the district.

An onslaught of letters and testimony soon flooded the Board of Education, as students, parents, and teachers, alike, protested on Andrew and Christine's behalf. The board soon relented to the public outrage, perhaps thanks to a very moving letter of support that Andrew received. This letter was from a young student explaining that he would not be alive today if it had not been for Andrew intervening in his life. This student was not someone Andrew saw regularly. They met only three times the previous school year.

Mental health counseling is a critical component for student success. Just three meetings were enough to save this student's life.

As a clinical psychologist, I know that there is no budget cut more shortsighted than one that stands between mental health resources and those who desperately need them. For a student, that access may be the difference between a productive day in class and an act of aggression against themselves or their peers. In the case of Andrew and that student, it made the difference between life and death.

That's why last week I introduced the Partnerships for Achieving Student Success, or PASS, Act. It does more than ever before to help our Nation's neediest schools ensure that our children have access to the appropriate mental health and student service professionals on campus. It creates a Federal grant program to help low-income school districts recruit, employ, and retain school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, and other psychologists qualified to work in K-12 schools.

Galway School District ultimately kept their mental health professionals, but not every school district has the capacity to do so. By expanding the number of school mental health professionals in low-income, high-need schools, we can effect positive change in the lives of students who need it most. That's why the PASS Act already has the support of the American Psychological Association, National Association of School Psychologists, American School Counselor Association, and the School Social Work Association of America.

And it is why I take to the floor today to encourage my colleagues to support this bill and improve the academic and life success for students across this country. Together, we can make sure that the Andrews of this world are there when their students need them.

COMFORT WOMEN

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

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to condemn the systematic and brutal enslavement of women during World War II by the Imperial Government of Japan. What is known today as "comfort women" is, in reality, a state-sponsored program of sexual brutality against 200,000 women from Korea, China, Taiwan, and the Philippines.

The fact that women and girls as young as 13 years old would be forced into this kind of misery is appalling. It runs counter to every recognized international norm against human dignity.

Anyone seeking to justify or deny the existence of comfort women is ignoring history. The sheer amount of evidence regarding this terrible time in history is staggering. Not only are there documents chronicling the existence of comfort women camps, but there is also the gut-wrenching testimony of survivors and of eye witnesses.

Countless governments around the world have come to the conclusion that, yes, the Imperial Government of Japan did indeed condone this most reprehensible of actions during World War II, along with such brutal violence as the rape of Nanking.

That is why I rise today to condemn the unfortunate remarks of the mayor of Osaka, Japan, who, as recently as yesterday, denied the existence of comfort women. The mayor not only questioned the existence of comfort women, but he sought to justify the use of a "comfort woman system" as a means to boost morale for the military. The mayor's remarks are absolutely outrageous, and it adds insult to injury for survivors and their families.

The rise of ultranationalism in Japan is very worrisome and, as chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, I strongly condemn it.

Mr. Speaker, the House went on record in 2007 to express our outrage regarding the forced enslavement of 200,000 women during World War II. The civilian populations of Korea, China, Taiwan, and the Philippines suffered so much from the imperialism and aggression of the Imperial Government of Japan.

We speak with one voice when we speak against grave violations of human rights. It is in America's interest that we continue to press for justice and to never forget.

THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, this week the House is voting to repeal the Affordable Care Act for the 37th time.

In every congressional district, there are seniors, new mothers, young children, low-income families, and young adults just starting out on their own. Do my good Republican friends really want to take away their chance for better health?

I would never do that to my constituents, which is why I'm here today, Mr. Speaker, to say again, I am proud of my vote for the Affordable Care Act.

□ 1030

Recently, I had a chance to spend some time with some Hoosiers across my district, and I heard again and again their worry about rising health care costs and their family's ability to access care. Fortunately, millions of Americans no longer have to worry about accessing care because of the Affordable Care Act. Instead, more than half a million Medicare beneficiaries in Indiana alone received free preventive services in 2012, avoiding more costly illnesses. More than 17 million children with preexisting conditions nationwide are no longer being denied insurance coverage. More than 100 million Americans no longer face lifetime limits on coverage.

Mr. Speaker, over 360,000 small businesses have already used tax credits to help insure 2 million workers. By the end of this year, health exchanges will be set up making it easier for people who don't have insurance to choose the coverage that best suits their needs. Next year, we will happily welcome even more consumer protections. Insurance companies will no longer be able to place lifetime limits on coverage. Discrimination against pre-existing conditions will be banned for all Americans.

This means that when a woman notices a lump under her arm, there is no reason for her to wait until she finds a job to schedule an appointment. And she doesn't have to wait to get sicker, costing more of her time off from work and away from her family. Under the Affordable Care Act, Mr. Speaker, she knows she can obtain potentially life-saving care right away. The same goes for her spouse, her parents, and her children. Our health care system benefits us by allowing us to make investments in lower-cost treatments and prevention now rather than expensive therapies later.

Of course, I know that times are tough right now and we have to be even more careful about the mandates we put on businesses. But my good Republican colleagues seem to forget that people have to be healthy to contribute to our economic growth. As a Representative of many hardworking families, Mr. Speaker, I have stood here time and time again over the past few years to extend a hand to anyone who wants to work with me and us to provide quality health care for all Americans.

Today, I make that very same offer. I will work gladly with anyone who wants to improve our health care system and ensure that all Americans have access to quality and affordable health care.

I call on my Republican colleagues to work with us to implement the Affordable Care Act and start improving it. It's time we all stand together, Mr. Speaker, and start looking out for the health of this great Nation. Without it, we have nothing.

POLITICAL BIAS AT EPA

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

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express in the very strongest terms possible my disapproval of a pattern of conduct of the Obama administration that is of great concern to all of us, a pattern of conduct in which this administration rewards its friends and punishes its opponents.

Now, when our Founding Fathers wrote the Constitution many years ago, there were some basic principles in that Constitution. One was equal protection under the law, and the other was protection from discriminatory