



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 160

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JULY 15, 2014

No. 110

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PITTEMBERG).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 15, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ROBERT PITTEMBERG to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

SPECIAL IMMIGRANT VISA PROGRAM

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, last Wednesday, I joined several of my colleagues and hundreds of people in the Congressional Auditorium to watch a gripping new film, "The Interpreters," by VICE News, about the American failure to protect Afghans who helped our soldiers as guides, interpreters, and drivers. Their lives are now at risk as a result of their brave service and our failure to act.

For almost a decade, I have been battling to have the United States honor these obligations by effectively implementing the Special Immigrant Visas program authorized by Congress. For a while, we were battling the bureaucracy itself, which issued an embarrassing total of 32 visas for all of 2012 to help save these poor souls trapped in a bureaucratic hell.

Since the beginning of the year, this bureaucratic logjam has broken and we have been able to raise it to an average of 400 a month. With that progress has come troubling news.

Congress set the cap on these visas artificially low—only 3,000 for the entire fiscal year. These visas are effectively gone now. They are used up. It is not theoretical. We have 6,000 Afghan applicants in the pipeline right now and more who are looking for relief and safety.

Recently, Secretary Kerry, in a powerful opinion piece in the LA Times, noted this challenge and called on Congress to act and raise the cap. With each day that passes, as is so vividly illustrated by VICE Media's gripping documentary, these are people whose lives and those of their families are left to the tender mercies of the Taliban seeking revenge and setting as an example.

One case just caught my eye. The plight of Mohammad is typical. His father was murdered and his toddler brother was abducted, all because of his special service to the United States. Without a Special Immigrant Visa, he was next on the list to be kidnapped, tortured, and perhaps beheaded.

As Secretary Kerry pointed out, "the way a country winds down a war in a faraway place and stands by those who risk their own safety to help us in the fight sends a powerful message to the world that is not soon forgotten." Secretary Kerry said:

And as the withdrawal proceeds, the United States is in danger of sending the

wrong message to the interpreters and others who put their lives on the line to help our troops and diplomats do their jobs.

That is why this is so urgent.

Remember how we brought the Iraqi Special Immigrant Visa back to life last October in the middle of impossible circumstances during the government shutdown? There was bipartisan support, thanks to Leader CANTOR, Leader HOYER, Chairman GOODLATTE, TULSI GABBARD, ADAM KINZINGER, and others. A number of bipartisan leaders sprung to action. We need that same bipartisan spirit of support and urgency for the Afghan visa program. As soon as possible, Congress must authorize at least 1,000 additional visas for this fiscal year to get us through these next critical months.

It is the moral obligation of every Member of Congress not to just cosponsor H.R. 4594, the bipartisan Afghan Allies Protection Act, which I have introduced with my friend and colleague ADAM KINZINGER and Senators MCCAIN and SHAHEEN in the Senate, but we should demand action before we adjourn.

As Congressman KINZINGER pointed out, it doesn't matter where you stood on the Iraq war—I thought it was a tragic mistake, and I still do—but what matters now is where we stand in keeping our commitments. Innocent lives are at stake. American honor is on the line. Our future actions could be compromised if people don't trust us.

It is our duty to save the lives of those who risked so much to help us when we needed them. They need us to cosponsor H.R. 4594 to protect innocent lives and American honor.

FOREIGN POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I am on the floor today because I believe that Congress must put an end to the waste of American lives and taxpayer dollars overseas.

Recently, President Obama requested \$500 million to train and arm Syrian rebels. In his editorial, "Congress Can Stop Obama's Ramp Up to War," Pat Buchanan made an excellent point, saying:

Before Congress takes up his proposal, both Houses should demand that Obama explain exactly where he gets the constitutional authority to plunge us into what the President himself calls "somebody else's civil war."

Buchanan goes on to comment:

Syria has not attacked us. Syria does not threaten us. Why are we joining a jihad to overthrow the Syrian Government?

Mr. Speaker, Iraq is another country in which America has again become involved to the detriment of our best interests.

A former commandant of the Marine Corps, who has been my adviser for the past 6 years, stated in a recent email to me, "We should not put boots on the ground." He went on to say that the situation in Iraq is "a Middle East issue that needs a Middle East solution," not more American troops.

Unfortunately, there are currently 750 American boots on the ground in Iraq, with authorization from the President for up to 770 in the future.

As our involvement in Iraq escalates, I am reminded of another important point made by Pat Buchanan:

It is astonishing that Republicans who threaten to impeach Obama for usurping authority at home remain silent as he prepares to usurp the war powers—to march us into Syria and back into Iraq.

Last August, Americans rose as one to tell Congress to deny Obama any authority to attack Syria. Are Republicans now prepared to sit mute as Obama takes us into two new Middle East wars on his own authority?

Mr. Speaker, Marine Lieutenant General Greg Newbold wrote an insightful editorial for *Time* in April 2006, titled, "Why Iraq Was a Mistake." From 2000 until 2002, General Newbold was director of operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff and describes himself as "a witness and therefore a party to the actions that led us to the invasion of Iraq—an unnecessary war."

In closing, I would like to quote a paragraph from General Newbold's editorial regarding the distortion of intelligence that drew America into the Iraq war in the first place:

In 1971, the rock group The Who released the antiwar war anthem, titled, "Won't Get Fooled Again." To us, its lyrics evoked a feeling that we must never again stand by quietly while those ignorant of and casual about war lead us into another one and then mismanage the conduct of it.

Never again, we thought, would our military's senior leaders remain silent as American troops were marched off to an ill-considered engagement. It's 35 years later, and the judgment is in: The Who had it wrong. We have been fooled again.

Those are sad, sad words. We have been fooled again.

Mr. Speaker, we in Congress have the responsibility, based on the Constitution, to never get fooled again, but too many times we do not uphold our constitutional rights. I believe the words of Pat Buchanan and Greg Newbold articulate the many reasons that no President should bypass Congress and the Constitution to send our military into combat.

Mr. Speaker, before closing, I have a photograph from the Greensboro News-Record. Here we go again in setting up our men and women in uniform that possibly could get killed in a foreign country. Mr. Speaker, this is a group of Army soldiers bringing a flag-draped coffin off of a plane.

Please, God, don't let us forget that those in uniform are our children, and we must protect them by meeting our constitutional responsibility.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform, please bless the families of our men and women in uniform, and please, God, continue to bless America.

FOOD INSECURITY

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of summer food security programs for America's children because, unlike Congress, hunger doesn't take a summer vacation.

Today, in the United States, food insecurity is persistent and rampant. We are one of the richest and most powerful Nations in the world, yet one in five households with children experience food insecurity each year.

Any American suffering from hunger is cause for concern, but it is especially troubling to think that so many American children lying in bed at night are struggling to sleep because they are hungry.

Thankfully, most children in America who aren't able to get adequate sustenance at home are provided meals for free or at a reduced rate during the school year. In fact, 21 million children nationwide rely on free or reduced-price meals during the school year, and 825,000 of those children are from my State of Illinois.

But while we have worked hard to ensure our children are fed during the school year, we often overlook the fact that many of these same children lack access to these meals during the summer months. Of the many children who receive free or reduced-price lunches during the school year, only 14 percent currently access meals during the summer. This is why the USDA's Summer Food Service Program is so important.

As Members of Congress, it is imperative that we support and promote these programs so families who need help during the summer months can take advantage of them.

Recently, I had the opportunity to visit a Summer Food Service Program

in my district with the Greater Chicago Food Depository and No Kid Hungry Illinois. I was able to see firsthand how the program is benefiting children in Illinois and across the country. These programs are working and making a positive difference for our local families.

Take, for example, the story of Maria and her husband from Chicago Heights. Maria works part-time at a laundromat while her husband works full-time in a lumberyard. These two hardworking Americans are doing all they can to provide for their children. But times are still tough and food is more and more expensive. To help pick up the slack, Maria and her children visit the Lunch Bus.

The Lunch Bus is a great program that not only provides lunch for low-income children during the summer, but also provides a safe place for those children to play and meet other kids. There are families all over America like Maria's family that work hard every day to provide for their children; but oftentimes, despite their hard work, difficult circumstances cause them to come just short.

We in this Congress have a responsibility to stand up for these hardworking families and to ensure no child in America goes to bed hungry. That is why I am a proud cosponsor of the bipartisan Summer Meals Act, which will expand the USDA summer nutrition program to help more children across this country access quality meals during the summer months.

Rather than slashing these funds, we need to focus on positive steps we can take to end hunger across the country. The best way we can reduce the amount of Federal Government spending on food nutrition programs is by supporting legislation that creates jobs and helps families earn a living wage.

Moving forward, it is incumbent on all of us to promote summer food nutrition programs and to ensure that the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, which expires next year, is reauthorized at sufficient levels.

□ 1015

As I said, Mr. Speaker, hunger does not take a summer break, and neither should we when it comes to taking care of America's children.

I will do all I can to make sure these children have access to nutritious meals all year round, and I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do the same.

STRATEGIC ENERGY POLICY—UTILIZING NATURAL GAS AT HOME AND ABROAD

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, in a dramatic shift from just a short time ago, the United States is reducing its dependence on