

used in hijackings. Both terrorists and pirates traumatize civilians and prey off of fear. As of now there is no international community specifically designated to prevent piracy like there is for terrorism, simply because the legal jurisdiction of piracy is in question. What we all should agree on, however, is that maritime piracy is a devastating form of terrorism.

The topic of most apprehension is the proven fact that modern pirates fund terrorist groups. Whether taken by force or friendship from the pirates, Al-Qaeda now possesses around 15 cargo vessels. Confiscation of vessels hasn't been the only recent breach in maritime security. Thanks to unobstructed leadership of Somali pirates, we've experienced an increase in maritime trafficking of narcotics, people and illicit goods, and arms proliferation. The evidence shows that maritime terrorism has recently gained the attention of most terrorist groups. Large and heavily loaded commercial vessels, offshore gas rigs, and maritime hub ports are easy shots for maritime terrorists, who seek mass destruction of human life, infrastructure, and nature.

Though piracy off the Somalia coast has recently decreased, it has caught flame and prospered in other regions of Africa, such as the waters of Guinea and Nigeria. Squashing these pirates once and for all is easier said than done. They do not proudly announce their presence on the sea, but rather use silence and stealth to steal an average of \$5,000 to \$15,000 per ship. Some of these raids are exceedingly violent, while others are bloodless. In both terrorism and maritime piracy, there must be extensive planning, and those involved must be willing to sacrifice their lives.

Our friends in England recently recognized a dire loophole in worldwide attempts to combat terrorism. Since 2010, the international community has poured billions into the hands of pirates as ransom for the release of vessels and crew. These pirates are not necessarily terrorists themselves, yet many have direct connections to major terror groups. We can be sure that piracy has summoned nearby terrorist groups with the scent of money and the bribe of civilian fear. Maritime piracy is now used as the ever-prosperous bank for terrorists. Great Britain understands this and is in the midst of editing a bill which prohibits all forms of ransom payments to terrorists.

Somali pirates appear to give the ransoms from their pirated material to al-Qaeda. There is no doubt that piracy could not only fund, but also be used as a form of terrorism or for political purposes, especially because of the unusual amount of security breaches easily accessible on ports and at sea compared to land. Take for example al-Qaeda's attack on United States. It only took two men in a tiny boat to kill seventeen U.S. citizens and injure 39 more, just by placing a shape charge against the hull of the USS *Cole* while it was refueling at a Yemeni port.

We must ensure the future does not hold a pirate-terrorist group merger. This event would spin to a halt all anti-terrorism efforts. Al Shabaab and al-Qaeda are difficult and resilient as it is, but imagine these groups with access to strategic waterways, billions of dollars, high grade ships in their grasp, and American captives at their disposal. Debate on the floor of the House has found, Piracy is "Booming without any credible deterrence, without the type of deterrence you saw at one point in

time from the British navy or from the U.S. fleet. As we speak, there are 27 vessels and 449 hostages being held by Somali pirates" Yet nothing substantial is done.

Though many ships are now well-armed, piracy continues without hiccup. It's time the United States takes some action and put these outlaws in the high seas out of business and send them to Davy Jones' locker. An estimated \$160 million was paid as ransoms to pirates in one year alone. Using a private navy is almost as drastic a cost. So, the question is: what should we do? One of the most considered solutions is that of modern privateering. Privateers as defined by international law are "vessels belonging to private owners, and sailing under commission of war empowering the person to whom it is granted to carry on all forms of hostility which are permissible at sea by the usages of war." Privateers will be given the opportunity to disable dangerous non-state enemies, and in the process, create revenue. This is not a hard decision. It's a win-win.

The U.S. military has used a form of privateering in the past certain types of air combat and warfare. In fact, in the 1930's, the U.S. Navy bought blimps from—and hired—a private company, Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, to build a fleet of airships and blimps. These blimps were previously used for advertising, yet the Navy used these simple civilian mechanisms to help defend the country.

In the past, the problem of piracy was largely wiped out due to privateers. The privateers, though used as a sort of political pawn, were extremely successful and motivated. In a system of capitalism, it's important to consider all parties, and the relationship in which each benefits another. If privateering and letters of marque were used by the United States government today, the government would gain a significant amount of hegemony, credibility, and sea power. The privateering ship owners would receive rewards or payments in return for the seized pirate ships, as well as a higher safety and low insurance prices. Maritime piracy is indeed a threat that, if not soon stopped, will lead to increased terrorism and economic disaster.

In my Congressional office, we employ interns to help with writing and tasks around the office. One of our interns, Rachel Jones, researched this issue regarding piracy on the open seas. Her help this summer was valuable and I thank her for all of her work and assistance. I wish Rachel luck in her future endeavors and with the rest of her time at my alma mater—Abilene Christian University.

And that's just the way it is.

WHAT KIND OF HISTORY SHOULD WE MAKE?

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2016

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today on this Restoration Tuesday, I rise to acknowledge the continued voter suppression around the country during this election year and the ongoing battle for protection of the constitutional right to vote.

This Restoration Tuesday is particularly special, as it is the last primary vote. At the clos-

ing of the polls, we will officially be embarking on the first general election in 50 years without the full protection of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Countless Americans gathered together in the years up to the passing of the historic legislation that banned discrimination in voting polls, and solidified voting equality. Backpedaling into times of racial disparity in the voting process is a dangerous course of action that we should refrain from venturing into. We are currently defacing the legacy of those who gave up their lives in order to secure equal representation in the voting booth.

It is imperative that we rally together and Restore The Vote. We cannot allow this presidential election to greet us without being protected against those who wish to slant the election through harsh voting laws. It is the right of every eligible American to cast a ballot in the favor of their interests without hurdles being placed in their path. Through the passage of the Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2015, we will be able to complete the order handed down to us by the Supreme Court of the United States. We will be able to recreate the safe haven in voting, where everyone feels entitled and able to exercise their democratic right. I ask my colleagues to join me in support of the Voting Rights Advancement of 2015 so that we can make the democratic process democratic again.

TRIBUTE TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE WORKERS

HON. DAVID W. JOLLY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2016

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the emergency medical service (EMS) workers of Pinellas County for their hard work and sacrifice.

From May 15th to May 21st we recognize the importance of our EMS workers who sacrifice every day to provide the emergency care our community needs.

EMS workers put their lives on the line for the people of Pinellas County. City Council Member Jerry Beverland's son was recently saved by his local EMS team who were on the scene within four minutes of his call for help. It is only right that EMS workers get the recognition they deserve for their dutiful efforts.

Several members of our local emergency response teams received awards for their efforts. Aaron Gonzalez, a Fire Rescue administrator for Oldsmar, accepted the EMS Week Award, and Chris Collins, who has been a Sunstar paramedic for two years, was recognized as Paramedic of the Year. Nick Eberhardt won the Emergency Medical Technician of the Year award, and Eric Fayad was named Emergency Medical Dispatcher of the Year. He also works fulltime as a lieutenant for the Seminole Fire Department.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank and acknowledge these award winning emergency response workers who sacrifice their time and lives for the residents of Pinellas County. Their work makes our community a better place, and I ask that this body join me in recognizing our EMS teams of Pinellas County for their exceptional work.