No community should ever be forced to experience the grief and trauma that my constituents are now confronting. It is more urgent than ever that we take meaningful action to reduce the toll of widespread gun violence. The time is now.

RECERTIFY IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the significance of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action regarding Iran, more commonly referred to as the Iran nuclear agreement. I have always been a vocal advocate for tough sanctions on Iran. While I was a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, in 2010, I was a member of the committee that drafted the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act. These sanctions, in 2010 and subsequently, did make a difference.

Unfortunately, Iran continues to support organizations, and its record on human rights is well known. But we should not withhold certification of the Iran nuclear agreement without credible evidence that Iran is not complying. Let’s remember, this agreement has always been about Iran, not obtaining nuclear weapons.

Doing so would strip the United States of our credibility in future international agreements not just with Iran, but with allies as well.

In addition to Iran, we negotiated the Iran nuclear agreement with the United Kingdom, Germany, European Union, China, and Russia, and we must keep our word. In other words, to remain a stabilizing force in the world, we must not change positions on international agreements from one administration to another without serious justification and without the consent in working with our allies.

Especially now, as we are facing an increasing threat with North Korea, we must work with our allies and, together, make a safer world through a comprehensive strategy that involves diplomacy, sanctions, and, yes, deterrence. If we must use such force. We have methods for addressing Iran’s nonnuclear behavior besides refusing to recertify the agreement, and I will continue to advocate for the use of these tools to take a strong stance against Iran and their support of terrorist state activities and their abuse of human rights.

But refusing to recertify the Iran nuclear agreement, without clear evidence that Iran has breached the agreement, will deeply damage our relationships with our allies, and it will weaken our credibility worldwide.

SUPPORT FOR NFL FOOTBALL PLAYERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise and stand in the well of the Congress of the United States. I am honored to celebrate the community whose determination and achievements are an integral part of not only our Nation, but the San Joaquin Valley that I have the honor to represent.

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To those who say that “they have earned millions, why aren’t they happy,” well, it is not hush money.

Is that what you are saying, that when they get paid, the millions that says that they don’t have freedom of speech? Does that check negate their freedom of speech?

I think not. Freedom of speech is something that you cherish, whether you live in a mansion or you live under a bridge. Freedom of speech belongs to you. It does not matter your station in life. It doesn’t matter your ethnicity. It doesn’t matter your religiosity. Freedom of speech belongs to you because you are a child of God and you live in the greatest country in the world.

So I stand in support of the NFL players. I want them to continue. I want them to stand their ground. I want this movement to continue. And I want those who were thwarted to know that you are trying to thwart injustice. When you try to change the subject and make it about something that it is not, you are trying to thwart injustice. Even if you don’t do it with intentionality, that is the reality.

We cannot allow injustice to continue. And I thank God that there are those who are making millions, those who are having their bodies abused, who are willing to take a stand by taking a knee against injustice, and they still respect this country and its flag and this anthem.

If there is one among them who has other thoughts, then I don’t support them. I support the righteous cause and who are respectful of the country, who can love the flag and still protest. I support that.

COMMEMORATING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to commemorate Hispanic Heritage Month. The celebration begins on September 15 and ends on October 15 every year.

This month we honor and celebrate the history, culture, achievements, and contributions of Hispanic leaders in communities throughout our great country. From serving in our Armed Forces, to starting businesses that further develop our economy and provide employment for Americans, Hispanics have contributed to the advancement in science, medicine, literature, and education.

The Hispanic community and its people have been critical in shaping our Nation and the valley that I have the honor to represent.

For over 250 years, since the formation of the United States, immigrants have come from all over the world to America to have a better life for themselves and, in turn, have made us the greatest country in the world.

During Hispanic Heritage Month, I am honored to celebrate the community whose determination and achievements are an integral part of not only our Nation, but the San Joaquin Valley that I have the honor to represent.

The story of our Hispanic friends, neighbors, and loved ones is the story of the American Dream, as they have the same hope and aspiration that all Americans have: to make a better life for themselves and their families through hard work, access to a better education, and equal treatment under the law.

Let us remember, after all, we are a nation of immigrants past and present. For example, in the State of California alone, there are over 815,000 Hispanic- or Latino-owned companies, which, together, generate over $89.9 billion in general receipts in our economy.

In Fresno, Merced, and Madera counties, which I represent, there are nearly 27,000 Hispanic- or Latino-owned companies, which, together, generated, last year, over $2 billion, $700 million in our economy.

I have the honor to represent.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise and stand in the well of the Congress of the United States. I am always honored that I have the opportunity, and I see it as a privilege to stand in the well of the Congress of the United States of America.

I love my country. I have said it many times right here at this podium. I salute the flag, Mr. Speaker. I say the Pledge of Allegiance. I sing the National Anthem. I love my country. And I respect those who are making millions, those who are having their bodies abused, who are willing to take a stand by taking a knee against injustice, and they still respect this country and its flag and this anthem.

So I stand in support of the NFL players. I want them to continue. I want them to stand their ground. I want this movement to continue. And I want those who were thwarted to know that you are trying to thwart injustice. When you try to change the subject and make it about something that it is not, you are trying to thwart injustice. Even if you don’t do it with intentionality, that is the reality.

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