

Now that the administration has begun to recognize the severity of these massacres, it is time to finally create a comprehensive strategy that will address the root causes of this conflict, including the continued presence of Assad in Syria.

#### HEZBOLLAH TERROR DESIGNATIONS

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, the Gulf Cooperation Council pledged to designate Hezbollah, an Iranian proxy, as a terrorist organization. This positive move was followed up with a similar designation by the Arab League. This is in stark contrast to President Obama's strategy, where he continues to appease the Iranian regime at the expense of our traditional alliances in the region.

Do problems still exist within some of the Arab League nations as it relates to support for terror and terror financing? Of course they do.

I will continue to press all of those nations to do more to curb these problems and to tackle all extremist groups, not just Hezbollah. But designating Hezbollah as a terrorist group is a step in the right direction. We must work with these nations and encourage greater cooperation to root out all extremist groups.

Mr. Speaker, instead of allowing Iran's continued provocations to pass without repercussion, the Obama administration should be holding Iran accountable for its actions. It is long past overdue.

#### PENN STATE FARM EMPHASIZES VALUE OF AGRICULTURE

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the House Agriculture Committee, I rise today to commend the efforts of students at Penn State University in their efforts to set up a student-run farm in State College, Pennsylvania, located in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, the university's Student Farm Club has been working toward securing ground for this farm for the past couple years, finally obtaining an acre of space at a meeting in January.

The farm will operate as a laboratory where students will have the chance to study food production as well as distribution and marketing. Food grown there will be delivered to the community through student-run, community-supported agriculture, which connects consumers with growers.

Now, I know that this is just the beginning for Penn State's Student Farm

Club, as they hope the student-run farm will expand in years to come.

Agriculture is the number one industry in my State, and it is key to Penn State University's past, present, and future. I wish these students the best of luck in this endeavor.

#### NATIONAL AGRICULTURE WEEK

(Mr. SMITH of Nebraska asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise during National Agriculture Week to recognize the tireless work of our farmers, ranchers, and producers. I am proud to represent Nebraska's Third District, the number one agriculture district in the Nation.

As the world's population grows, demand for food is projected to increase by as much as 60 percent by 2050. This provides great opportunity for Nebraska agriculture.

Our innovative producers utilize the latest advancements in the industry, including biotechnology. When biotechnology is applied to cultivated crops, producers increase yields while using less land, less water, and fewer chemicals. Not only is this good for the environment, it also lowers the cost of food at a time when one in eight people worldwide is suffering from chronic malnutrition.

Study after study has shown the safety and vast benefits of biotech crops. I am confident our farmers and ranchers can meet growing global demand, but the Federal Government must let them do their jobs. As founder and co-chairman of the Modern Agriculture Caucus, I am committed to promoting sound policies to help producers do what they do best: help feed the world.

#### NO MORE UNAUTHORIZED SPENDING

(Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind all of us that those who sent us here did so because they trust us with their voice to set the priorities in the people's House, because that is the way that our Founding Fathers intended it to be—a government of, by, and for “We, the People.”

But what was established as three branches of government has evolved into an overextended executive and an overly active court system, with the American people's voice getting lost. Americans are frustrated, and I am, too. That is why I introduced the USA Act, to promote a more effective, accountable, and timely oversight of our entire Federal Government.

Too much of the government is currently on autopilot. We must challenge the status quo by ensuring that spending and decisions made by the execu-

tive branch departments, agencies, and programs come under the citizens' scrutiny.

No more unauthorized spending. It is time to hold Federal bureaucrats accountable for being so disconnected from their mission and reclaim the power of the purse.

I urge my colleagues to join me in co-sponsoring the USA Act.

#### VIOLENCE AGAINST CHRISTIANS IS GENOCIDE

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, facing persecution, murder, and torture each day, Christians overseas are persecuted for their religious beliefs. These individuals are being slaughtered, raped, and sold into slavery and forced to watch as their churches are burned down.

This morning, the State Department labeled these atrocities as genocide. This is mass genocide by ISIS and other radical jihadist groups that is taking place throughout the world.

Less than a year ago, 30 Ethiopian Christian men were marched to a beach, beheaded, and shot by radical Islamist terrorists because of their religion. These killers proudly put the video of the executions on YouTube.

In total, over 1,000 Christians have been killed by the radical Islamic State. These atrocious, cold-blooded massacres are an attack on the very nature of human existence: the right to practice one's religion.

Declaring the torture, crucifixion, and murder of Christians and certain religious groups genocide is now the official position of the United States. Genocide in any form is a grave injustice to those who are persecuted for their beliefs. Those people who murder Christians and other minorities because of their religion must be brought to justice because, Mr. Speaker, justice is what we do.

And that is just the way it is.

#### INTERNATIONAL LAW

Genocide is defined in Article 2 of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948) as “any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; [and] forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.”

The definition of Genocide is codified in 18 U.S. Code Sec. 1091:

(a) Basic Offense.—Whoever, whether in time of peace or in time of war and with the specific intent to destroy, in whole or in substantial part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group as such—

- (1) kills members of that group;
- (2) causes serious bodily injury to members of that group;

(3) causes the permanent impairment of the mental faculties of members of the group through drugs, torture, or similar techniques;

(4) subjects the group to conditions of life that are intended to cause the physical destruction of the group in whole or in part;

(5) imposes measures intended to prevent births within the group; or

(6) transfers by force children of the group to another group;

#### RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND THE LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR CASE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CURBELO of Florida). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

##### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, next week, the Supreme Court will hear the most important religious freedom case in decades. It is *Zubik v. Burwell*. The purpose of this Special Order is to talk a little bit about religious freedom and what is at stake here.

Before I begin, I yield to my colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), who has long been a champion of human rights across the globe and understands the importance of religious freedom and is also the chair of our Pro-Life Caucus.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I want to thank my good friend and colleague, KEITH ROTHFUS, for his tremendous leadership on protecting the weakest and the most vulnerable among us, including the unborn and their mothers who are at risk of violence perpetrated by abortion, and for his dedication to protecting conscience rights, again, the subject of today's Special Order.

Next week, the Court will hear oral argument on a landmark case for religious liberty. The impact of the Court's ruling in this case cannot be overstated, but the question before the Court is really quite simple: Can the government coerce the Little Sisters of the Poor and other people of faith to violate their conscience?

The Obama administration is telling these religious sisters, women who have given their life in service to God by taking care of the elderly poor, that their conscience is irrelevant and that they must follow the Federal Government's conscience rather than their own.

This abuse of government power is absolutely antithetical to the American principle of freedom of religion and the First Amendment. Unless re-

versed, Obama's attack on conscience rights means that government can impose discrimination against Americans who seek to live according to their faith.

The Little Sisters have 30 homes for the elderly across the United States. Each Little Sister takes a vow of obedience to God and of hospitality "to care for the aged as if they were Christ Himself," and they wear religious habits as a sign to others of God's presence in the world. Yet the Obama administration is dictating to the Little Sisters and others about how they should interpret their own religious beliefs. That, in a word, is outrageous.

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The Sisters object to having their healthcare plans used to funnel drugs and devices that they have a moral objection to, including drugs that could even destroy a young human life. The sisters say that facilitating the provision of these items is a violation of their religious beliefs, and the government is saying: No, it isn't. We know better than you.

Under the Obama administration's coercive mandate, the Little Sisters and other religious organizations, like Priests for Life and Geneva College, are put in the impossible situation of being forced to violate their religious beliefs or face Obama-imposed crippling fines of \$100 per day per employee. In the case of the Little Sisters, that would mean about \$70 million per year.

This obscene penalty is completely unfair, unreasonable, and unconscionable. The Obama administration is saying: We will punish you; we will hurt you; we will stop you from serving, unless you provide health care according to the government's conscience, not your own.

President Obama has no business imposing his morality on people of faith, but that is exactly what this oppressive mandate does.

Let's make no mistake about it, this mandate is very much Obama's willful intention. The imposition of this attack on religious freedom is no accident. It comes straight from the pages of ObamaCare.

In December of 2009, in the run-up to passage of ObamaCare, Senator MIKULSKI offered an amendment which provided the authorizing language for this oppressive mandate; and some, including Senator CASEY, rigorously supported Senator MIKULSKI's amendment.

Mr. Speaker, when President Obama spoke in 2009 at Notre Dame University—which, I would say parenthetically, has also filed suit over the mandate—he spoke about drafting a sensible conscience clause. Yet today, protection of conscience is another highly visible broken promise of ObamaCare.

The Supreme Court, Mr. Speaker, has a duty to protect the right of the Little Sisters of the Poor and others to live according to their conscience, to ensure that they serve the elderly poor according to their conscience.

Again, I thank Mr. ROTHFUS for his leadership.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, again, for his long leadership on this very important subject of protecting life and protecting conscience.

He mentioned something about the government deciding what is or is not a sincerely held belief. It has been long established, Mr. Speaker, that that is up to the religious adherent-to-be, making that decision, not the government, not the government to interpose itself and tell an individual what is a sincerely held belief for the individual. That is a fundamental freedom that the individual has.

I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA), who also has concerns about what is at stake.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. ROTHFUS.

Also, I appreciate following somebody like the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), who has been a tremendous leader on life and on the individual liberties that we are guaranteed and that, indeed, were the cornerstones of the founding of this country and are our religious rights. So I am glad to be able to support Mr. ROTHFUS today in this Special Order about our First Amendment to the Constitution.

We know that next Wednesday, it appears the Supreme Court will hear oral arguments for the Little Sisters of the Poor in the consolidated cases of *Zubik v. Burwell*.

Now, why is it we are even having to do this? How far have we gotten out of touch, as a Nation and as this oppressive government, that we have to go to court to assert the religious rights and freedoms of individual organizations, like Little Sisters and others that are joining them? It is outrageous to me because, again, a cornerstone of the founding of this country is religious rights.

The Little Sisters of the Poor is a tremendous faith-based organization consisting of Catholic nuns who serve the elderly in over 30 countries around the world, giving from their hearts to help people in a way they see fit in their views and their religion with God.

My scheduler, Caitlin, hosts a weekly movie night at the Little Sisters D.C. home, where she and many others can attest to the incredible work that is done by these nuns.

The HHS mandate under ObamaCare is now forcing religious organizations, like the Little Sisters, to provide health care plans, contraceptives, drugs, and things that they find that are against their belief system, that violate their deeply held belief system; yet the club of ObamaCare and this Federal Government, hitting them over the head saying "you have to provide this," goes against our founding principles, and I think the whole country should be outraged by this, merely so that a few can have something provided to them for free by an organization that shouldn't have to be doing so.