

American companies must make the first step and begin investments. Right now Lithuania is an untapped resource of money, goods and a capable workforce. The possibilities are endless as to what can be done in this burgeoning economy. The United States and Lithuania must work together to encourage this investment. The possibilities are too great for American companies to miss by sitting on the sidelines.

Again, I would like to congratulate the Lithuanian people on not only their independence but on the strides they have made over the last 10 years to make their country what it is today. Through continued perseverance, they have shown in the past Lithuania will be an outstanding addition to NATO and an economic powerhouse in central Europe.

#### TALIBAN ATROCITIES IN AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleague, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), in speaking out for equality, equal opportunity, freedom of choice, and freedom to live. There was once a time when these words were only meaningful to men. However, more than 50 years ago, the universal declaration of human rights declared once and for all the principle of equality for women and men around the world. Then why is it that in the year 2000, the beginning of the year and the decade of hope and advancement and greater opportunity that there is an entire population of women who still live in constant fear and violent oppression?

Since 1996, the Taliban, an extremist militia, has seized control of 90 percent of Afghanistan and then unilaterally declared an end to women's basic human rights. Women are banished from working, girls are not allowed to attend school beyond the eighth grade, women are beaten for not fully covering themselves, including their eyes and ankles. Women and girls are not allowed to go out into public without being covered from head to toe with a heavy and cumbersome garment and escorted by a close male relative. Women are not allowed to seek health care, even in emergency situations, from male doctors. The Taliban has allowed some women to practice medicine, but women must do so fully covered and in sectioned-off special wards. And even these services are only available in very few select locations, leaving women to die from otherwise treatable diseases.

A 16-year-old girl was stoned to death because she went out in public with a man who was not her family member. A woman who was teaching girls in her home was also stoned to death in front of her husband, children, and students. An elderly woman was beaten, break-

ing her leg, because she exposed an ankle. These are atrocious actions and they are real. They are happening now. They will continue tomorrow as long as the extremist Taliban government is still in control.

The restriction on women's freedom in Afghanistan is not understandable to most Americans. Women and girls cannot venture outside without a burqa, a heavy and expensive restrictive garment, that covers the entire body, including mesh over the eyes. For some women, not having the means to afford and purchase this expensive garment will banish them to their homes for the rest of their lives.

The effects of this decree have been severe. Many Afghan women are widows and have no means of income because they cannot work. And unless they have a close male member in their family, they have no access to society for food, for their families and for themselves.

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It is no wonder that under these conditions, the Feminist Majority Foundation reports that the Physicians for Human Rights found that 97 percent of Afghan women show signs of major depression.

I join my colleague, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), in condemning the Taliban regime. We must continue to speak out against the Taliban, on behalf of the women and girls that risk death for speaking out for themselves.

We must not accept the Taliban as a legitimate government.

We must send a strong and clear message that gender apartheid is unacceptable and a gross violation of the most basic human rights.

Afghanistan may be physically located on the other side of the world, but the voices of the women and girls suffering there are heard loud and clear here.

I urge my colleagues to continue their support of the women and girls in Afghanistan by cosponsoring my resolution, H. Res. 187, to prevent any Taliban led government from obtaining a seat in the United Nations, and refused any attempt to recognize any Afghan government, while gross violations of human rights persist against women and girls.

In closing, I want to share with you an excerpt from a poem written by Zieba Shorish-Shamley called "A poem dedicated to my Afghan Sisters":

I remember you . . .  
When you have no choice, no voice, no rights, no existence  
When you have no laughs, no joy, no freedom, no resistance  
Your pain, your agony, your silence, your loneliness  
Your anger, your frustration, your cries, your unhappiness

To the women of Afghanistan I say, we remember you, we will not forget you, we will fight for you!

#### NOT ALL AMERICANS EXPERIENCING THE SAME PROSPERITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SUNUNU). Under a previous order of the

House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODE. Mr. Speaker, when the President delivered his State of the Union address on January 27, he touted the unprecedented prosperity of the Nation. He pointed to the fast economic growth and the lowest unemployment rates in 30 years.

Unfortunately, this is not the case in all areas of the country. In some parts of the Fifth District of Virginia, which I represent, we have experienced significant job losses and unemployment rates that are three to five times greater than the State average. The job losses are the result of textile plant closings and the decline of the apparel manufacturing industry in Southside Virginia and throughout the Nation.

Martinsville and Henry County, Virginia, used to be known as the "sweatshirt capital of the world," but with the recent loss of over 3,000 apparel manufacturing jobs, that title will no longer be applicable. Recent figures show that the unemployment rate in Martinsville for the month of December was 19.6 percent, and the unemployment rate for surrounding Henry County was 11.6 percent. Neighboring counties, including my home county of Franklin, also have seen textile plants close and unemployment rates increase.

The people who have lost their jobs are able and willing workers. Many in the community were concerned when NAFTA was proposed, and they feared the impact that the agreement would have on their jobs and the local economy. Their fears and concerns have now been realized. Nearly all of the plant closings in the area have been certified by the Department of Labor as NAFTA impacted, making the workers eligible for the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program and the NAFTA Transitional Adjustment Assistance Program. Many have taken advantage of these programs which provide job training grants. With the help of the Virginia Employment Commission, many of them are enrolling in training programs. However, job training will be of little benefit to these people if there are no jobs available to them.

There is legislation that has been introduced in the House of Representatives which I believe would help these displaced workers and others like them around the country. H.R. 1967, the NAFTA Impact Relief Act introduced by the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. SHOWS), now has over 70 cosponsors. The NAFTA Impact Relief Act would provide tax incentives and grants to communities affected by the loss of businesses and jobs as a result of NAFTA.

I believe this measure is an example of what we need to try to do in order to assist adversely impacted localities in their efforts to create jobs and to get their economies on the same track as those sectors of the country which are enjoying more prosperous times.