

in these institutions trying to get an education to move forward because we know of the large number of health care providers that we need.

We are proud in the city of New York to say that we have been able to train and educate a larger percentage of physicians than all of the teaching hospitals that we have throughout our great country, and we're proud to do that. All of a sudden, we hear that some \$300 billion will be cut from the hospitals that provide this care. And it's not just by the beneficiaries that you and I know they need this care and they will be put in harm's way, but also we have to acknowledge that many of the people that work in these hospitals, a large number of them being minorities, they too will be released to join the unemployed.

So while I'm praying for our spiritual leaders to protect the vulnerable, please understand that every time we make a cut in the budget, we're cutting someone's job, and they will join the hopeless and the unemployed.

#### OPPOSING THE COLOMBIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my ongoing concerns about human rights abuses in Colombia and to oppose any consideration of the pending United States-Colombia Free Trade Agreement until tangible and sustained progress is seen on the ground. Colombia has a longstanding legacy of serious and pervasive human rights violations. Trade unionists, members of indigenous groups, and human rights defenders have been particular targets for violence. Despite some positive rhetoric by the Santos administration about improving protection of human rights, serious abuses continue.

In one recent incident reported by Human Rights Watch, seven people were massacred in southern Colombia on July 2, reportedly by FARC guerrillas. On June 25, another eight people were killed also in the southern part of the country. In both cases, children were among those killed. According to Human Rights Watch, there were 17 such massacres between January and May, 2011, resulting in a total of 76 deaths—a 21 percent increase over the same time period in 2010.

Several members of indigenous groups have been targeted and killed in recent weeks as well, ranging from children to prominent community leaders. Human Rights Watch reports that 14 members of indigenous communities have been killed in 2011 in Antioquia Department alone. Other indigenous leaders have been threatened, and dozens of families have been displaced. The Colombian Government has to act immediately to ensure a thorough investigation into these horrific

crimes and to finally end the cycle of impunity. Further, the government must take immediate steps to protect indigenous communities and other particularly vulnerable groups, as human rights groups have repeatedly demanded.

Labor leaders and trade unionists also continue to be victims of serious abuses. Though the recently agreed to Labor Action Plan commits the government, at least in writing, to take several important steps to prevent and punish these human rights violations, we have yet to see any sort of tangible progress on the ground. With recently published statistics showing that Colombia again led the world in trade unionist deaths in 2010, it is critical that we see a real reduction in violence before we even consider passing and implementing a trade deal.

The Labor Action Plan is not legally binding under the FTA before us. If violence and impunity continue, the United States will have no mechanism for delaying or halting implementation of the free trade agreement. The Labor Action Plan fails to require sustained, meaningful and measurable results. Once we enact the FTA, we lose any ability to force the Colombian Government to produce tangible change.

Mr. Speaker, I do not support the NAFTA-style trade model illustrated in the three pending Bush-negotiated free trade agreements because so-called free trade has proven destructive to the American economy and harmful to workers both in the United States and abroad. The Economic Policy Institute estimates that implementing the Colombia and South Korea free trade agreements would increase the U.S. trade deficit by \$16.8 billion and eliminate or displace 214,000 U.S. jobs. Particularly at a time when we should be focused on job creation, I strongly oppose all three FTAs, which jeopardize more jobs.

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Finally, I find it particularly concerning that we are considering implementing an FTA with Colombia in the absence of demonstrated progress on human rights and workers rights.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot turn a blind eye to ongoing abuses, and we should not consider the trade agreement until these issues are fully resolved.

#### COLOMBIAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to address the House and the American people regarding the Colombia free trade agreement and the negative impacts it will have on working families in the United States as well as Colombia.

Quite frankly, I am stumped as to why Congress is even considering this

trade agreement. Colombia is the most dangerous place in the world to be a union worker. This year, 17 trade unionists were assassinated as of mid-June. Last year, 51 trade unionists were killed in Colombia.

As a Member of Congress, I have traveled to Colombia to see labor conditions there firsthand. We simply can't afford to approve an FTA with a nation as unsafe as Colombia which can't even enforce its own laws.

Like many of my colleagues, I was glad to see that the Obama administration negotiated a Labor Action Plan with the Colombian Government. Both morally and economically, it is imperative that Colombia address some of these concerns regarding human and labor rights for workers. The administration says the Labor Action Plan has been met. The problem is that the Labor Action Plan doesn't go far enough.

Many of my colleagues might question whether labor conditions in a foreign country could really impact job prospects of their constituents here in the United States. Well, when you consider that for years American workers have been competing for jobs with nations that have weaker labor and environmental standards, it is no wonder that we are losing jobs here in the United States.

Let me be blunt: if joining a union means putting your life on the line, there is no freedom. There is no fair competition. Without fair competition, we will see even more American jobs shipped overseas. I think we can all agree that the last thing that this country needs right now is to lose more jobs.

Let me be clear. I am committed to trade. Trade can benefit our Nation, our businesses, and our working families. In fact, I am a member of President Obama's Export Council, and the goal there is to double American exports in 5 years, not to export American jobs.

The fact of the matter is that the Colombia free trade agreement doesn't help American working families. It really benefits transnational corporations. These transnational corporations already repress Colombian workers. Nothing under this agreement makes the lives of Colombian workers better. Nothing under this agreement makes the lives of U.S. workers better. They don't get an equal share of the benefits of this free trade agreement.

Why are we rushing to approve an agreement when workers in Colombia don't even want it? Even worse, once the agreement is in effect, the U.S. loses our most important leverage to see that the human rights situation improves in Colombia. So I ask again: why the rush?

Congress should wait to see if Colombia institutes the Labor Action Plan, as they have promised. After that, we can determine if conditions for working families in Colombia actually improve. The Labor Action Plan is a good