

on Homeland Security said yesterday—Mr. Speaker, this is the Republican chairman of the Homeland Security Committee: ‘I fully believe we should not be playing politics with the national security agency like the Department of Homeland Security, particularly given the high threat environment that we’re in right now.’

What American would say it makes sense to play politics with Homeland Security in light of what the gentleman has just referenced and which all of us know to be the case?

We have people who want to harm us as a people and as a nation. Mr. Speaker, this body has a responsibility to the American people to do everything we can to make them as secure as we can and to make our country as secure as we can.

Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, with whom I served in this body who now represents South Carolina and is a Republican Member of the Senate and an expert on national security, he told his Republican colleagues this—and, again, I quote: ‘The worst possible outcome for this Nation is to defund the Department of Homeland Security, given the multiple threats we face to our homeland, and I will not be part of it.’

None of us ought to be part of it. 435 of us ought to vote to fund the Homeland Security Department starting on Friday. I urge the Republican majority to heed this advice of Mr. McCaul, of Mr. GRAHAM, and, frankly, countless other Republicans in the Senate and some in the House to do the responsible thing and let this House work its will on the single subject of our national security.

If a clean Homeland Security appropriation bill were to come to the floor, I am confident—and I tell my friend and the majority leader, Mr. Speaker, every Democrat will vote for it. We are 188 strong.

Surely, there are 30 responsible Republicans who care more about our national security than their politics who would join us in voting for that bill—I am confident of that—many more, I think, than 30, but at least 30 would be needed, with 188, to get to the 218, and we would fund the Department of Homeland Security, and we could do it tomorrow.

We could probably do it today by unanimous consent—well, no, I don’t think we could do it by unanimous consent because there are some who continue to play politics with our national security.

If the majority is dissatisfied with our immigration policy which they articulate and legitimately can have an alternative view to express and to try to enact, that is the democratic process.

Offer a bill to change that which they do not like, not hold hostage the Department of Homeland Security until hopefully, from their standpoint, the President is bludgeoned into signing a bill that he does not agree with and he does not believe is good for our country and believes is bad for our economy.

If the majority is dissatisfied, bring a bill to the floor. Former Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge, also a Republican with whom I have served when he was a Representative from Pennsylvania, subsequently the Governor of Pennsylvania and then our first Secretary of Homeland Security, I want to quote him as well as I have quoted the other two Republicans that I have quoted.

‘Political folly’ and ‘bad policy,’ that is Tom Ridge, former Republican Governor and mentioned for President. He went on to say: ‘I think the political repercussions could be severe. And, on top of that, the men and women of Homeland Security deserve better.’

Who wants to work for an employer that simply takes them hostage every few months and says to them: You may or may not get paid, you may or may not be able to come to work, you may or may not be able to do your job. It depends upon whether or not our political ends are served.

I urge Republican leaders to keep the pledge they made to the American people to consider issues one at a time. Bring a comprehensive immigration reform bill. If you don’t like what the President has done, bring a bill that changes that. We have the power to do that. Do it.

We can work in a bipartisan way to change our immigration policies through legislation and fix what everybody in this body believes is a broken system.

Bring a clean appropriation bill to the floor to fund the Department of Homeland Security, and then, as well, bring a bill to the floor on comprehensive immigration reform or the bill that our Republican friends think is the appropriate bill to fix a broken system, and we will vote and debate on that.

But let the Department of Homeland Security do its job for America, for Americans. Let’s exercise responsible, adult legislating this time.

HONORING THE FUGUITT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HONOR GUARD

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

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an exceptional group of young men in Pinellas County, Florida, the honor guard at Fuguitt Elementary School in Largo.

Last week, I had the pleasure of visiting with 21 young men of Fuguitt’s honor guard who have recognized the importance of respect, discipline, commitment, and speaking out against bullying. These are remarkable young men in third, fourth, and fifth grade.

The honor guard program at Fuguitt was started by former Principal Michael Moss; teacher Rhonda Correa; and her husband, Frank Correa, a Marine Corps veteran. The Correas have continued to lead the program today under the leadership of Fuguitt’s principal, Dr. Kathi Bentley.

The purpose of the honor guard is to develop structure, discipline, and leadership in young students who otherwise might face academic or behavioral challenges.

Each student signs the honor guard pledge, which reads: ‘As a Fuguitt honor guard member, I am a student leader of this school. As a member, I promise to be truthful, respectful, helpful, and hardworking. I will act like an honorable gentleman and respect and honor the flag of the United States of America. I understand my success is my Nation’s success.’

Each day, the honor guard opens the school with the presentation of colors and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Speaker, the young men committed to this program represent future leaders both in Pinellas County and also in our Nation, and they deserve the recognition and encouragement of this body.

I am honored to recognize Fuguitt Elementary School’s honor guard members today: in third grade—Romeo Greene, Sean Lange, Blake Logan, Levita Maafu, Troy Mason, George Mercado, Walit Morton, Daniel Mattrass, Micah Timberlake, and Bryce Young; in fourth grade—Domenic Barclay, Johnnie Chattman, Ari Davis, Matthew Kosinski, and Tyrek Tripp; and in fifth grade—Jon Dameron, Anthony Gonzalez, William Maafu, William Muscu, Steven Suero, and Andra Witchard.

Today, these young men serve as role models to the rest of Fuguitt Elementary School and are held to a high standard, both academically and behaviorally. I rise today to recognize their efforts and commend the leadership at Fuguitt who are committed to the mission to help these students grow into future leaders.

In closing, I would like to share the honor guard’s poem that they recited to me at the end of my visit with them. It is a fitting tribute from 21 young men to the exceptionalism of our Nation.

‘We are the beacon of light, the hope of mankind, that shining city on a hill, the most beautiful, the most bountiful, the most generous people in the history of the world, the country that has birthed the great titans of science and industry, the country that put a man on the Moon, the country that has liberated tens of millions from the clutches of evil, the home of the brave, the undisputed champion of freedom, the great Republic, the United States of America.’

I thank the Fuguitt honor guard for serving as an inspiration to so many, including to this Member of Congress.

May God bless each of them and their families, and may God bless these United States.

2015 FUNDING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from