

share? So do this tribal community, this city, this county, and this government each need to own their own? Why aren't they put on sharing platforms?

The concept is real simple. Capital assets need to be maximized. It is like the concept of a classroom. At 3:45, when school is out, does that classroom become the community college? At 7:30, does it become the senior learning class? It is a building. We are paying to heat and cool it. It is there. We spent the capital money. How do you maximize the utilization of capital assets?

Mr. Speaker, this is happening in the private world. Much of this technology is coming out of Silicon Valley and other hubs of innovation in our country. We need to open ourselves up in the government and say: "We need to be embracing this technology to move it to ourselves."

In the last half of this, I see fights starting to break out on the new technology and how it changes how we work. It changes our optionality. We need to understand that technology is changing our society. But if we can get out of the way, it can actually really provide us some opportunities.

So there are crazy thoughts. We are researching these. Let's say you are one of these drivers, whether it be an Uber platform or something else and there is this argument saying, well, you are being treated as a self-employed 1099 or you are getting direct payments electronically or you are doing Airbnb or these sorts of things. How is that going to help you fund your Social Security?

Maybe we need to rethink it. Maybe it really is time to have that honest conversation of should you be allowed to have that account that is truly yours and set up your technology that every time you have a client and you take them and deliver them to a location, every time you have guests in your Airbnb, every time you provide a certain service, you can use that technology so that a little bit of that money goes to your retirement account.

We have the technology. It would be a very low-cost way to do it. And we start to engage in the technology revolution that is happening around us to basically embrace it, not be scared of it, and at the same time use that technology to shore up what we have just talked about, the devastating actuarial math we are running into.

Mr. Speaker, I know there is a political battle coming in this because, for some of my brothers and sisters on the other side, it is very much: How do I unionize that population? How do I do this type of control? How do I have this?

For many of those on the more free market side, we are making the argument for individuals to be able to use technology and the new economy to pursue their optionality, maximizing the value of their time. They need to be allowed to do that.

We are Americans. Being free is part of the basic—it is supposed to be part

of our DNA. At the same time, use that same creativity, that same optionality, to not be afraid of it, but to use that technology to actually grow the economy and embrace the empowerment of individuals to deal with the very problems we were showing on those slides.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

RESOLUTION TO HONOR AND PRAISE THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE ON ITS 109TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject matter of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as I move forward with this Special Order hour, because the AJC has been very close in Houston, Texas, to a leading citizen, the Honorable William Alexander Lawson, I think it appropriate to let it be known that the AJC stands in sympathy with a good many persons with reference to Pastor Lawson's loss of his wife, the Honorable Audrey Lawson.

□ 1615

She will be funeralized on Friday at 11 a.m.—that would be central standard time—in Houston, Texas, at the Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church. Pastor Lawson has worked very closely with the AJC and many other Jewish organizations. I would dare say that he has been a nexus between various communities and the Jewish community. I am saddened by his loss and want him to know that the AJC as well as my good offices send him our condolences.

Today, Mr. Speaker, we are here to present H. Res. 518. H. Res. 518 honors and praises the American Jewish Committee on the occasion of its 109th anniversary. I am proud to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that on the campus today here at the Capitol we have visitors from the AJC. We have Richard Foltin, who is the Director of National and Legislative Affairs in AJC's Office of Government and International Affairs, in Washington, D.C. He happens to be accompanied by an intelligent, beautiful lady, who works with the AJC. Her name is Daniela Erazo. They are here, and I am proud to let them know that we are most excited about their being here on the occasion of the introduction of this resolution.

This resolution has been cosigned by a good number of Members of Congress.

I would like to, because this is very special to us, give their names so that the RECORD will be clear as to who the cosponsors are.

The original cosponsors are: the Honorable ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, Florida's 27th District; the Honorable EMANUEL CLEAVER, Missouri's Fifth District; the Honorable STEVE COHEN, Tennessee's Ninth District; the Honorable ALCEE HASTINGS, Florida's 20th District; the Honorable SANDER LEVIN, Minnesota's Ninth District; the Honorable JERROLD NADLER, New York's 10th District; the Honorable CHARLES RANGEL, New York's 13th District; the Honorable DAVID SCOTT, Georgia's 13th District; the Honorable FREDERICA WILSON, Florida's 24th District; the Honorable TOM MACARTHUR, New Jersey's Third District; and, of course, the Honorable DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Florida's 23rd District, whom I mentioned earlier.

This resolution is one that acknowledges the mission of the AJC, which is to enhance the well-being of the Jewish people and Israel, and to advocate and advance Jewish rights and Jewish values in the United States and around the world. The AJC is committed to combating racial prejudice, anti-Semitism, and sponsoring and supporting issues related to the State of Israel.

The AJC has a rich history. It was founded on November 11, 1906, in New York City, by a group of American Jews who wanted to raise awareness about some of the atrocities that were taking place against Jewish people in Russia as well as in other places. This leadership went on to add as its list of duties, I suppose, doing all that they could to help in the fight against racism here in this country.

I am proud to tell you that the local chapter of the AJC in Houston, Texas, currently has as its director, Randy Czarlinsky. He is a dear friend. The president is Marcia Nichols. She is a friend as well.

But I am also going to mention a friend who was there in 1989. His name is David Minberg. David Minberg and I worked together. I was the president of the Houston branch of the NAACP. At that time, we had an unfortunate circumstance occur in Houston, Texas. We had a city council person make a racial slur. The AJC and the NAACP worked very closely together.

David Minberg was one of the leading citizens to stand up and denounce this racial slur that took place and call for the resignation of the city council person. It had been prognosticated by one of our local persons who was in the community associated with political science.

He went on to explain that this person probably could have won. I have not mentioned his name. I see no need to. He probably could have won his office because there still was some support for him—substantial support, I might add. But because David Minberg and the AJC stood with the African American community, by and

through the NAACP and other organizations, this city council person decided to apologize and to resign from office.

This is but one example of how the AJC has made a difference in the lives of people who are not directly associated with the AJC. I think all people of goodwill are by virtue of the fact that the AJC is on a mission to do those things that will enhance the quality of life for people around the world, especially as they suffer from discrimination and other forms of atrocities that would cause them to have a quality of life that is unacceptable.

To this end, I would like to just mention some of the varied circumstances that the AJC has been involved with.

When Hurricane Katrina hit in 2005, the AJC organized a delegation to travel to the Gulf to bring relief and aid to the victims. This was quite an effort that the AJC put together. It contributed about \$1.9 million in relief funds to help these victims to make sure that they had housing and to make sure that places of worship were rebuilt.

I would also add that the AJC, in 2010, received a wonderful honor. Dillard University decided that they would dedicate their new Distance Learning Center in honor of the AJC, as the AJC donated about \$200,000 to this university.

In 2005, the AJC's efforts with reference to the tsunami relief fund should be acknowledged. This tsunami relief fund consisted of about \$900,000 that went to help persons who were the victims of the tsunami in the Indian Ocean. This was a major disaster. I am proud to know that the AJC played a role in helping persons to receive not only what we call relief, but actually an understanding that they were not alone, that there were people in distant places who were willing to stand with them to make sure that they received the help that human beings beset by tragedy richly deserve.

In 2004, with the Dominican Republic and Haiti when there were floods, the AJC made a contribution.

In 2001, there was an earthquake in El Salvador, and the AJC made a donation.

In 2000, with the Lebanese refugees in northern Israel, the AJC made a donation to assist them.

And in 1999, with the Muslim refugees in Kosovo, the AJC made a financial contribution.

The AJC has been there in most of the major disasters around the world to be a hand to those in times of need, as evidenced by the record that I am building.

I would also note that the AJC was there in 1954. In 1954, the NAACP was litigating *Brown v. Board of Education*. The AJC filed an amicus brief in this case supporting the efforts of the NAACP and the other organizations—there were many—but the AJC was one of the leading organizations helping us to fight the discrimination that was taking place in our schools, such that

the schools would be open to all, that there would no longer be segregation in schools in the United States of America.

As a result of what the AJC and the NAACP were able to accomplish, the rest, of course, is history. *Brown v. Board of Education* was won by the NAACP, with the aid of other organizations, including the AJC. We now have integrated schools. I would dare say that, without the help of the AJC and donations and helping us with some of the test materials with reference to how people are impacted by segregation—the psychological evaluations and the materials related thereto—without these things, we may not have won that lawsuit. The AJC has been instrumental in helping us with this type of invidious discrimination.

In 1965, the AJC presented Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King with the American Liberties Medallion for his exceptional advancement of the principles of human liberty. Dr. King, as you know, was a freedom fighter for all. While he was doing this, he had the aid and comfort of the AJC. The AJC was there to help him with marches and with the protest movement, but also there to help him as he went through some of the difficult times. I can remember the Edmund Pettus Bridge, for example. There were members of the AJC who were on-site to march with Dr. King after what we call Bloody Sunday had taken place.

The AJC and its members also established the Transatlantic Institute to promote Transatlantic cooperation for global security, Middle East peace, and human rights. This was done in 2004.

The AJC is a champion not only of human rights for Israel, but also for Palestinians. The AJC supports a two-state solution. The AJC encourages peace talks between Israel and the Palestinian leadership. The AJC believes that a peaceful solution with the parties negotiating it is the best way to have a long and lasting peace in the Middle East.

I must tell you that I have been involved with the Houston AJC as they go through some of these difficult issues and talk through them and work through them, and I am honored to support the AJC in its efforts to bring peace to not only Israel and Palestine, but also to the entire Middle East. The AJC is very much concerned about the diaspora on the whole, but more specifically about their friends and neighbors in the Middle East and bringing peace.

The AJC, in 2007, joined me and other colleagues, especially Representative Laura Richardson, in a resolution that we had, H. Res. 826, a resolution condemning noose intimidation.

In 2006, we had, at that time, some persons who felt it necessary to hang nooses in various places to intimidate and to incite others to do dastardly deeds. The AJC joined with us to denounce this type of behavior. As a result, while I don't say that there are no

nooses being placed in places for the purpose of intimidation, I can say that they are not as prevalent as they were back in 2006–2007. I am honored at the AJC was there to help us with this endeavor.

In 2008, the AJC visited South Sudan to study how Israel could assist in the preparation for South Sudanese independence. I had the honor of going to Sudan myself. I was not with the AJC at the time, but I did have an opportunity to see some of the needs of the people. They were great, they were many, they were varied, and the AJC was there to assist with the independence movement.

□ 1630

The AJC does things that go far beyond what, perhaps, many think it should be doing or has been doing.

In 2015, the AJC joined the chorus of civil rights groups in condemning bans on Muslims from entering the United States. This is one of their most recent activities. The AJC believes that religion should be respected and that, because a person happens to be of a given religion, it is no reason to conclude that a person can be banned or should be banned from the United States of America. The AJC respects all religions.

The AJC is an entity that established a full-time office in Israel. It did this for the first time such that it would have a means by which it could advocate for peace between the Israelis and their Arab neighbors; so they wanted to make sure that they had an office on the ground in Israel. While it appears to be a Jewish organization—and it is—it still wanted to make sure that its presence was immediately known in the State of Israel.

The AJC has long supported comprehensive immigration reform, and they want this type of reform done once the security of the Nation's borders has been put in place. Once the borders are secure, the AJC wants that comprehensive immigration reform. In fact, it would be great if it could all happen at the same time, and we push for this.

The AJC is an organization of goodwill, is an organization that has withstood the test of time, and is an organization that is diverse in every aspect of its existence as its membership is very diverse, and it preaches diversity.

In Houston, Texas, the AJC has, on many occasions, talked about the rich diversity of Houston, Texas. In fact, on an annual basis, an event is sponsored in Houston, Texas, wherein diversity is celebrated. We talk about this at what is called America's Table. We talk about all of the various ethnicities that are at America's Table, and we talk about how we all came to America's Table. We talk about the greatness of America. We talk about how there is but one race—the human race. We celebrate our rich diversity such that we can appreciate each other.

The AJC has made it possible for people who may not have had an opportunity to meet and to greet each other

in an informal setting to sit at the table of brotherhood and to get to know each other in such a way as to not only develop a relationship but as to develop a friendship. The AJC is a supporter of relationship building, but, more importantly, of establishing relationships that can lead to friendships.

So I am honored today, Mr. Speaker, to present H. Res. 518, a resolution to help us acknowledge the great work of the AJC, not only this year, but in each year to come, such that this House of Representatives will annually record and recognize the accomplishments of the AJC and its members.

I mentioned SANDER LEVIN, who is from Michigan. I may have said “Minnesota” earlier. I want to correct the RECORD. He is a dear friend and a great supporter of this resolution, and he is also a person who has been in the fight for human rights. That means human rights as they relate to all people, not just to some people.

I am honored to close with a very brief word about the AJC and what I see in the future.

I believe that the AJC, given its history, is going to help us write a future that will bring peace to Israel and its neighbors. I believe that the AJC has demonstrated that it not only wants to be of benefit to Israel, but also to its neighbors. I believe that, with its involvement here and in Israel, the AJC is going to make a difference.

I think that the AJC, because of its history, will help us through this immigration reform debate. The AJC does a lot of research, and it has a lot of intelligence on how this type of circumstance, with people living in the shadows, can impact the lives of people beyond their physical existence and also beyond their mental existence. I am proud that the AJC is providing this type of intelligence.

I believe that the AJC, in the future, will help us with issues related to police community relations. The AJC is always available to help us when we have these turbulent times, when there are circumstances that must be addressed by communities that are grieving. The AJC helps us to bring the communities together so that we can, at some point, come to a conclusion that is beneficial to the community as a whole and to the persons who have been injured or harmed.

In the future, I believe, as the AJC moves forward with its various programs, it will help us with the hopes and with the aspirations of people who are suffering in places around the world from various natural disasters. I think they will do even more to help persons who are suffering from natural disasters. They have done an awful lot in every circumstance that is mentionable to date, but I do think that they will do even more. They have a wide reach, and they make sure that they are present, in some way, in order to be of assistance.

The AJC has been there. My prediction is that it will be there and that

it will make a difference when it is present. I am honored to have received this time, and I do trust that Members who have statements will place them in the RECORD.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a proud original cosponsor of House Resolution 518, Honoring and Praising the American Jewish Committee on the Occasion of its 109th anniversary, and to more broadly commend and celebrate the work of AJC. Thank you to my colleague Representative AL GREEN for organizing this special order hour.

Originally founded to raise awareness about the targeting of Jewish communities in Russia, AJC has become a leading voice and advocate against racism and prejudice here in the United States and around the world. Rooted in the Jewish values of *tikkun olam*—repairing the world—and of being a voice for those who cannot speak for themselves, AJC has been a key actor in pivotal movements and legislative victories including the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act, and for comprehensive immigration reform. As we continue to work to fulfill the complete visions of those movements, AJC will continue to be on the front lines.

AJC has partnered with governments all over the world to promote tolerance and understanding and successfully worked to restore and preserve Jewish historical and cultural centers from India to Morocco to Argentina. This work is critical not only for supporting Jewish communities and historical memory abroad, but also for the broader goal of promoting intercultural and interreligious understanding in the face of hatred and violence.

On a more personal level, as a young legislator in the Florida House, the American Jewish Committee took me on my first trip to Israel in 1995. That mission was nothing short of transformative. Although I felt a connection to the land of Israel as a Jew, that trip was the first of many that has deepened my connection to the land, to the history and reinforcing my steadfast commitment to supporting the state of Israel and the U.S.-Israel relationship. With threats coming from across and within her borders, our support for this relationship has perhaps never been more important.

So again, I commend the American Jewish Committee for its work on behalf of the Jewish community, on behalf of Israel, and on behalf of all the people its work impacts.

LIFTING THE CRUDE OIL EXPORT BAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HILL). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) for 30 minutes.

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk a little bit about one component of the omnibus tax extender package that is dominating the legislative agenda as we wrap up this year.

The one piece of the package that I want to talk about is the lifting of the crude oil export ban, which is an issue that has passed twice now in the House of Representatives—in fact, as a stand-alone bill. H.R. 702, the lifting of the

crude oil export ban, passed with 62 percent of the vote.

As is often the case, good bills that are passed by the House often languish in the Senate for a number of reasons. Perhaps one of the main reasons bills languish in the Senate is that their rules are as antiquated as is this export ban on crude oil.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take some time to talk about this provision and why it is important that we lift the crude oil export ban. I want to talk a little bit about the history that led to the export ban in the first place, and I want to talk about a more optimistic future as we look at the oil renaissance—what it has created and what it can create.

As I said, the export ban really is an antiquated law. It was put in place 42 years ago, which was a very different time in our country. It was different for a number of reasons, not the least of which being that the ban on exporting crude oil came at a time when our country did not enjoy energy abundance as we do today. It, rather, suffered from a scarcity of energy resources—a scarcity of oil, a scarcity of all kinds of energy—and, certainly, from a scarcity of the products that are created by oil. It suffered even from a scarcity, frankly, of some of the technologies that make the development of fossil fuels and, yes, of new, cleaner—greener, if you will—energy sources.

We are nothing in this country but for our innovation. I think innovation is the key to much of our success. It is not that the United States really had a scarcity of resources, but that, rather, we had a scarcity of technology to develop those resources. As the technology developed to get more and more of our energy resources and to develop them, it also progressed to make it more and more efficient to develop them and to make it cleaner to develop them. I am happy to elaborate.

I represent the great State of North Dakota. I am the only Member of the people’s House from the State of North Dakota. We have just over 700,000 people in my State. So, like my 434 colleagues, I represent, roughly, 700,000 citizens. It just so happens that they make up a State.

In just the past few years alone, we have lost 80,000 U.S. jobs, just in the last year, 80,000 U.S. jobs, because our oil producers have been forced to scale back their rigs by nearly 60 percent. That is the result of a collapse in price.

Why is there a collapse in price? There is a collapse in price largely because we are producing a lot more, and, of course, we cannot sell the product outside of the United States. Obviously, you can’t produce more than your consumers can take in.

In North Dakota, we grow a lot of crops. We grow a lot of food to feed a hungry world. In fact, we are the number one producer of anywhere from 12 to 16 or 18 crops depending on the year. We produce a lot of wheat, but we can’t begin to eat it all. We produce a lot of