

those graduates has started a successful small business, Love's Barbershop. Not only is Love's owner a contributing member of the community, Love's Barbershop lifts the entire community by creating jobs for other Nevada families.

In the case of Hope for Prisoners, the participants join the program on a voluntary basis. If an individual is not ready and willing to break the cycle of incarceration and poverty, no solution will find success.

Investment does not end with those going through the program, however. The success of local, community-based solutions has shown everyone involved to be fully invested. The local businesses employing the participants have bought in completely to working with the program and are willing to give offenders a shot, a shot at working hard, earning a wage, and contributing to society.

Local law enforcement have also been invested. Rather than simply policing the streets as crime stoppers, they are active partners in the community. They work in tandem with the entire community.

The idea of mentoring individuals is such a powerful tool that we all have, and it is available to us. Are you using that tool that is available to you?

Remember: Who is your neighbor? We can make a difference.

Jon and Hope for Prisoners have taken this idea of mentoring and turned it into a job creator and, more importantly, a lifesaver. While Hope has been operating for only 5 years, they have been able to help more than 1,000 people in southern Nevada, with only a 6 percent re-incarceration rate.

Too often, individuals released from incarceration face the uncertainty of a future plagued by limited employment opportunities available to them. Without employment, these individuals become at risk for re-incarceration or poverty and homelessness.

Programs like Hope for Prisoners work. The numbers and the survivors speak for themselves.

While there is still much to do to address poverty in our country, we should all be looking to our States for examples. States are not only the national laboratories of industry, they can also be the laboratories for hope.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Nevada. I am so inspired by the success that he talks about in Nevada on a local level that is working and how powerful mentoring is.

□ 1715

I mentioned a few minutes ago that our colleague, Representative TIPTON from Colorado, and I were up in New York last week. We visited The Doe Fund, which just recently celebrated 30 years of fighting homelessness and hopelessness in the boroughs of New York. They provide affordable and supportive housing for individuals and families struggling with chronic homelessness.

They are famous because of their Ready, Willing & Able program, the bright, colorful uniforms all across the boroughs of New York that provides homeless and formerly incarcerated individuals with transitional work, housing, case management, life skills, education assistance, occupational training, job readiness, and graduate services.

About 2,000 individuals per year are helped through The Doe Fund's extensive network of training and jobs. It is exactly the kind of thing, Mr. Speaker, that we want in all of our cities where citizens come together and help the least of these, those coming off parole and those trapped in alcohol or drug abuse.

My hats are off to Harriet McDonald, the executive vice president and co-founder, and her husband of The Doe Fund and all that they are doing good and the success they have by the number of former Doe Fund beneficiaries, like Don Pridgen, who now is a case-worker helping his fellow citizens as an alumnus of The Doe Fund.

Arthur Brooks said recently at the American Enterprise Institute: "The Doe Fund is an extraordinary success not just because of its numbers (it has lower criminal recidivism and higher work attachment than virtually any other program for the homeless in New York City) but because it specializes in taking care of some of the most difficult members of society—the hardest cases."

That is what impressed Representative TIPTON and me on our visit last week. My friend from Nevada was talking about mentoring, and that is so essential, in my view, to the idea of educational attainment because, truly, if the best program to end poverty is a good job, we have got to stop the horrendous dropout rates that we have.

We have to have people that have the kind of mentoring they are not getting, potentially, from their family or in their school system only to be able to stay in school and think ahead about their future, to have aspirations for their future. If we can close that gap of staying in school, we can close that learning gap as well.

Some programs in my district that have impressed me in this regard are, first, Greenbrier High School. Greenbrier High School is a public school in a rural part of my district that is doing both skill workforce training while students are in high school as well as getting them up to 2 years—2 years, Mr. Speaker—of college credit by partnering with the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to have a dual enrollment system.

This saves families money and gets people the kind of educational attainment that we want. This is all done in the confines of a successful, locally controlled local public school.

Representative BROOKS of Indiana stopped me this week and said that she couldn't be with us for this important hour of discussion about the ways and

means of beating poverty in our society, and she wanted me to say—and I think it is illustrated by Greenbrier High School, Mr. Speaker—that, if we could lower dropout rates, we, in turn, could change the direction of family success and family income.

My friend from Nevada was talking about mentoring programs, and we have a bright story there in Little Rock with Donald Northcross, founder of the OK Program. OK stands for "our kids."

Donald is a former deputy sheriff in Sacramento, California, who moved to Little Rock, inspired by the work, vision, and leadership of Fitz Hill, president of Arkansas Baptist College in Little Rock.

Donald was troubled by the violence and despair that he found in Black communities in California and the growing incarceration rates of young Black men.

Determined to make a difference, Donald founded the OK Program back in 1990 and is now spreading it across the United States with a goal of using it as a way to mentor young African American males while they are in their middle school years and through high school years to make sure that they are on the right track.

These are just a few examples of what you are hearing around all of our districts whenever I travel in the U.S. about how people are banding together as citizens in our great country to tackle poverty using local resources and local ingenuity.

I hope, Mr. Speaker, that we can come back in a few months and talk about this issue again and give more Members an opportunity.

I want to thank those that joined me today on the floor to discuss this important issue about how we alleviate poverty in our States and our local communities and how we overcome barriers of our existing Federal programs or other program barriers that are preventing success. There is no doubt that we have unique, successful opportunities throughout this country to beat this challenge.

I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues in the House and the Speaker's Task Force on Poverty, Opportunity, and Upward Mobility. I thank Speaker RYAN for his personal dedication and leadership to this topic across our country.

I want to thank our team in Arkansas and in Washington, D.C., and my staff for their commitment to this issue and how we are coming together to find solutions in the Second Congressional District to both urban and rural challenges.

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

DEMOCRACY SPRING: MONEY IN POLITICS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January

6, 2015, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, in a 10-day march that started on April 11, thousands of Americans came to Washington, D.C., from all over the country to fight for one thing: our democracy.

In peaceful protests right outside this building, Capitol Police arrested more than 1,300 of them as they called on this body to make basic changes to reinforce the institution that makes the United States so special.

The reason they marched is simple, Mr. Speaker. In a Nation founded on the will of the people, States have systematically disenfranchised those same people and it is the will of well-funded special interests that now run our elections.

We have found ourselves in this predicament primarily through inaction, the same kind of inaction poised to give the Supreme Court the longest vacancy in nearly 100 years.

These folks came to the Capitol to ask our leaders to do something, and their requests are pretty simple.

For starters, they want to see the restoration of the Voting Rights Act to prevent voter discrimination in the 21st century because voting discrimination does still exist, something Chief Justice Roberts acknowledged even as he struck down parts of the original Voting Rights Act.

It is targeted against voters of color, those with language barriers, and those with disabilities. And Congress should be doing something about it.

That is not the only call that came out of last week's rallies, though. They also want updates to our election day procedures, updates that are sorely needed.

In a world as technologically advanced as ours where you can pay for your lunch with your phone and use a fingerprint to unlock your computer, we have hours-long wait times at some voting polls. We have provisional ballots and ineffective, if not outright confusing, notification systems for how, when, and where to register to vote. It is another issue Congress should be doing something about.

But perhaps the most important issue that these rallies brought to the table is the need to make sure that the voices of real people, not those of corporations or special interests, are what are heard in our elections. For that, we need to create a path back from Citizens United that allows us to regulate

how money is raised and spent in elections.

Because of that ruling, we need a constitutional amendment that makes clear what common sense already dictates: corporations are not people and shouldn't get a say in who governs our Nation.

What is really interesting here is that the work has already been done. The call of these protesters wasn't for Congress to investigate or draft or identify solutions to these problems.

The solutions already exist. They asked that we pass a few pieces of legislation that will put our democracy back where it belongs: with the people.

So, Mr. Speaker, I stand in solidarity with the individuals who came to Washington last week for Democracy Spring. I stand in strong support of reforms to how we run elections and how we ensure the right to vote.

I urge my colleagues to follow suit in saving our democracy.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield to the gentlewoman from Illinois, JAN SCHAKOWSKY, a U.S. Representative.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I thank my colleague so much for taking the leadership this evening on such an important and central issue. It is really about our democracy.

Our country has long been known and respected around the world as a beacon of democracy. We aspire to let every person participate in our system of government and give each person's views and votes equal weight. But today our democracy itself is in jeopardy.

Instead of promoting voter participation, States are erecting barriers to keep Americans from voting. Instead of giving people an equal voice in our elections, corporations and the wealthy are claiming outsized influence. The Supreme Court, tasked with protecting our rights, is being crippled by congressional inaction.

Over the past days, thousands of Americans have come to Washington to demand that we restore American democracy. I join them in their call for action: Pass the Voting Rights Amendment Act, stop the outsized role that money plays in politics, and fill the vacancy on our Supreme Court.

Last year marked the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act. The Voting Rights Act broadened access to democracy and fulfilled the promise of the 15th Amendment. It ensured that every American had the opportunity to take part in the democratic process.

But in recent years, courts and State legislatures have torn away at these rights. In 2013, the Supreme Court rolled back voter protections with its misguided Shelby County decision, striking down key provisions of the Voting Rights Act.

Before the Shelby County decision, the Voting Rights Act required States with a history of voter discrimination to clear any changes that they wanted to make to their voting laws in advance.

What happened when this provision got struck down? No surprise. Certain States rushed to pass new voting restrictions.

On the very day of the ruling, Texas officials announced they would implement a photo ID law that had previously been blocked.

North Carolina went even further, imposing a strict photo ID law as well as cutting back early voting and reducing the time period for voter registration. This law disproportionately affects communities of color.

This November is the first Presidential election since the weakening of the Voting Rights Act. Sixteen States now have new voting restrictions in place.

The Voting Rights Amendment Act, introduced by my Republican colleague, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, would restore key protections of the Voting Rights Act.

Despite bipartisan support for this bill, House leadership has simply failed to take action. The inaction is unforgivable.

But voting rights are not the only part of our democratic process that is under attack. Citizens United, another misguided Supreme Court decision, has unleashed a flood of money from rich donors and powerful corporations that is now drowning out the voice of the American people.

In the 2014 elections, the top 100 donors to super-PACs gave nearly as much as 4.75 million small donors combined. This election cycle, the Koch brothers alone have pledged to spend almost \$900 million.

□ 1730

Just in the early phase of the 2016 Presidential race, 158 families were responsible for more than half of all the money raised in Presidential campaigns.

The American people want action. They are demanding that we get money out of politics—the big money. Congress continues to ignore the will of the American people. Republican leadership has failed to take legislative action to address the egregious spending allowed by the Citizens United Supreme Court decision. For example, they haven't brought up H.R. 20, the Government By the People Act, which would provide matching funds for candidates who agree to rely on small donors to fund their campaigns. This would empower individuals to support candidates and balance the influence of big money.

This is the sort of legislation the House ought to be considering. We don't just need legislative fixes, though. Repairing our democracy also requires confirming justices who understand that corporations are not people and money is not speech. But here, too, Republicans are refusing to do their job.

On March 16, President Obama fulfilled his constitutional duty—you can read it in the Constitution—by nominating D.C. Circuit Court Judge

Merrick Garland to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court. But even before Garland's nomination was announced—in fact, just about an hour after Judge Antonin Scalia passed away—Senator Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL promised nothing but obstruction. He said he would not hold a hearing, he would not have a vote, and that this was going to wait until the next election.

Republican Senators have refused to hold hearings, they have refused to have an up-or-down vote, and many of them have refused to even meet with the nominee at all. Even those Senate Republicans who haven't publicly endorsed this obstruction are doing the bare minimum. They may have courtesy meetings, they may even say they would support hearings, or maybe even a vote, but words are not enough. We need action, not photo ops.

The Constitution makes clear that the President—the sitting President, this President, Barack Obama—nominates judges to the Supreme Court. Then the Senate's job is to advise and consent on the President's nominee. It doesn't say: and you only do it in the first 7 years of a President's term, and you don't do anything in the last year of a President's term. There is simply no excuse for the Senate to resist taking any action.

I find it really disrespectful to the American people and I find it disrespectful to this President that they are saying that he cannot have the right; as every other President in history, even in the last year of his term, has had to nominate and have considered, and, in fact, all of those nominated in the last year were actually approved. So there is no excuse for the Senate to resist taking any action.

Senate Republicans are putting politics ahead of the Constitution. That is not democracy. Big donors are not democracy. Taking away voting rights is not democracy.

It is time for this House of Representatives to really represent the American people, listen to their calls for change, and take action to strengthen our democracy.

Again, I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Illinois for her very eloquent and very important remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentlewoman from New Jersey, who has led these Special Orders for communicating to the American people, and the gentlewoman from Chicago, Illinois, who has a history and record of reform. I thank the Congresswoman for her very well-stated challenge in a message and effort.

Let me also thank those hundreds who have seen the inside of a Washington, D.C., jail. They have done so in the name of those who cannot speak for themselves—the millions of Ameri-

cans who sit languishing because decisions are made against them and not for them. Unfortunately, big money, inertia, and the Congress not doing its job has taken the dominant place in American history.

Hundreds of Democracy Spring protestors were arrested on Capitol Hill. We heard them repeatedly over the last week. Having had the experience of standing before the Sudanese embassy, standing in a fight for immigration reform myself, as well participating by way of fight and registering people to vote in the deep South in the aftermath of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, I think that protest and petition is a right of the American people—peaceful protest and petition—and I want to applaud those who sacrificed or stood their ground protesting the inertia of this Congress and the help that is needed by millions of Americans.

Democracy Spring should be an agenda that all of us can support. It is, in fact, one that speaks to the question of how we are going to treat the least of those and how we are going to do what is right for the American people.

There is no doubt, I think, if you were to ask one of our leading fighters in one of the States with the most draconian voter right laws, Reverend William Barber, who will be on the Hill tomorrow, he will know firsthand what voter suppression is all about. Clearly, it is an indictment of the undermining of the Bill of Rights, due process under the Fifth Amendment, and equal protection under the law.

There are examples of voter ID laws where thousands are barred from voting. Maybe mistakenly the States did not realize that they did not have the offices, like Texas in over 80 counties, where individuals were supposed to get their voter ID; or in Alabama, where the Governor closed offices where people were to get their voter ID; or in other States, of course, where other reasons have been put forth—the stopping of early vote or the lessening of early vote by North Carolina, and, of course, the voter ID law.

After section 5 of the Voting Rights Act was eviscerated, destroyed, in the Shelby case by the United States Supreme Court, despite having the right to have a disagreement with me—they are the Supreme Court—they were absolutely wrong. As Justice Ginsburg said: For you would not stop using polio vaccine because you have not seen polio in the United States in any large way for a very long time.

That is what we stand here on the floor today to talk about. That there is a need for a reckoning in this country that those who are part of Democracy Spring are standing up for. That is to ensure the restoration of the Voting Rights Act that is fair.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the Voting Rights Act protects all of our rights to vote, irrespective of color. It does not respect color. It only indicates that if you have been barred from voting unfairly, then we have the right—the

Federal Government, the Department of Justice—to review that.

Lo and behold, section 5 saved money, millions of dollars, in fact. My own State has used millions of dollars, millions of tax dollars, to pursue and fight the Voting Rights Act, when in actuality the Voting Rights Act saves money.

If a jurisdiction like, for example, Pasadena, Texas, which redid their city council structure that eliminated Hispanics from being able to even win in that city—if they had been able to have their particular process reviewed and found that it is in violation of the Voting Rights Act and unconstitutional to one vote, one person, then they may not have foolishly constructed that scheme and done one that maybe all parties could work together on. I believe in that.

I have done some wonderful things with bipartisan friends, Republicans and Democrats, working on important issues. Criminal justice happens to be one of them. But that did not happen. So now section 2 becomes the arm of the way of trying to solve these problems, and, of course, in doing so, we have lost our way.

Let me say that I was here when President Bush signed into law the 1965 reauthorization, the 1965 Voting Rights Act, worked on it extensively and submitted amendments. Happily, it was voted for with a large margin by a bipartisan Congress 98-0 in the United States Senate, and a big celebration in the White House celebrating the signing of the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act with section 5 after 15,000 pages of testimony.

Why can't we do that?

The American people deserve that kind of response. Democracy Spring, you are right, let us reauthorize the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

That draws me as well to the issue of the Supreme Court Justice and to recognize that constitutionally we are in a no man's land. No man's land is that we have taken the Constitution and, unfortunately, we burned it. The Senate has the responsibility of advice and consent, and it has a responsibility to address the question of the missing Supreme Court Justice.

Justice Scalia was grounded in conservatism. All of us respected that. We disagreed on many occasions, but Justice Scalia wrote opinions that everybody agreed with. When it was a majority court, when there were others who had previously disagreed on other matters, they agreed.

That is the way the Supreme Court works, but if you block from even a consideration or a meeting or a hearing, then you are literally tearing up the Constitution, ripping it up, and burning it up. Democracy Spring were willing to go to jail because they believe that is wrong, and I join them and stand with them in their protests and their petition.

Now, let me step away for just a moment—my colleague and I will get

back—but I must say that I am, again, mourning the loss of those in my district who lost their lives through this terrible storm over these last couple of days. We expect rain to continue. I wanted to just make sure that, as I indicated yesterday when I was in my district, we are praying for their families.

As Members of the United States Congress, I am hoping that we will find a way to work with places like New Orleans and Houston, Texas, who are 50 feet below sea level, that we are not just getting a hurricane. People understand hurricanes, they understand tornados, and they understand earthquakes. They don't understand just plain rain that comes up to 20 inches or more and you are literally under water, as we were in the spring of 2015 and now we are again. Homes destroyed of the most vulnerable of my constituents, those who are most impoverished.

I cite this because I am in the midst of discussing that we should be doing our job. One of those issues is to look at the cost and the relationship to lives lost, to doing an infrastructure system, a retention system, and other systems that have been represented as being helpful, trying to work with various constituencies so they don't have to go through that again.

Dying in one's car in an underpass, dying in one's car, can't get out, we had at least four people. We are up to eight. As I said, no one would understand it. It is not a flaring hurricane: Oh, you had a terrible hurricane, we understand it. Tornado. Oh, you had an earthquake, like the tragedy in Ecuador and Japan. We offer our sympathy to them.

They don't understand just rain that causes loss of life—truck drivers, a young mother, a mechanical engineer. What are the horrors of dying in your car, drowning, and you are thinking someone is coming? You are using your cell phone, you think you see lights, and no one is showing up.

I am burdened by this. I wanted to acknowledge them and offer my sympathy, and hope that tomorrow I will again come to the floor for a moment of silence.

Let me step back to this because it ties in that we have to do our job here in Congress. All of us in our districts have had instances where the Congress' failure or the Federal Government's failure probably has impacted in some way some terrible loss of life.

As I continue, we need a Supreme Court Justice, we need the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act, and, as I just indicated, we need an infrastructure bill. We passed one, but we need one that gets into the weeds of these questions dealing with flooding and the loss of life and the loss of property that we have.

□ 1745

Finally, let me say this since I was here during this, and I use the Constitution in a way that, I think, is very, very important.

I had a bill that I introduced that said a corporation is not a person. Citizens United is premised on that fact. The decision came down from the United States Supreme Court 5 years ago. That decision was the opening of the door of the dominance of big money over politics, and politics and policy has grown, seemingly without restraint and with dire consequences for representative self-government.

"A functioning democracy requires a government responsive to the people—" we call ourselves the "people's House" —"considered as political equals, where we each have a say in the public policy decisions that affect our lives. It is profoundly antidemocratic for anyone to be able to purchase political power and when a small elite makes up a donor class that is able to shape our government and our public policy."

I offer that as an article written by Liz Kennedy on January 15, 2015: "Top Five Ways Citizens United Harms Democracy and Top Five Ways We're Fighting to Take Democracy Back."

She goes on to talk about how big money allows the wealthy elite few to overpower other voices. That sounds very familiar in the fight against gun violence and in the inability to get any gun legislation passed whether it has to do with gun storage bills that I have, whether it has to do with protecting our children, whether it has to do with background checks or with immunity that has been given to gun manufacturers and keeping away people like the Sandy Hook families or, maybe, families out of Chicago, where my colleague has been working so hard, Congresswoman KELLY.

"Secret political spending exploded after Citizens United because the disclosure requirements relied on by the Court do not yet exist."

No. 3: "The purported 'independence' of outside spending is often a farce, allowing for evasion of contribution limits and disclosure requirements."

She goes on to cite that big money in politics distorts representation and makes one group bigger than the other group.

Then No. 5: "The Supreme Court's decisions have distorted the Constitution by preventing commonsense rules to protect representative self-government." Might I say that that deals with the gun legislation as well.

I think I will close with the simple words that we must do our jobs. We need to do our jobs. One of the reasons that we are in Court on the DACA and DAPA is that Congress did not do its job, and the President has the constitutional authority that says to take care, which means that that President, whoever he is, does have prosecutorial authority and discretion on how laws should be enforced, i.e., the immigration laws.

The President is absolutely right. I do not know how the Supreme Court is going to rule. I would ask that they be very attentive to doing this in a con-

stitutional manner, which means they have the ability to look at the Take Care Clause. That may not work, but they have the ability to look at standing; and I would make the argument that none of the States have been injured, because, as for all of the things that they are arguing about—driver's licenses and otherwise—they don't have to do anything.

The President is saying that these individuals will not be deported because they are not dangerous. He is not saying that States need to provide them with benefits, and they should not, by interpretation, suggest that he is dictating to them unfunded mandates of items that he has not asked. That is not in his executive order. It does not say what benefits they are supposed to get. In essence, in the President's doing his work, unfortunately, he is now being penalized for helping and following the Constitution.

We have a Presidential campaign going on, and the one thing that I can be proud of is that the candidates who are now running in the Democratic primary have made it very clear of their opposition to big money in politics, of their opposition to Citizens United, and of their willingness to fight against it.

In particular, I want to quote from the Boston Globe on then-Secretary Clinton: "She took a mostly hands-off approach to Wall Street regulation." She stayed away from it. She is not immersed in big money, which is a plus for all of us. She understands the people's voice must be heard and realizes that we must do something with Citizens United.

I have joined in cosponsoring a constitutional amendment to change it, but in whatever way that we can move forward to change it, the voices of the people must speak. Public finance is a reputable and reasonable way to run Presidential campaigns and to run all of our campaigns, but until it is done, it is important for us to listen to the voices of the people and to make sure that, however big money comes in, it does not carry this House—this body and the other body—on its back, marching towards legislation that will not help the American people.

Democracy Spring was a movement of quality and dignity, and I am here today to thank them for their willingness to peacefully petition and protest. Over the years and decades, America has seen those protests peacefully leading to, as Dr. King might say, a promised land in which all of us can enjoy the benefits of what America truly stands for.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. I am always grateful for the gentlewoman from Texas who comes and shares her wisdom and her passion and her concern.

Mr. Speaker, as we close out this Special Order hour, I just want to share a few more comments.

We should be doing whatever we can to ensure that every American is able to participate in the democratic process and ensure that elected officials

truly represent the voices of their constituents. The right to vote and the elections in which we cast our ballots are the foundations of our democracy, and policymakers should be strengthening those systems and expanding that right whenever and wherever possible. Instead, for the past few years, we have been restricting it.

In a Nation whose founding documents begin with “we the people of the United States,” the local, State, and Federal Government should champion the cause of ensuring that every single American can make his voice heard with as little difficulty as possible. I support every effort to do so, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

RESTORING RESPECT FOR AMERICA'S RULE OF LAW

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

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to have the opportunity to address you here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives.

I listened to a lot of discussion here with which I disagree, of course; but I keep hearing this term “do your job” that seems to echo out of the left constantly. “Do your job.”

One of the arguments is that the President of the United States has a constitutional right to nominate to the Supreme Court. He does. That is pretty clear in the Constitution. However, the Senate determines what advice is, and the Senate determines that which is consent, and no nomination to the Federal court can move forward without the Senate's advice and consent. It is the Senate's job then to evaluate the President's nominations, and they can do so with or without hearings, with or without interviews. The Senate writes its own rules just like the House writes its own rules, Mr. Speaker. I would like to put this back in perspective here.

We have a lameduck President who has made appointments to the Supreme Court, which seems to believe that the Constitution means what they want it to mean, and they want to read it to say what they want it to say rather than what it actually says and rather than what it actually was understood to mean at the time of its ratification.

When you have Justices on the Supreme Court who embody that belief, who act on that belief, then we here who take an oath to support and defend the Constitution—and that is, actually, all of us here in the House of Representatives, Mr. Speaker, and everyone in the United States Senate for that matter—recognize that, if we are going to support and defend the Constitution and encourage the nomination and the advice and the consent and the confirmation of the Senate and

encourage then a Presidential appointment to the Supreme Court of someone, we know the President is incapable of nominating anyone to the Supreme Court who actually believes what the Constitution says and what it was understood to mean at the time of its ratification. He has demonstrated that in the past with his appointments to the Court. He will demonstrate that again.

We have a Constitution to preserve, protect, defend, and support and defend, so our obligation then is to say: Mr. President, you are a lameduck. Let's stick with the tradition; let's stick with the practice; let's stick with the statements that have been made by a number of Democrats in the past when the shoe was on the other foot. People like JOE BIDEN and HARRY REID and CHUCK SCHUMER all would agree with Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY: no hearing, no confirmation in the Senate, no vote in the Judiciary Committee, and no vote on the floor of the Senate for this lameduck President's appointments because we have a Constitution that has got to be restored, and instead of being restored, it would be destroyed by another Presidential appointment.

We were sitting with a deadlocked Court that sat 4½ to 4½ out of a 9-member Court, and you could kind of toss a coin on whether you would get a decision that came down on what the Constitution said and what the law said or what they preferred the policy was. There are a couple of bad examples of that. This is even with the stellar Justice Scalia's sitting on the bench not even a year ago on June 24 and June 25.

On the 24th of June, the Court came down with a decision in *King v. Burwell*, in which the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court decided that he could write words into ObamaCare that didn't exist. They were not passed by this Congress—not by either Chamber of this Congress, as a matter of fact. It wasn't a phrase that was conferenced out or was something that was contested. It was never in the bill. It was the phrase that read, “or Federal Government.” Had that component been in ObamaCare, then the Federal Government could have gone into the States and established the exchanges in the States that refused to establish exchanges to comply with the suggestion that came from this Congress, by the way, by hook, by crook, by legislative shenanigans, just to quote some Democrats who lamented at the methodology they had to go through to push ObamaCare down the throats of the American people.

In any case, the law never enabled the Federal Government to establish exchanges in the States, and the Constitution doesn't allow that authority. In my opinion, there is no enumerated power for the Federal Government to create exchanges for health insurance policies within the States; but the Supreme Court ruled with the majority opinion, which was written by the

Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, that they could add words into ObamaCare. Where it reads that the States may establish exchanges, they added that the States or Federal Government may establish exchanges. They made it up, and they wrapped themselves in the cloak of constitutional authority in *Marbury v. Madison* and in a whole series of, presumably, precedent cases along the line. That was June 24, on Thursday.

That would kick the breath out of your gut to hear that, if you are a constitutionalist, and it would bring you to a sad state of mourning. You would lay your head down on the pillow at night, having trouble sleeping, thinking: What am I going to do tomorrow? I couldn't react today. What am I going to do tomorrow? Lord, wake me up with an idea on how to preserve our Constitution.

The Supreme Court of the United States believes that they can write law when here, in Article I of our Constitution, Mr. Speaker, it reads: “All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States.” That is here, in the House and the Senate. Article I, which are the first words of our Constitution, reads: “all legislative powers”; but the Supreme Court, wrapped in the cloak of *Marbury v. Madison* and their imagination of what “precedence” and “stare decisis” might mean to them decides that they can write words into the law. A Supreme Court writing law.

Then the next morning—that morning that I was hopeful that I would wake up with an idea on how to address a Supreme Court that has overreached—there came the next decision at 9 my time, 10 D.C. time. It was the decision of *Obergefell*, in which the Supreme Court created a new command in the Constitution. Not just discovered a right that never existed—they manufactured a command.

There is no right in the Constitution for a same-sex marriage. There is no reference in there at all. There is not one single Founding Father who would have ever accepted an idea that they had founded a nation that embodied within our Declaration or our ratified Constitution or the subsequent amendments that there was some right, let alone a command, to a same-sex marriage. That is a completely manufactured—not just a right but a command—by the Supreme Court of the United States.

I have some history with this. The Supreme Court of the State of Iowa did the same thing to Iowans in 2009. I sat in the legislature and was an author of the Defense of Marriage Act in about 1998.

□ 1800

One of the pieces of debate was why do we need to bother to do this. Yes, it would make sense if marriage were threatened. But it was so far beyond the pale that why would we bother to do this. We saw litigation coming in