

In economics, African-Americans went from an equality index rate of 56.2 percent in 2015 to 56.5 percent in 2016.

In healthcare, the equality index between African-American and white Americans went from 79.4 to 80 percent between 2015 and 2016.

The only decrease came in social justice, from 60.9 to 57.4 percent.

In the category of civic engagement, African Americans actually surpass whites, according to the Urban League, with the number between 2015 and 2016 remaining at 100.6 percent.

As for Hispanics, there was a bigger increase in the overall Equality Index, from 77.9 percent in 2015 to 78.4 percent in 2016.

The Urban League also ranked the 70 metropolitan areas from the smallest gap in unemployment between African Americans and whites (and Hispanics and whites) to the largest gap.

For African Americans, the area with the smallest black-white unemployment gap was San Antonio-New Braunfels, TX, where the African Americans unemployment rate was 6.4 percent (down 1.9 percentage points from the previous year).

The white rate was 4.5 percent (down 0.4 percentage points).

The area with the largest gap was Milwaukee-Waukesha-West Allis, WI, where the unemployment rate for African Americans was 13.8 percent, while just 2.7 percent for whites.

In income inequality, Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA for the third consecutive year had the smallest difference between African Americans median household income and white median household income.

The city with the biggest income gap was Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI, where the chasm was 41 cents for African Americans for every dollar earned by a white person.

For both African Americans and Hispanics, the area with the highest median household income was Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV, at \$68,054 for blacks and \$69,481 for Hispanics.

It also had the highest white household income at \$112,177.

Mr. Speaker, our nation still has a long way to go before we achieve economic equality for all its citizens.

THE RIGHT TO LIFE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SMUCKER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege and honor to address you here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives, and I appreciate the honor and the privilege to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I came to the floor here tonight to talk to you and address the body about the issue that is so important to so many millions of Americans, and that is the issue of life, the issue of protecting innocent, unborn human life that doesn't have the ability to speak out for itself, doesn't have the ability to scream for its own mercy, but it

does have the ability to squirm and move and belch and do all the things that we do outside the womb and can feel pain, a beating heart, and a throbbing heart of a heartbeat.

I mentioned this on the floor here a couple weeks ago of an ultrasound that was sent to me with a little baby with 158 beats per minute.

I would take people through some of the pro-life legislation that has been moved or attempted to be moved here in the United States Congress, Mr. Speaker. I would take you back to 1973 and *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*. Those two Supreme Court cases, working in conjunction with each other, essentially translated into abortion on demand. We saw abortions go from about 35,000 abortions a year in America, a number that I would say I thought was horrible then, to something like 1.6 million abortions in America, now ratcheted down with the weight of the conscience of our society to some number about 1 million or maybe a little bit less than 1 million.

Mr. Speaker, we don't get to count that difference between 1.6 million, roughly the peak, and a little under 1 million as 600,000 babies saved every year. Instead, it goes on our conscience the other way. That is a cumulative total of 60 million babies who have been sacrificed at the altar of this subject called pro-choice, judicial activism.

I remind you, Mr. Speaker, that human life is protected in our United States Constitution. It is protected under the 14th Amendment, and we have a constitutional right here in Congress to protect and defend life. In fact, I believe we have a duty to protect and defend life.

So I would first take us to that case of *Roe v. Wade*, and *Doe v. Bolton*, and the two cases taken together, January 22, 1973, and we have marched every year since then, including just last month on January 19.

But essentially this: *Roe v. Wade* was a case that was built on several Supreme Court precedents, but the one that strikes me the most is the *Griswold v. Connecticut* case. That was back in the mid 1960s sometime, maybe 1964, where Connecticut had outlawed contraceptives. They were a strong Catholic State at the time, and so they outlawed contraceptives.

Griswold went to court and said: No. We are married. We should be able to buy contraceptives, and the State of Connecticut shouldn't interfere in that.

So the Supreme Court manufactured this thing called a right to privacy, which was the privacy was protected by contraceptive activities within the marriage. So that case went in as a precedent case that established the right to privacy.

And then there was a follow-up case, and that would be the *Eisenstadt* case, that said: Well, it doesn't matter whether you are married, you have got a right to privacy whether you are

married or not, so you should be able to buy contraceptives if you are cohabiting rather than being joined together in holy matrimony. The Supreme Court found in their favor in that case.

And then, not that long later, 1973, here comes *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*. *Roe v. Wade* says: Well, there is a right to privacy, so I guess if we are not going to interfere with reproductive choices of married couples or non-married couples, then we are not going to interfere with whether they want to terminate the life of that innocent, beautiful, miraculous little baby.

So they came down with the decision that a right to privacy was more important than the right to life. And on this floor, Mr. Speaker, I brought this issue up numerous times to remind the body that our Declaration of Independence articulated this very clearly. It laid out the parameters for our Constitution. Our Constitution reflects those parameters in the Declaration.

So there is a right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. And those are prioritized rights. The priority is this: life is paramount. It can't be subordinate to anybody's liberty, and somebody's pursuit of happiness can't trample on anyone's liberty or their life.

Yet the Court decided this right to privacy, this liberty, this right to privacy that was manufactured in *Griswold v. Connecticut* in roughly a decade or less earlier, was more important than the right of the life of the innocent unborn.

And then they got into the concept of viability. But *Doe v. Bolton* is the one that gave essentially the broad license. The viability piece says: Well, can a baby survive at the end of the first trimester? No. The end of the second trimester? Probably not. But into the third trimester? That became more likely.

Yet even that didn't protect that innocent, unborn baby because *Doe v. Bolton* put these exceptions in here for the health of the mother, and that was defined and included the physical health, the emotional health, the psychological health, the familial health, and age-related factors.

So if you get into the emotional health, that is impacted by mental stability. It is impacted by cash flow. It is impacted by anything. What it amounts to is that this long list carried within it someplace there that anybody could look at it and say: Well, that's a license to abort a baby under any circumstance anytime, provided that the mother just simply wants the abortion.

And we, just a little over a year ago, saw a President leave office who stood on the floor of the Illinois State Senate and, multiple times, took the position that if a woman goes to an abortionist and wants an abortion, if the baby survives the abortion, she still has a right to a dead baby.

And by the way, all the people speaking over here a little bit ago all voted

against the bill that protected a baby who was born alive and survives an abortion.

And it is abhorrent to me to think that you would abort a baby. But the second thing is that if that baby survives the abortion, to go forward and kill that baby anyway or put that baby off in a cold room until that baby freezes to death, close the door, shut off the sound, plug your ears, and come back and check in an hour or two or five and see if it is done.

It is an appalling place that this country has gone. Sixty million babies. And I have supported every piece of pro-life legislation that has come before this Congress, including the Born-Alive bill. I support the ban on abortions for sex selection. I support the Pain-Capable bill, which passed the House here last October and went over to the Senate where, thankfully, the Senate had a vote on the Pain-Capable bill, and it failed, and we knew it would fail.

But it did establish that there is a pro-life majority, at least under those parameters, in the United States Senate. And I believe there will be some Senators who are held accountable for that vote.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear that I believe this: I believe that life begins at the moment of conception, begins at fertilization. From that point forward, it is a unique being that is growing and multiplying and shaping; and within about 18 days, we have scientific evidence that the heart starts to beat. We know that there is nerve activity.

We know that that baby—by about 20 weeks, it is clear, and I say it is actually irrefutable, that the baby feels pain. We have watched them in ultrasound move around in the womb and squirm.

We held a hearing last November 1 where we watched probably the youngest witness to ever testify before the United States Congress, and his name is Lincoln Glen Miller. This little boy was 18 weeks into development, and we watched him on ultrasound as he jerked his arm towards his face, sucked his thumb, moved his lips like he was trying to talk to us, squirmed around.

This little guy, Lincoln Glen Miller, showed us the humanity inside the womb here in this United States Congress for the first time.

So at the funeral of Phyllis Schlafly, who, prior to her death, was a living, breathing icon, a very principled individual, someone who was the clearest thinker of our time, I read most all of Phyllis' writings and followed her closely and counted her as a friend, and she has had a powerful impact upon this country, but at her funeral, Janet Porter of Faith2Action and I sat down and talked about something that Phyllis had asked: Would I bring a Heartbeat bill to the floor of the House of Representatives and push it through for a vote here on the floor successfully? Phyllis never wanted to do any-

thing unsuccessfully, and I don't either, Mr. Speaker—and send it over to the Senate and work to nurture it over there so it can get to the President's desk for a signature, because we have gone through 45 years of incrementalism. Forty-five years of a little bill here, a little bill there, that saved a few lives here and a few lives there.

Henry Hyde, the leader in the pro-life movement, and he was a glorious man who I had the privilege to serve with here in this Congress, and I enjoyed that time with him, Henry Hyde brought the Hyde amendment, and that extrapolated into the Mexico City policy. The Hyde amendment, coupled with the Mexico City policy, has saved 1 million lives, perhaps as many as 2 million lives, during that period of time.

I was involved in the ban on partial-birth abortion, and there we first saw the Supreme Court overturn our ban on partial-birth abortion, that ghastly tactic of turning a baby around in the womb and delivering the baby breech, feet first, until that baby's head and face are still inside the mother, and then poking a pair of scissors or a scalpel into the back of that baby's head and sticking a suction in and sucking the brains out to collapse the skull and removing the balance of that baby as that baby squirmed for mercy until the brain tissue was emptied from his skull.

□ 2045

Mr. Speaker, that sickening and ghastly and ghoulish tactic was outlawed by this Congress, and it went to circuit courts around the country. And those circuit courts found it unconstitutional because they couldn't overturn *Roe v. Wade* or *Doe v. Bolton*, so it came to the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court, in the first round of the ban on partial-birth abortion, found that killing a baby in that ghastly fashion was entirely constitutional because Congress had failed to precisely define to the satisfaction of the Supreme Court the act of partial-birth abortion, and had failed to demonstrate by congressional findings that a partial-birth abortion was never necessary to save the life of the mother.

Mr. Speaker, we went back to work. We went back to the Judiciary Committee and we held hearings before the Judiciary Committee, hearing after hearing after hearing. We got out the word processor again—it was a word processor in those days—and we precisely defined the act of partial-birth abortion.

When I describe it here, it is more ghastly than I have ever spoken publicly, and I regret the damage that it does to the ears and the psyche of the people who are listening tonight, Mr. Speaker, but it needs to be said. We defined that act absolutely, precisely, from a medical perspective, and we had a lot of sets of eyes and ears on it to weigh in on all approaches that we

could do. And with those hearings, medical doctor after medical doctor came through and testified. In the end, we had congressional findings that concluded definitively that a partial-birth abortion was never medically necessary to save the life of the mother.

So we defined the act. We proved it was never necessary to save the life of the mother. We passed the legislation, House and Senate, and it went off to be litigated again to three separate Federal circuits, one of them in Lincoln, Nebraska, which I attended in front of Judge Kopf. I will not forget that. But each of those circuits all found that our bill was unconstitutional in partial-birth abortion, not because we didn't define the act precisely enough, and not because our congressional findings weren't that, but because they did prove that it was never necessary for a partial-birth abortion to save the life of the mother.

They found our second bill unconstitutional because of the precedent called *stare decisis*. *Stare decisis* is the precedent that the court respects a previous decision. So anybody who thinks that there is a piece of pro-life legislation that will save any lives, that is going to be upheld at the lower court level, is, I think, barking up the wrong tree.

It is not going to happen that any lower court and lower Federal court in the United States is going to overturn a Supreme Court decision, because they will respect *stare decisis*, the decision of the Supreme Court. And there are too many Justices who have served in the past on the Supreme Court who would also honor that *stare decisis* decision.

If a similar case comes before them, they would look at the decisions that were made before and say: Well, I guess the court has already resolved this. There is no reason for us to relook at this. There is going to be no *de novo* review. It is simply going to be whatever the court has decided in the past. We are not going to challenge that going forward. We will build all case law on the case law that is behind us as we go forward.

That is an adherence to *stare decisis* and that is what we must overturn if we are ever to put an end to abortion in this country.

That is why we have written legislation in the Heartbeat bill that is designed to challenge *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* and ask a new Supreme Court, after we pass the Heartbeat legislation, H.R. 490, and bring it to this floor, get this vote, and pass it over to the Senate. When the day comes that we have got the votes in the House and Senate and we have a President that will sign the legislation—today, if we could get there—and a Vice President that seems to be enthusiastic about this—and I notice that the political adviser for the President, Kellyanne Conway, had a heartbeat pin on her dress as she spoke just a week or so ago.

I appreciate that support that is there.

But with the votes that are here now in this House, and the votes that need to be compiled in the Senate, and a Presidential signature, we can ban abortion. If a heartbeat can be detected, the baby shall be protected.

That is the Heartbeat bill, H.R. 490. But when it is passed—I pray to God it is and soon—it will go to the lower courts because the pro-abortion lobby will litigate everything. Nothing seems to get to their conscience. They will litigate it. And we don't expect to win at the lower court level. It all has to go to the Supreme Court.

When we designed this path for this legislation, it was designed for a pro-life majority in the House, which we have; a pro-life majority in the Senate, which was proven just a week ago we have; and a President that will sign that legislation, a pro-life President who said just a few days ago that he is a pro-life President again. I appreciate that reinforcement.

We designed it for all of that with the expectations it would go before not the court at the time we wrote the bill and not the court now—perhaps the court now, but more likely a court that would be formed by a subsequent appointment or two made by this President, Donald Trump. All of that needs to be lined up for the Heartbeat bill to have success. And we should remember that. This isn't a function of waiting for the Supreme Court to be where we think it is favorable alone.

It is, instead, a function that there has to be four windows that are opened in the right sequence and we have to fly through those windows. So the first window is open right now: the House of Representatives. We just need a Speaker and a majority leader that will schedule the vote here on the floor, with 170 cosponsors on this legislation, and a good long list of folks who want to vote for the bill that just weren't ready to sign on yet.

We will get there, Mr. Speaker. That is window number one. We have got to fly the Heartbeat bill through window number one, and then send it over to the Senate. And we have got to fly the Heartbeat bill through window number two. That is harder. It is harder with the filibuster rule, a 60-vote majority. But with 60 million lives at stake, maybe the 60-vote majority is not such a requirement.

Perhaps they would be willing to waive that long tradition for the purpose of saving lives. That will be my argument. We have got 60 million lives we have lost in this country and you are requiring 60 votes in the Senate, and that sets the stage for another 60 million lives to be aborted if you can't get rid of that filibuster rule and let a simple majority pass something through the Senate.

The window in the House is open now. The window in the Senate can be opened if the Heartbeat bill goes over there. The window at the White House

is open right now. And the court is going to take a little time. But if we sit back and we decide we don't want to send something out this window of the House because we don't think that the Senate is ready—the President is ready, by the way—or if we don't think the court is ready, then there will be a window closed and it will be too late.

We have got to move this legislation through. It is H.R. 490, the Heartbeat bill that says this: that before an abortionist can ply his trade, he must first check for a heartbeat. And if a heartbeat can be detected, the baby is protected. It is that simple, that clear. And we have the technology now that shows that definitive heartbeat on ultrasound, where you can watch the baby move and squirm and gurgle and suck its thumb and try to talk, and do all of those loveable things.

We have the technology that shows that in ultrasound. We have a take-home kit where you can listen to the heartbeat of your baby. I get them texted to me from young ladies who are moms already and they are already bonding with this unborn baby. That technology says that, at about 6 weeks, we can determine the definitive nature of that heartbeat. And if that heartbeat can be detected, the baby is protected.

Mr. Speaker, here is the problem that we have: 170 Members signed onto this bill and another good bunch of them want this bill to come to the floor and they want to vote on it. The will of the people is reflected through the United States Congress, especially the House of Representatives. Unelected people on the outside of this Congress are the ones who are holding this bill back.

When I talk to the leadership up the line and I say, "I want to vote on the Heartbeat bill and so do 170 Members who signed on and multiple others who want to vote for it," the will of this Congress is clear, but the leadership says, "We don't want to divide the pro-life community. We want to make sure that the pro-life community is unanimous in this before we move legislation."

I think that is an old rule that was put in place. It wouldn't be my rule.

So the top organizations along the way would be National Right to Life, the oldest and largest pro-life organization in the country. Now, I have named them. I can name every other organization from Family Research Council to Susan B. Anthony List, to Faith to Action, on down the line. And I will name a bunch of them a little later this evening, Mr. Speaker. Every other organization that I name supports this bill.

The only organization that doesn't support it is National Right to Life. National Right to Life, protecting Americans since 1968. The oldest pro-life organization, the largest pro-life organization.

I say: We need you on this bill because it is not going to move until you say you support it or the rest of Congress rises up in a very strong way.

So here is their answer. They tweeted this out here a little while back: "National Right to Life does not oppose the Heartbeat bill."

That was their message: "... does not oppose. . . ."

But in order for a piece of pro-life legislation to move—according to what I think is an archaic rule—it has to be unanimous.

So that means Family Research Council, Susan B. Anthony List, and National Right to Life, if they all say, "We like this bill; we want to move it," then H.R. 490, the Heartbeat bill, moves. If they don't say they like the bill, it is a de facto veto that blocks the bill.

So the will of 170 Members who signed on, and a good number of folks who are willing to vote for the bill who didn't sign on, the will of the American people reflected in this constitutional Republic that we are, is all being stifled and frustrated by one organization. It happens to be the oldest and the largest pro-life organization in the United States of America: the National Right to Life. Since 1968, they say: "National Right to Life does not oppose the Heartbeat bill." That is H.R. 490. There is no doubt about that.

I have had my conversations with Carol Tobias, and I have had my conversations with David O'Steen. By the way, not in person, only by phone. We couldn't get an in-person meeting. But a couple of their lawyers came in and we had that conversation, too. They all say the same thing. They all say: Well, our board doesn't like the Heartbeat bill and doesn't support the Heartbeat bill, so we can't act unless our board tells us to act.

I asked: So when was your last board meeting?

They said: Oh, several months ago. And there won't be another one until after the March for Life.

This conversation took place the first week in December.

So call a special board meeting because this is important. The Heartbeat bill grew a lot more momentum than you ever thought it was going to. It wasn't your idea, I know. I will give it to you as an idea if that is what National Right to Life wants. They can't meet with their board. They can't call a board meeting. They can't poll their board. They have to wait until the next scheduled board meeting.

Who are these board members?

I don't know. Fifty of them.

Mr. Speaker, can you imagine 50 dedicated pro-life people in America who are on the board of National Right to Life and all of them sitting there intransigently saying, "Nope, I don't want to see the Heartbeat bill move. It is not something I want to do. I don't support protecting babies from the moment that a heartbeat can be detected"?

How in the world is it that you are the preeminent right to life organization in the country and the best you can say is you do not oppose the Heartbeat bill?

The real truth is, if you don't oppose it, neither do you support it. What it really means is the National Right to Life does not support the Heartbeat bill for whatever those reasons are, Mr. Speaker.

And I would sure like to know. Because I think if you truly are pro-life, then there wouldn't be a way you could sit there and say: I don't want to protect the babies that have a heartbeat.

In fact, if I look through their tweets and their literature, and they are full of references to heartbeat.

And I will get to that in a little bit, Mr. Speaker. But I wanted to hear from the gentleman from Texas and set the stage a little bit here. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT).

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING), my dear friend, for all of his work in this area; not just his work, but his leadership.

I know his heart beats with a desire to make sure that any heart beating is protected.

□ 2100

I heard a comedian on television this last night saying something about, "Yeah, so many years ago I had an abortion because it is my choice," something of that order. The audience cheered and clapped. I thought, "A comedian?" My heart wasn't angry. My heart just broke for that child.

As my friend knows, my wife and I, our first child came 8 to 10 weeks early. They tried for 3 days to stop the contractions, and after 3 days it was clear our daughter was coming. Back then, it was far enough back that we really didn't know if we were going to be able to keep her.

The first day she was there in Tyler, we were losing her. I had had malpractice cases as a judge that involved the condition. I know for preemies they don't like to give too much extra oxygen because you get to 100 percent and it may cause blindness. It is a condition called retrolental fibroplasia. The retina has not matured enough, and in the presence of oxygen, the blood vessels constrict and cause little fibers to come out and separate from the back of the wall. I knew all of that. I knew all about what was going on.

When the pediatrician came in and tried to intubate our child, tried to get that tube in—he didn't intubate a lot of children. He was just a wonderful, caring doctor. They lost her three times. The monitors went off. They got her going again, tried to get the tube in so they could get more oxygen to her little, undeveloped lungs. He didn't know I was sitting there in the nursing station watching. It was like a horror movie. I was sorry I ever started watching it, but I could not leave until I found out how it came out.

Also, they were praying for my child and the doctor's hands and what he was doing. But he finally got her intubated and came out sweating profusely be-

cause he had that little child's life in his hands. I had already held our child. I could hold her in one hand. I was careful and preferred to use two.

But anyway, he made clear we needed to take her either to Dallas or Shreveport. At that time—now all kids, if they have to go somewhere, they go to Dallas, instate, from Tyler.

But at that time, I said: Well, which is more successful?

He said: It seems like the survival rate in Shreveport right now is a little better.

I don't know what it is now.

But I said: Let's get her to Shreveport.

So I wasn't sure. Kathy had to stay in the hospital there in Tyler, but I followed the ambulance and made sure she was checked in.

When I got over there, the doctor, I could understand why they had such a good survival rate. His name is Dr. Tsing. He, with one of the nurses, got me over to our daughter's isolette. It is open-air. They had the monitors hooked up. They had the halo around her head piping in extra oxygen.

He said: Please sit down here on this stool.

He said: Now, you are probably aware that her eyes are not functioning properly. She can't recognize you when she opens her eyes and tries to see, but she knows your voice. She has been listening to your voice for months. She knows you, and she is comforted by your voice because she knows you. So you sit here, and you talk to her, and you caress her little arms and face and talk to her, and you will do some good for her.

They said: We have a 2-hour limit on how long you can sit here, and then you have to take a break for a couple hours and you can come back.

The last thing Kathy had asked was that I do anything I could to help our little girl. So there I sat, and I caressed her little face.

The danger of a child born prematurely, the number one danger is the lungs not being properly developed to get enough air in to actually keep the child alive. So her breathing from the first moment of birth was very, very shallow, and her heart rate was erratic, very fast. You could see it on the monitors, very shallow, very fast, and very erratic breathing and heartbeat. But she had a heartbeat.

As the gentleman from Iowa has said many times, my friend, and Janet said many times: Gee, you walk in a room. You see a body not moving. You check to see if there is a heartbeat; and if there is a heartbeat, you know you have to call an ambulance. You have to do everything you can to try to keep that person living, which is, again, the principle behind the Heartbeat bill.

Her heart was beating just so very fast and erratically, but when I was playing with her little hand, she took her whole hand, it wrapped around the end of my finger, and she held on tight. It was a tight grip. This was a child

whose lungs are not working so well, eyes aren't working that great, but she was holding on and holding tight.

I was there for 3 or 4 hours before Dr. Tsing came back. When he came back, he said: Have you looked up at the monitors?

I had not for a couple of hours or so. I looked up, and the breathing was very shallow, but it was no longer erratic. It had a regular beat, a regular rhythm to it. The heartbeat was still very fast, but it was not erratic. It was a regular heartbeat with a regular pattern.

Dr. Tsing said: She is drawing strength from you. She is drawing life from you.

I can tell you, when you know this little child is drawing life from you and strength from you, you don't want to leave. Finally, after 8 hours, the nurses and the doctor came over.

They said: You have to leave. It has been 8 hours.

I said: I don't want to leave. The monitors show she has a regular heartbeat, regular breathing. I don't want to leave.

They said: You were supposed to leave 6 hours ago. You have to leave now. Go somewhere.

I did leave and went to McDonald's. My heart was up there with our daughter, and so I rear-ended a lady right there by McDonald's. The policeman was very nice, and the lady that lived there in Shreveport was extremely nice, but I couldn't wait to get back to our child.

She is extraordinary, absolutely extraordinary in every way, one of the top artists in the world. She was chosen to be one of the first 12 artists that Swatch Art Peace Hotel dedicated to the arts in Shanghai, one of the first 12 they selected to live there as artist-in-residence from all over the world. She was one of the first 12—amazing talent.

I think about the talent of so many, 60 million children. Every one of them had some kind of gift, and they are gone.

I have appreciated the National Right to Life when I was in college, when I was out of college, and when I was a prosecutor after law school. When I was a practicing lawyer, local businessman, my own firm, I was elected a judge, I never wavered in my appreciation of the National Right to Life.

I want to make sure that people understand, we also have a Texas Right to Life. It is not National Right to Life. It is its own organization.

I have talked to the Grahams. The Grahams that head up the Texas Right to Life, God bless them. They have done incredible work, but they make clear, we don't care whose bill it is, we don't care who came up with the idea; if there is any bill that will prevent even one precious life from being aborted, that life being saved and allowed a chance to be loved and to love and to not be aborted, then they are on board.

That is the way everybody I knew who is pro-choice, meaning you choose

to live, that is the way I thought everybody was. So it has been quite an awakening to be here in Washington and to have any groups, especially one that I put up on a pedestal for so many years, for decades now, that says: Our board doesn't support a bill.

We have a bill, the pain-capable bill, heck, any bill—pain-capable? Yes, sign me on—that saves 5 to 15 percent of abortions, count me in; I am there.

Then, National Right to Life may save 80, 90 percent of the children who are being killed; count me in. I am in.

I thought that is where everybody would be. I don't know. I really don't understand. If it is a turf battle, it wasn't our idea. Why is it that any group doesn't support saving an additional life?

I do read the Bible every day. I made that promise I would read the Bible, and I do that. I have just gone, again, through some of the Old Testament books, and when I read the prophets talk about how evil a society was, they said that this king did right in the eyes of the Lord, and this king did evil in the eyes of the Lord. When the writer wants to really illustrate the point that a society had become so evil that it was an abomination to God, they would point out that they sacrificed their children on the altar of an idol.

I remember reading that as a kid, and I thought: What could be worse than that? I just cannot imagine a parent being willing to sacrifice their child. I can imagine my parents, lots of parents, fighting to the death to protect their child, but I just couldn't imagine how that could happen in these Old Testament days.

Then I came to realize we have been doing that since the seventies. We have been sacrificing these children who could survive on their own on the altar of individual choice: I am too busy to do other things. I don't have time for a child when there are parents begging for children to adopt.

So I just appreciate so much my friend speaking up on behalf of the unborn. We have heard from our Democratic friends so many times that a society is judged by the way they protect those who cannot protect themselves and help those who cannot protect themselves. Clearly, there is nobody more innocent and more in need of protection than a child not quite born that someone wants to kill.

So I appreciate my friend's illumination of what is going on. I thank him for his efforts not just tonight, but every day.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I so much thank the gentleman from Texas for that, indeed, heartfelt description of what it was like, that miracle little child who also is intelligent and beautiful as well as a world-class artist.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here, and I don't understand National Right to Life either. This is exactly what they are formed for. The Heartbeat bill, H.R. 490, is an exact fit, as near as I can determine, into their very mission state-

ment. I made it a point to look up that mission statement, and I happen to have it here.

The National Right to Life mission statement, Mr. Speaker, goes this way: "The mission of the National Right to Life is to protect and defend the most fundamental right of humankind, the right to life of every innocent human being from the beginning of life until natural death."

Now, if that is the National Right to Life's position and mission, "from the beginning of life until natural death," I certainly support that. I don't think we disagree on when life begins. But one might read that statement literally to say "from the beginning of life until natural death" may be National Right to Life's position is something other than the moment of fertilization or the moment of conception on when life begins because the mission statement doesn't say "from the fertilization until natural death" or "conception until natural death." It says, "from the beginning of life until natural death."

□ 2115

But I dig a little deeper. On their website, they have a statement that starts with a question: When does life begin?

It answers its question this way: The life of a baby begins long before he or she is born. A new individual human being begins at fertilization when the sperm and ovum meet to form a single cell.

Perfect. I agree with that answer.

So the mission is to protect and defend the most fundamental right of humankind, the right to life of every innocent human being, from the beginning of life to natural death, the National Right to Life's mission statement, and they define the beginning of life as when, at fertilization, the sperm and ovum meet to form a single cell.

There should be no argument any longer on where National Right to Life stands. They should be standing for protecting all innocent life, from fertilization to natural death.

It is a fine, honorable position, and the history of National Right to Life has actually spoken to the heartbeat issue in the Heartbeat bill.

For example, there was a Heartbeat bill that passed out of the North Dakota State Legislature back in 2009. It went to a Federal circuit court. It was not upheld by that Federal circuit court. Just as I described a little earlier, the lower courts will not overturn a decision made by the Supreme Court. It has to be appealed to the Supreme Court level. This was not. But they were supporting the Heartbeat bill then.

So they are on record supporting the Heartbeat bill, and here are a number of other times on their positions on heartbeat.

Heartbeat has been showing up pretty often in the information that has come out of the National Right to Life. I would point out again their lead, Carol Tobias or David O'Steen.

This is February, 5, 2013, Right to Life's tweet that went out. It is @NRLC, if you want to send them a message. It says: An unborn child's heartbeat is "the most beautiful music," says Beyonce.

I looked that up because I wondered what that was. Beyonce was pregnant. She actually had a miscarriage and lost that child. She loved that child before that child was born. I don't have any doubts that her heart was broken.

But she said: An unborn child's heartbeat is "the most beautiful music."

That is posted on National Right to Life's Twitter page. That is February 2013.

Here is a July 2013 Tweet from them: Unborn babies can feel pain, they can dream, they have a heartbeat, they respond to their mother's voice. Abortion ends their life.

It looks like National Right to Life understands the importance of a heartbeat. I think they know something that I think I also know: that beating heart is in our ears now.

Many of us have heard that beating heart on ultrasound. When we hear that on ultrasound, we know that that is life. We also know that if that heartbeat can be detected and the baby is protected, that baby has at least a 95 percent chance of a successful birth.

So that is how viable that baby is at 6 weeks with a heartbeat.

Here is another Tweet, September 24, 2014, from Right to Life's Twitter account: Listen to an unborn baby's heartbeat at just 6 weeks.

Just the amount of time I gave it.

Another heartbeat message, going on down the line, this is 2014, also, a Right to Life tweet: Did you know, babies by 20 weeks can feel pain? They already have a heartbeat and detectable brainwaves by then.

That is the Pain-Capable bill that just failed in the Senate.

Heartbeat about 6 weeks. So they are telling us this heartbeat matters. A heartbeat is a sure sign of life. If there is a heart beating there, there is a live baby there—a baby with a 95 percent chance, or better, of a successful birth.

Moving on in 2014, also. Here is Carol Tobias, the lead in the National Right to Life. She tweets out on this day, 24 March 2014: New smartphone appcessory allows moms to hear unborn child's heartbeat.

I am glad that we noticed this. It is important that we know that. That is the place where these heartbeat sounds have been texted to me from young mothers who are at 6, 7, or 8 weeks along. They will send me the sound of that heartbeat. It comes on my phone, and I can open that up and I can hear that heartbeat surging at, say, 158 beats per minute. That is one of the most precious things that came to me about 2½ weeks ago; 158 beats per minute.

Here is the next tweet, February 2015. This is an abortionist. The National Right to Life's tweet is quoting an

abortionist who said: “I know that the fetus is alive during the process”—meaning the process of abortion—“. . . I can see fetal heartbeat on the ultrasound.”

I can see the heartbeat on the ultrasound.

That abortionist stops that beating heart that ends the life of that baby. But this is why Right to Life put this up. They know that heartbeat beats also in our conscience. It beats in theirs.

They want to stop abortions. That is their mission statement. They are the oldest organization in the country, the largest organization in the country. The Heartbeat bill couldn't more perfectly fit their mission statement, their cause for being, or the messages that come out here time after time in what one would presume would be laying down the predicate for the Heartbeat bill itself.

Here is another one from Right to Life. Their tweet says: I have a heartbeat.

It is a baby.

It continues: I have detectable brainwaves. I can feel pain. Don't I deserve human rights?

Yes, as soon as we can possibly provide them and stop this carnage of abortion. Don't I deserve the human right to life, is what this quote is, the National Right to Life.

Going on to another tweet, this one is in November of 2017. There is a continuum here that brings this through to 2017. The National Right to Life's tweet says: Did you know an unborn child's heartbeat starts around 20 days into a pregnancy? Most mothers don't even know they are pregnant by that time.

It is not easily detectable. It is not detectable by the technology we call for in the Heartbeat bill, but that is how early that is.

The Knights of Columbus has put up billboards that say: My heart began beating at 18 days.

We all start small. Abortion stops a beating heart.

Heart, heart, heart. It rings in our conscience. It should ring in the conscience of National Right to Life.

Here is National Right to Life in their tweets: Heartbeat; heartbeat; heartbeat; heartbeat; heartbeat.

Why not support the Heartbeat bill? You are actually doing so verbally here, but you go back to this canard: the National Right to Life does not want to—they want to say oppose; but, instead, I say it is more appropriate to say do not support the Heartbeat bill. Why?

It is beyond my comprehension how an organization that has these kind of convictions cannot be supporting the Heartbeat bill.

We have polling that tells us where this stands. It is a majority opinion all the way across the board. In a Barna poll taken in 2017, 69 percent of adults support the Heartbeat bill. Actually, it has slightly more polling support than

the Pain-Capable bill that has already passed the House and just failed in the Senate, but with a majority vote.

Sixty-nine percent of adults support the Heartbeat bill, 86 percent of Republicans, and 55 percent of Democrats. Even pro-choice/pro-abortion Democrats, the people who vote for them, support them, also support the Heartbeat bill with what we call a landslide level, if it were an election, and 61 percent of Independents.

Eighty-six percent of Republicans support Heartbeat, 55 percent of Democrats, and 61 percent of Independents support the Heartbeat bill. We are getting down to the place here where it is making even less and less sense that National Right to Life would not support the Heartbeat bill.

There is another big set of reasons here. Mr. Speaker, this isn't the whole set of reasons. This is maybe half, maybe not quite half the set of reasons.

Not only 170 Members of Congress have signed onto this bill, and a good number of them that will vote for it on the whip card on top of that, but 130 pro-life organizations and leaders support the Heartbeat bill, H.R. 490.

You can't read this from very far away because we tried to jam as many names on there as we could. There is another sheet and probably at least another one behind that. It is 130 pro-life organizations.

We look down through that, and who are we missing?

I couldn't come up with anybody that we were missing, as far as supporting this, other than the National Right to Life.

I am looking on top here. Here is Susan B. Anthony List at the top of the list. Here is Tony Perkins, the president of the Family Research Council. These are the top three organizations right here that some have referred to as the Holy Trinity that control pro-life legislation and whether it comes to the United States Congress or not, whether the will of the people can be realized as being stuck right here in red.

So we put this in red. I held this back and reserved this spot on the sheet for Carol Tobias of the National Right to Life. Just pick up the phone and call the Speaker is all, Mr. Speaker, that Carol Tobias needs to do and the Heartbeat bill comes to the floor of the House and the will of the people can be reflected. It can go over to the Senate, it can sit on MITCH MCCONNELL's desk, and they can have a vote over there and we will find out where those Senators all are. If it doesn't pass on the floor of the Senate, there might just be some new Senators sent in who will protect innocent, unborn human life.

So I can go down the list. Lila Rose, the president of Life Action, a strong supporter, enthusiastic supporter of the Heartbeat bill. Tom McCluskey, March for Life. We have sat down and had a conversation. He is supporting of this.

Then we have got Kristan Hawkins, the president of Student for Life. On

down the line. Anita Staver, president of the Liberty Council; Ed Martin, president of the Phyllis Schlafly's organization, Eagle Forum. He is the Eagle's president. He solidly supports the Heartbeat Bill. In fact, he was there in that church that day that we put that plan together and has been a driving force.

But the real, strongest driving force of all is Janet Porter, the president of Faith2Action. Janet Porter really carried this in the State of Ohio. I went to Ohio to help conclude that. What we found out in the State of Ohio is that not only did the Heartbeat bill pass in Ohio, Mr. Speaker, but it passed over the resistance of the local affiliate of National Right to Life.

They will tell me, and David O'Steen told me, they are not in control of their State organizations. You heard Congressman GOHMERT address that, also. The State organizations kind of run their own show.

But when it was resisted in Ohio, it made no sense. They lobbied John Kasich to veto the bill. Why?

Under the grounds that it would be found unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in Ohio. Seriously?

Do we go through all that work and then just decide we are going to preempt the court decision, pass a law, sign it into law, and save the babies' lives?

Every step we take along the way saves lives.

Keith Rothfus made an argument that I want to give him credit for. He said that even just debating the Heartbeat bill saves lives, because the debate causes people to talk about it, to think about it differently, and to make different decisions about the lives that they are in charge of protecting, and that is the innocent unborn lives.

So here we are with 130 pro-life organizations and leaders supporting the Heartbeat bill, H.R. 490. We look down through this list—and I will put it all public, if it needs be, Mr. Speaker—but I saved a spot up here in red for Carol Tobias and David O'Steen and the National Right to Life. Just give us a call. Send me an email, a text. Pick up the phone. Call the Speaker. We will move this bill, and we will save lives together.

Meanwhile, if that doesn't happen, I am going to continue to ask the question: How in the world can you not support this bill?

How in the world can the Nation's preeminent pro-life organization, the National Right to Life, who says they do not oppose the Heartbeat bill, and I say they do not support the Heartbeat bill, how can that be?

How can you form 50 people on a board of directors, all of them pledged and dedicated to your mission statement to protect life from the beginning of life to natural death, and not find one among those 50 who support the Heartbeat bill, when 170 cosponsors are already on it here in the House of Representatives and multiple others are

standing up ready to vote for the bill, and not one among your board supports the Heartbeat bill?

There is something wrong. There is something wrong inside an organization.

Those statements came both from Carol Tobias and David O'Steen. Maybe there were a couple along the way, there is a little clause in there, but generally this: Who on your board supports the bill?

You can't name any. That is essentially it.

□ 2130

If that is the case, Mr. Speaker, then there is something seriously wrong in the National Right to Life and something that seriously needs to be corrected because there are babies who must be protected. If a heartbeat can be detected, the baby is protected, and we need the support of the entire pro-life community in order to get this legislation moved out of the House and over to the Senate, to the President's desk.

It will eventually get before a Supreme Court. We will eventually have one or two more appointments to that Supreme Court. It has got a shot today. It is clearly more constitutional than the pain-capable legislation because it is precisely drafted with these things all in mind. It is a solid case to go before the Supreme Court.

I would say, instead, there is no reason to litigate it, but I kind of think it will be because the enemies to life litigate everything that saves and protects lives. But these little babies are too precious, they are too unique, they are too miraculous for us to waste a minute in protecting their lives. I want every little baby that has got a heartbeat, have every little baby have that chance to be born, that chance to live, to love, to laugh, to learn, to worship, to be a parent of its own, and to be a gift from God to this country, to this planet, and to posterity. That is the miracle of every little child.

When Congressman GOHMERT spoke of being able to hold his little daughter in one hand, that sacred, protected little girl now has grown into a glorious and beautiful and intelligent woman who is contributing to this society and to this world, and that is true for everyone where all give glory to God. But 60 million babies—60 million babies—cannot continue. We have to put an end to this atrocity of abortion.

The Heartbeat bill, H.R. 490, does that, and there is only one entity standing in the way, and that is National Right to Life. And I plead with you, and I pray that you will come around to support. Your history says that is who you are and what you do, and it is time, now, to get on the bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair and not to a perceived viewing audience.

CELEBRATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOTO) until 10 p.m.

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, first, I take a moment to acknowledge that we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Family and Medical Leave Act. Signed into law February 5, 1993, FMLA established the right for many workers to take an unpaid leave from work for serious illness, adoption, or to care for newborns or family members.

Unfortunately, unpaid leave is still inaccessible for 63 percent of working Floridians because they are ineligible for the FMLA or cannot afford to take unpaid leave. This means 63 percent of Florida's families face an impossible choice: work or family responsibilities.

Failure to guarantee paid family leave not only hurts our economy, it hurts our families, and it is women who suffer most. In Florida, 79 percent of Black mothers, 56 percent of Latina mothers, and 53 percent of White mothers are key family breadwinners. Paid family leave means these mothers can stay in the labor force and care for their families' medical needs.

We must also think about our seniors, medical circumstances arising from military service, and those in need of support battling addiction. Paid leave not only supports American families, it boosts economic activity. We must expand FMLA to cover more workers for the next 25 years and beyond.

HONORING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I take a moment to reflect on the invaluable contributions of African Americans and what they have done throughout our Nation's history and for our community in central Florida.

We are incredibly blessed to stand on the shoulders of so many greats who have come before us. We give thanks to Dr. King, Rosa Parks, my colleague, the legendary Congressman JOHN LEWIS, to A. Philip Randolph, and so many others who have been critical heroes in this story, countless brave men and women whom we honor for demanding equality for all.

Today, I want to celebrate and honor the leaders in central Florida who have influenced and continue to make an impact throughout their day-to-day lives in our community. They are an inspirational group who remind us that America is made stronger and greater by the countless contributions of our African-American community.

RECOGNIZING RICHARD HALL

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, in honor of Black History Month, I recognize Mr. Richard Hall. Mr. Hall is one of the original Tuskegee Airmen, the country's first Black military aviators in the U.S. Air Force—back then, the U.S. Army Air Corps.

Born in Georgia, Hall moved to central Florida with his parents when he was 5 months old. A graduate of the Robert Hungerford Boarding School in Eatonville, Hall received a 4-year scholarship to Xavier University in New Orleans, Louisiana. He joined the Army Air Force Reserves and, in 1942, was sent to fight in World War II in France.

Mr. Hall was among the first African-American chief master sergeants after integration in 1949. He served his country for over three decades and completed tours on four continents, including the Korean and Vietnam wars, as well as World War II.

In 2007, Mr. Hall, along with other Tuskegee Airmen, received the Congressional Gold Medal from President George W. Bush, and in central Florida, he was honored with a life-sized sculpture that sits outside of Hannibal Heritage Center in Winter Park.

Mr. Hall retired to Maitland in the 1980s and continues to call central Florida his home.

I was honored to be able to interview Mr. Hall last week for the Library of Congress Veterans History Project, and it was an absolutely amazing story of a man from central Florida who traveled around the world defending our country and finally made it back home.

RECOGNIZING ELIZABETH JONES

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, in honor of Black History Month, I recognize Elizabeth Jones. Mrs. Jones was born in 1942, in Savannah, Georgia. She made her career in military banking from Bank of America and retired with 29 years of experience in managing support for our soldiers in Germany.

Betty arrived in Orlando and started working for Presidential campaigns by volunteering on phone banks to get out the vote. She also worked for various candidates who were running for office by distributing campaign literature and helping the Orange County Democratic Executive Committee. As a member of the Orange County Democratic Executive Committee, she became the precinct representative for her community in Wedgfield.

In March 2016, Elizabeth joined the Orange County Democratic Hispanic Caucus and was elected to the executive board. She became a very active member within the Hispanic Caucus by registering new voters, being engaged in Orange County, and supporting various initiatives within the Hispanic community.

Elizabeth also volunteers for various organizations within her community, including Give Kids the World in Kissimmee, which cares for children with cancer; the VA hospital in Lake Nona that we are proud to have in our district to serve our veterans; and the Florida Baptist Mobile Dental Bus for communities that are disenfranchised and in need of free dental care. She has been volunteering for the mobile dentist bus with her husband for more than 5 years.

Ms. Jones, we honor you.