

transgender woman described as vivacious, outgoing, and loved by many people.

On this day, I rise to remember the transgender women of color who were catalysts for the LGBT rights movement in the United States and around the world. We remember the bravery of Miss Major Griffin-Gracy and the late Sylvia Rivera, and Marsha P. Johnson in the face of the police who violently raided the Stonewall Inn in New York City in 1969, detaining and arresting people simply for being themselves.

When faced with compounded transphobia, racism, sexism, and homophobia, transgender people have marched and resisted. When confronted with structural barriers, transgender people have organized and advocated.

I remain committed, along with the dedicated members of my team—and I want to issue a special thanks to Jenny Curt for her contributions to today's Special Order hour—committed not only to lifting the stories of those lives lost, but to working in partnership, legislating boldly. I see their power; I honor their activism.

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

NATIONAL TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. DEAN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GARCÍA) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Madam Speaker, before I begin, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the subject of the Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Madam Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank Representative PRESSLEY for dedicating this time in honor of the Transgender Day of Remembrance and, of course, naming many of the victims of violence who have met this fate simply for being who they are. As a member of the Equality Caucus, I am proud to call her my colleague and my friend.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN).

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, and still I rise. And I rise tonight with a degree of sadness because we have this day, this national Transgender Day of Remembrance.

It is a sad thing such that you have to have an occasion such as this. You should never have to set aside time annually to remember those who have lost their lives to violence. But because it happens, we must be here.

What Dr. King reminds us was right then and is right now: "Injustice any-

where is a threat to justice everywhere." Injustice against the trans community is a threat to every community.

It seems that murder of Black transgender women is becoming almost a crisis in this country. Fatal antitransgender violence in the United States is on the rise, and most of the victims are Black transgender women: the largest number of transgender homicides, a record number in 2017, 29 killed; last year, 26 killed, most of them Black.

Why is this happening? Well, one reason might be because this administration tends to promote a narrative that marginalizes people who are already being marginalized. Such a narrative has a means of trickling down.

The tone and tenor of society is set by those at the top. Those at the top have to be mindful of the messages that they send.

So I am honored to observe this day, and I would like to speak very tersely about someone whose story cannot be told in 5 minutes.

Itali Marlowe was my constituent. She was found in the driveway of a local residence, shot multiple times, the 19th trans person to die by violence in our Nation this year. All but one of these victims has been a trans woman of color.

This day allows us to memorialize those who have been murdered as a result of transphobia. But I pray for a day when this day will no longer exist, when all people will be accepted in a society that proclaims liberty and justice for all.

INCOME INEQUALITY AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Madam Speaker, tonight, we find ourselves at a troubling time for all workers across the country: Income and wealth inequality are at an all-time high, and union representation is at a historic low. These facts mean that all workers have a harder time making ends meet.

It is time to reset the balance of power in our economy between working people and corporate interests.

For decades, collective bargaining rights have been under relentless assault, especially by the Republican Party, in an effort to disempower working people and hand our democracy to corporate America. Tonight, I am proud to bring together my colleagues from the Congressional Progressive Caucus and our friends to talk about the PRO Act.

The Protecting the Right to Organize Act is a landmark step to restore the rights of working people to join unions and collectively fight for fair wages and working conditions.

The PRO Act rebalances the scales between workers and corporations by enacting strong enforcement measures against employers who violate labor laws, strengthening the right to negotiate and organize unions, and empowering workers to report abuses of their rights.

I thank my colleagues for joining me to stand up for workers and their right to organize.

I also want to recognize the true creators of wealth in our economy, the working men and women of America.

To begin tonight's deeper conversation, I call on a person who represents a district that has been at the heart of growing the economy and driving the economy for average Americans over a long period of time. He comes from trade union organizing and represents an overwhelmingly working-class district in the great State of Michigan.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from the great State of Illinois for organizing this special session to talk about what I consider to be the single most transformative piece of legislation that we are considering right now, the PRO Act, the Protecting the Right to Organize Act.

And why would it be so transformative? Because, as Representative GARCÍA mentioned, inequality of wealth and income has grown to proportions we have not seen in 100 years in this country.

From 1980 to 2014, income for the bottom half of earners, the whole bottom half of American workers, grew 1 percent; whereas, income for the top 1 percent grew 205 percent.

And why? Because workers have lost all voice and power in this economy. Workers do not have the freedom to form unions.

At its high-water mark in the late forties and early fifties, a third of American workers had collective bargaining, and they built the middle class in this country over the post-war decades. Today, 6 percent of workers in the private sector—6 percent—have collective bargaining, have unions, and so they have no real ability to get their fair share of the American pie and to rebuild the American Dream.

The PRO Act would do so much to change this.

Truly, it reminds me of my days organizing nursing home workers, kind of a long time ago, in the 1980s, in Michigan and Indiana and Massachusetts and Rhode Island. It was so hard for workers to form a union. Their employer could do almost anything, and that is true to this day.

□ 1915

So, for example, your employer can make you go in a room, and if you refuse to attend, they can fire you. And the sole purpose of the meeting is to tell you how bad forming a union would be for both of you. They can make you individually go into their office and tell you that the union would be a bad thing.

This kind of intimidation tactic has led to a crisis in our economy. And people like to talk about free markets and capitalism. All I want to see is a free market for worker organizing in this

country. And all the best research suggests that if we really had one, about a third of workers would, again, be in unions, and it would completely transform the economy.

So let me just hit a couple of the things that the PRO Act would do that would be so important.

First of all, it would recognize the realities of the 21st century economy. Workers could organize and bargain with whatever companies share control of their employment. So, hello, McDonald's franchises, hello, Courtyard by Marriott. Any companies that have franchises, both the franchisee and the franchisor could be joint employers.

Employers could not prevent workers from organizing and could not avoid the responsibility for workers by misclassifying them as independent contractors. That is rampant in today's economy. Employers under the PRO Act would not be able to just call their workers supervisors willy-nilly to deny them the right to organize. And workers' rights to organize would be recognized in all the electronic formats that we use to communicate today.

Another thing that is key is that at long last, the PRO Act would end the right to freeloader, a disease that has been spreading in this country since the late 1940s that says that in our system, even though a union has to represent all the employees in a workplace, it prevents union employers from negotiating contracts that simply say that all the workers have to pay their fair share for administering the contract. We would end 60 years of efforts to destroy the labor movement simply by allowing what I learned in law school as the freedom of contract. An employer and a union are free to negotiate that all the workers pay their fair share.

The list of improvements in the core area of an organizing campaign is really impressive. Just to pick a couple of them.

Employers couldn't gerrymander the bargaining union to pick out who is for or against the union, so to choose the voters in a sense. Elections would have to happen much faster. If a worker is fired for organizing a union, as I saw happen so many times, the NLRB would have to go for an immediate injunction to get them reinstated. If the workers felt intimidated by having an election on the employer's work site, then the NLRB could have it at a neutral location. So many commonsense things just to allow workers to organize freely.

So let me just sum up and say, I would love to talk about all the provisions, but it would take me all night, and I want to yield to my colleagues.

All we are asking for is that workers in this country have their rights recognized across the globe in the international labor organizations provisions so that they can have freedom of assembly, freedom to organize, and freedom to bargain a contract. And, Representative GARCÍA, that would do

more to make our country more just and beautiful than anything else we could do.

Mr. Speaker, I am so proud to stand up tonight for the PRO Act, and I thank Representative GARCÍA for his leadership in making this happen.

Mr. GARCÍA of ILLINOIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative LEVIN for sharing that story, his own personal knowledge and experience of working to empower working people so that they have good wages, good working conditions and very critically what is at the heart of the PRO Act, organizing to have leverage to level the playing field and to arrive at what is the best contract for workers in a worksite setting.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), who happens to be the chairman of the Committee on Education and Labor.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues to speak in support of H.R. 2474, the Protecting the Right to Organize Act, or the PRO Act.

The PRO Act was reported out of the Committee on Education and Labor on September 25, and it is the most comprehensive legislation in recent history to strengthen workers' rights to organize and bargain for higher wages, better benefits, and safer working conditions.

Labor unions have long fueled our Nation's prosperity. Wage growth and worker productivity rose steadily together when union membership was at its peak, around 30 percent, between the end of World War II and 1973. Union members earn significantly higher salaries, they are more likely to enjoy better benefits and also much more likely to work in a safe workplace. This had the effect of creating an economy where most working families could achieve a basic standard of living. But unfortunately, in the last 4 decades, union membership has plummeted, and income inequality has soared.

Despite the clear benefits of strong unions, just one in 10 workers currently is a union member and only 6 percent of private sector workers are union members.

Low union membership certainly does not mean that American workers have given up on unions. In fact, according to a poll of workers across the country conducted by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 48 percent of nonunion workers say they would vote to join the union if given the opportunity.

Regrettably, what is keeping workers from joining unions are weak labor laws, aggressive employer opposition to unions, and relentless political attacks that have dismantled workers' rights to organize.

To that point, the PRO Act would deter employers from violating workers' rights to form a union in five key ways:

First, the PRO Act puts some teeth into the law by authorizing civil mone-

tary penalties for companies that inflict serious economic harm on employees by violating the National Labor Relations Act, in doing things such as firing union supporters for engaging in protected activities. This would update the current law, which provides no civil penalties today for employers who violate the NLRA, leaving no meaningful deterrent for employers who choose to violate workers' rights.

Second, the PRO Act would streamline procedures and guarantee swift remedies for workers. Currently, if workers prove that they were unlawfully fired for organizing, they may have to wait years before being reinstated and receiving back pay. The PRO Act would guarantee temporary reinstatement for workers whose cases are found to have merit while their cases are being adjudicated. This would also make the National Labor Relations Board orders immediately applicable to all parties involved in proceedings, just like those of other Federal agencies.

Third, the PRO Act would protect the integrity of union elections by providing remedies when employers interfere with union representation elections. It also establishes mediation and arbitration procedures to encourage employers and unions to reach a first collective bargaining agreement after the union is formed.

Fourth, the PRO Act would modernize labor law by clarifying exactly which employees and employers are covered by the National Labor Relations Act. Too often employers misclassify their employees as independent contractors or anything but employees. This tactic allows employers to avoid their legal obligations to their workers. The PRO Act safeguards against these practices and also protects workers' First Amendment rights to engage in peaceful picketing and other free speech activities.

Finally, the PRO Act fosters transparency, so employees know their rights under the law. Other labor laws require employers to post notices of employee rights like Title 7 of the Civil Rights Act, the Family Medical Leave Act, and OSHA. The PRO Act will similarly guarantee the employers notify the employees of their rights.

At its heart this legislation is about restoring workers' rights to organize and restoring balance to the economy. By passing the PRO Act, we can take an historic step towards improving the quality of life for workers and families across the country.

So I thank the Progressive Caucus for sponsoring this Special Order and giving us the opportunity to promote the PRO Act.

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative SCOTT, who, of course, is also the Chair of the Education and Labor Committee. Part of the reason why he knows so much about the bill is he happens to be the bill's chief sponsor.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to hear from another part of the country, and

we are going to the West Coast to get a better understanding of why representatives in this House from all over the country are uniting behind this important piece of legislation.

Next, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO), who is a member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus and also chairs the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the U.S. Congress.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Illinois for yielding.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to join the voices of the working men and women of our country demanding better wages, better working conditions, better benefits. I rise for working families, for those working multiple jobs and struggling to get by while CEOs are making multiple millions of dollars and reaping the benefits of their labor.

And this is all during a time over the past several decades where productivity of the American economy has gone up while wages from those who have created that productivity have stayed flat. And if we want to achieve income equality or less income inequality, the answer is in giving workers leverage on the economy.

So I rise to defend workers' rights, their right to rise up in their workplace and use their collective power to demand better from their employer. That is the leverage that I am talking about.

Right now employers and corporate interests are doing everything they can to strip workers of their protections. In fact, they have already done that. They have already participated in weakening our labor laws and made it more difficult for workers to organize. And Representative LEVIN of Michigan started to explain the complex ways in which organizing is made more difficult; how elections can run forever; and how employers have an unfair advantage in those elections; and how the will of the workers in the workplace to organize and unionize can be thwarted.

And once unions are formed, there are many efforts to bust unions and silence the voices of workers, which, let me be clear, is illegal. And that is why we need to pass the PRO Act to make sure that penalties are enforced. We do have laws on the books, but there is not enough enforcement. We need to put an end to these antiunion activities.

If we want to reduce economic inequality, support working people and working families and ensure that the American Dream is within reach for all, then let's pass this bill. It is time to reaffirm our support for working people in America.

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California. Before we go to the East Coast and hear the voices of working people there and why they support the PRO Act, I would like to share with you a brief story about myself in Chicago.

When I was growing up in Chicago, both of my parents were proud union

members. In fact, they were both Teamsters. My father worked at a cold storage facility, and my mother worked at a candy factory on Chicago's West Side. Both relied on their union jobs to raise our family, and they retired on their union pensions, which enabled them to purchase a comfortable home for their family.

There will be more stories from Chicago, but right now I would like to go to the East Coast and hear from another member of the Progressive Caucus. He hails from the State of New Jersey. I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. NORCROSS).

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on the importance of the Protecting the Right to Organize, or as we know it, the PRO Act.

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We heard several of my colleagues talk about the pros of what literally is taking place and how difficult it is. As many people know, and as we have heard here, there are 218 lawyers in Congress, but there is only one electrician and one electrician who spent his career not only doing the electrical work but representing workers.

I have spent 37 years in the IBEW, literally having to retire from that as I came here and took my oath of office to represent the people of the First District.

When we look at what is happening today in this country, it is the end of a long line of abuses, those things that have happened over the course of the last three decades in particular, the decline of union membership. Many of those on the other side of the aisle like to say that it is because people don't want it. This couldn't be any further than the truth.

Today, close to 80 percent of employees would vote for a union if they could—80 percent. This is quite a different figure than the 6 percent that you heard representing private employers, Mr. Speaker. That is because it has been rigged. I can say that because I am one of the few Members who speak on this floor who have been to the National Labor Relations Board and who has conducted elections. I have done it repeatedly. I see the cheating that takes place. That is why we have the PRO Act.

Earlier this year, we voted on something that I thought would have been unanimous, the Raise the Wage Act. The minimum wage in this country hasn't been raised in over 11 years—11 years—\$7.25 an hour.

Tell me out there, can you live on \$7.25 an hour?

We change that.

Predictably, over the next 7½ years, that would raise to \$15 an hour. But our colleagues on the other side of the aisle say: They don't need a raise.

That is how unbelievable some of this is. Tell me, can you live on that?

The PRO Act is simply listening to the people whom we work with who want a voice and who want to be able

to grow the business that they are working for so that they can share in those wages. That is where the PRO Act comes in.

I mentioned I was an electrician, and I still am. I am not doing much work the way I used to, but as I told my kids, I am an electrician with a tie now. But I saw firsthand people who would say: I want the chance to do better. I want the chance for us collectively to bargain.

They would come to see us and say: Can you help me?

We said: Sure we can.

We gathered together, and we speak with one voice, go to the NLRB, which is the labor relations board that makes the rules, and say: Here is a bargaining group of 8 to 10 men and women who want to become part of the IBEW, or speak collectively as we call it. Then the fight begins.

Occasionally, Mr. Speaker, you would have a contractor who says: Do you know what? After talking to them, I think this is a good way of working together to try to grow my business and to take care of my employees.

Unfortunately, for those who want to cheat the system, they start to say: Well, he is an independent contractor. He just started here. He is an apprentice.

They try to break up the groups. When they talk about bargaining groups as my colleague, Mr. LEVIN, talked about, it is about breaking that apart.

All this does is level the playing field and make it fair so those workers who want to vote to collectively bargain can do it in a fair and open way so the elections aren't rigged. Fair and open, we hear that so much today.

The PRO Act protects workers because the other thing that the employer will do is fire the one who spoke up: We will take care of the one who is causing the trouble.

I am trying to do better for my family, and I talked to my employer about a raise, and he doesn't want to do it, so I call up the union and say: Can you help me? And I get fired for that.

There is no recourse for bad actors. The PRO Act would change that and level the playing field so there are penalties when you break the law. It is like having speed limits with no police on the road. That is what it is like now. They are free to do whatever they want.

The PRO Act restores the fairness of the economy against those workers who are rigged. Workers win, but just as important, business wins. They grow together. It is just not a one size fits all. We understand working together is what this does.

We see so often the tragedies of what happened from the same crew who won't vote to raise the minimum wage in 11 years and who are the same ones fighting this.

Together, we can do better. Raise the level of fairness so that all employees will have a voice at their workplace.

Again, I thank the gentleman for bringing us together. I look at my colleagues out here who understand this on a gut level. To the Representatives who are listening tonight, go home and talk to the average guy on the street and say: Do you want to make it better, to raise your family, to have a decent wage? Then you will hear yes.

I recommend voting “yes” for the PRO Act.

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for sharing that wonderful story.

Women in this body overwhelmingly support the PRO Act for good reason. The PRO Act would help level the playing field and move all of us toward a greater sense of economic justice.

This evening, we are very fortunate to hear from a voice also from the East Coast who will get to the crux of why this is such an important tool for economic justice in our country. She is a member of the Progressive Caucus of this body and someone who is passionate and compassionate about providing equal opportunity for everyone in our country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN).

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. I thank the gentleman for yielding to me, and I thank the gentleman for taking on this Special Order hour and leading it.

Organized labor has always been the foundation of good-paying jobs that support a thriving middle class. That is why it is vital that we support legislation like the PRO Act, finally empowering the National Labor Relations Act to do the important work of protecting workers’ rights.

Since the day that law was enacted in 1935, big businesses and their allies in the Republican Party have worked to weaken it. Their efforts have brought us to a point where union membership has cratered, and not coincidentally, inequality has grown.

The PRO Act implements penalties for employers who illegally fire workers because they try to form a union or are simply pro-union in their thinking. Today, we see employers out in the open on Twitter flagrantly violating the NLRA and threatening their employees if they even think about forming a union.

The PRO Act will allow workers to stand up and say to their boss: Joining together with my co-workers is right, and you will not threaten me with cuts to my hours, my pay, or my job.

This law will put an end to the practice of company bosses dragging their feet in collective bargaining negotiations in order to break the spirit of workers and avoid their legal responsibility to honor the wishes of their workers.

The PRO Act also recognizes the changing face of workers and ensures that those working multiple jobs do not lose their right to organize when they change shifts.

The part of this bill that I find most energizing is its protection of that

most fundamental right of workers, the foundation of worker power from which all labor power is derived, the right to strike, the right to stand with your fellow worker and say: We will not accept these conditions another minute. We will not work another day until our demands are heard and our rights are respected.

The right to stand with your union sisters and brothers and withhold your labor is finally recognized under this bill.

If workers can put their sweat into building the greatest country in the world, how dare we say to them that they cannot join their fellow workers to demand a fair share of what they built?

This bill is the most important labor rights bill in years, and today, I am proud to be a member of the party of the working men and women, the Democratic Party, as we pass this bill. I thank the gentleman for the opportunity.

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, if I could inquire how much time is remaining in the Special Order hour?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GREEN of Texas). The gentleman has 11 minutes remaining.

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Before I introduce and as a prelude to the remarks that we will hear from the following speaker, I would like to share a story about the great city that I hail from and the great State that I represent here, the State of Illinois. It has a proud labor history that is filled with stories of courage and sacrifice by workers striving to organize.

Since the 1800s, workers organized in mines and factories fighting the abuses of powerful industrial interests. Chicago earned the reputation as a city of big shoulders, a working-class and hardworking city. Workers were killed in the Haymarket massacre of 1886, a struggle that led to the 8-hour day and the end of child labor.

The country’s first national strike started in Chicago when train workers across the country joined a strike that began in Pullman, Illinois. Federal troops were sent in to break up the Pullman Strike, but it was so significant that Congress created Labor Day shortly afterward.

One of the Nation’s most deadly mine disasters happened in Illinois in 1909. The tragedy prompted better enforcement of child labor laws and advanced the movement for workers’ compensation.

Working people joining forces in unions helped lift up all workers across the country.

With that opening remark, Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield next to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. POCAN), who also happens to be one of the cochairs of the Congressional Progressive Caucus.

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much for all the work that he has done on behalf of his constituents, the people of Chicago, and really the people of the entire country.

I know this is the gentleman’s second event today alone on behalf of workers, and I thank the gentleman for his outspoken representation on behalf of people who need a voice in Congress. I think we heard earlier tonight there are about 200-plus lawyers in this body. A majority of Congress are millionaires. Not to say that if you are a millionaire, you can’t empathize with working people, but it is another thing to come from a background like I do.

I had a union specialty printing shop, a small shop for nearly three decades, a member of International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, IUPAT, for nearly three decades.

I can tell you the benefits that have happened for my family and the people I work with by having good, union-supporting wages and good, union-supporting benefits and why that matters so much.

The problem we have right now in this country and the problem that we have across so many States is an organized effort going after working people by going after their ability to have a voice in their workplaces by having unions. We have watched attacks across the country, including in my home State of Wisconsin, where States have gone to a so-called right-to-work law. What that is often referred to as a “right-to-work-for-less” law because when you get these laws often, on average, people lose over 3 percent in pay in States that do this. But we have watched those laws happen across the country.

Federally, under the Trump administration, we have watched laws that make it harder for working people who win the legal right to form a union, through a union election. They run into all kinds of stumbling blocks. All too often, there is no legal recourse against an employer who violates the rules or stacks the deck against people and doesn’t allow that vote to actually form that union.

That is the real problem that we are facing. That is what we are talking about tonight with the PRO Act. That is what we are trying to address in Congress.

What I think is so very important to raise is the reason people want to have a union is because it will help not only their family but their communities by lifting up everyone. When you have a union job, you are more likely to get more pay and better benefits than people who are not in union jobs.

That is why the public support is so strong right now for unions with 64 percent support for unions, one of the highest percents we have seen in this country. And 67 percent of people 18 to 34, millennials, even more than the population as a whole, see this as a way to have a voice in their workplace.

□ 1945

Here are some of the things they support: expanding union rights, banning right-to-work-for-less laws, ensuring a first contract for new unions—if you

vote for a union, you should be able to get a contract for your union—making so-called independent contractors employees, and protections for workers on strike.

All of those things I just mentioned are included in the PRO Act. All those things could be possible for workers across the country.

We know that when we have had the least amount of income inequality in our country, back in the 1950s, is when we had the greatest representation of people in unions. Now that we have got one of the smallest amounts of people—about 11 percent, nationwide, in public and private employee unions—we have the greatest gap in income that we have had in this country.

There is no surprise there is a lot of pushback from not only people on the other side of the aisle, but from the United States Chamber of Commerce, which is not your local business in your chamber of commerce, but it is the big businesses in this country that don't want to take care of their workers. Instead, they want to send all the profits up to their shareholders, so very few get a lot and everyone else gets the crumbs that are left over.

Just to give you an idea of some of the actions we see by these companies: 75 percent of private-sector employers hire outside consultants to run antiunion campaigns when workers try to form a union; 63 percent force their employees to attend closed-door meetings to hear antiunion propaganda; and over half of employers threaten workers in these meetings, they threaten their jobs.

You have a one-in-five chance, if you are a union organizer, of losing your job because, right now, you can get away with it with this administration and how they enforce our labor laws.

But here is the reality. If you don't have a union in your company right now, this is what you get when you have a union:

Health insurance: 75 percent of people in a union participate in job-provided health insurance versus about 48 percent nationwide;

Pensions: 70 percent of people versus 13 percent nationwide;

Paid sick leave: 91 percent of people who are in a union have paid sick leave, and the median weekly earnings are \$207 more a week. That is \$11,000 a year more if you are a member of a union, in a similar job, than if you are not.

That is the real reason we see the attacks on working people trying to have a voice in their workplaces, and that is why we see people not trying to lift this bill.

This is so important that, in this Congress, we take this bill up in the House of Representatives and we pass this bill and we give, finally, an edge to help push a little more assistance to workers who want to have a say in the workplace than what employers have had because of this administration, because of States that have passed bad

laws, that make it harder, again, to have a say in your workplace.

This is an important piece of legislation. The Congressional Progressive Caucus has made this issue a priority. We are going to make sure there will be a vote this session in Congress. We are going to try to make the Senate take this up as well.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Chicago. His help on this and so many issues has been so very important. We are going to do everything we can to get this done this session.

Mr. GARCIA of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for his remarks.

So what is the essence of the Protect the Right to Organize Act? We have heard from my colleagues today about the many ways that unions have made America strong. From the 8-hour day to building the middle class, we have a lot to thank the labor movement for. Unions are an integral part of increasing wages and addressing income inequality.

Still, special interest-funded attacks on labor laws have eroded union membership for years. For too long, greedy companies have used extreme measures to stop working people from exercising their right to join together and negotiate for their rights and their working conditions.

While the economy is working very well for the wealthy, our middle class continues to shrink. The cause is simple: policy choices, especially by Republicans in the House at this time, in the Senate, in State legislatures, and the Presidency that have stripped workers of the power to stand together.

The Protecting the Right to Organize Act is a historical proposal that restores fairness in the economy by strengthening the Federal laws to protect workers' rights to organize.

We need the PRO Act at a time when Trump wages war against the labor movement. We need the PRO Act to build an economy that works for all working families and not just the wealthy.

The lessons I learned from unions—that individual justice is only as good as collective justice—continue to inform my career in public service, and I hope every worker can have the opportunities that unions gave me.

I got a chance to work at a young age. I joined a union. It helped me pay for my college education. I did well in the community that I still live in. That is why I approach banding together for the welfare of working people.

Tonight, you have heard from people from coast to coast, all over our country, from the South and from the heartland. These are individuals who are fighting for working people to, again, level the playing field and create a real purpose of economic justice to lift everyone up in our country.

As we move forward with the PRO Act, I call upon the American public to understand that it is time for economic justice and it is time for prosperity for

all. And, with that, I ask them to call on their Representatives in the U.S. Congress to make this law a reality for all working men and women across the Nation.

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

ISSUES OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I really haven't ever become friends with General Michael Flynn. He doesn't object to being called Michael Flynn, even though he earned the title of "General," even though he has not been treated fairly at all and has actually been treated unjustly.

There is an article today from Margot Cleveland in *The Federalist*. It talks about Michael Flynn's case, and I am learning some things.

I think the world of Sidney Powell. She is an amazing attorney. She is a friend. But there is a motion pending before Federal Judge Emmett Sullivan on a motion to compel and motion for sanctions that attorney Sidney Powell had filed.

"Powell's motion seeks to force Federal prosecutors to provide Flynn an array of documents withheld from his attorneys and to sanction government lawyers for their failure to provide relevant evidence to the defense team in a timely manner."

Now, as a former judge—and I have prosecuted, I have defended, and I have been a chief justice, but nothing is more infuriating to me, when it comes to our justice system, than prosecutors who are unjust, who lie, who misrepresent. And it looks like all of that has been occurring in Michael Flynn's case or with deference to, like Colonel Vindman, General Michael Flynn.

This article points out: "Then, mere days after the final briefing came in," to Judge Sullivan, "Federal prosecutors found themselves forced to admit that, for nearly 3 years, they had wrongly identified the authors of the handwritten notes taken by the FBI agents during their January 24, 2017, interview of then-National Security Advisor Flynn. Prosecutors had told defense counsel, and the court, that the notes written by Peter Stozk had been compiled by FBI Agent Joe Pietka, and those taken by Pietka had been written by Stozk."

"This embarrassing mea culpa surely added strength to Powell's plea for access to other withheld evidence. After all, if Federal prosecutors made such a basic blunder concerning key evidence, what other mistakes lay buried in the undisclosed evidence?"

This goes on and points out that, at a minimum, things that are being set out now "would also support the withdrawal of Flynn's guilty plea—something Powell does not appear to be considering at this time—including"—and