

local decision made by those sovereign states to protect their citizens from a lethal pandemic by permitting voting by mail.

The Supreme Court summarily rejected this latest lawsuit, finding that petitioners lacked standing to bring their specious arguments.

Madam Speaker, it defies belief that persons claiming to revere the 10th Amendment and federalism would have taken this action that makes a mockery of their core beliefs and is so inconsistent with the bedrock principle that in America, it is "We, the People" who choose our leaders; leaders do not choose their voters.

The principle behind this most frivolous of lawsuits would allow the absurd result of California suing Texas for not expanding Medicaid, New York suing Mississippi for the way it runs its penal system, Illinois suing North Carolina for gerrymandering election districts, and Minnesota suing Alabama over its school funding mechanism.

This latest Republican led and Trump-inspired law suit, like the preceding 50, was not grounded in reality so it is useful to describe what the Constitution and the law prescribe regarding the process for electing a president.

First, it must be emphasized that while November 3 was Election Day throughout the nation, it was not a national election but a series of discreet and separate elections held in each state and District of Columbia to choose the persons who under the 12th Amendment are to meet six weeks later to cast the votes to elect the President and Vice-President.

The result of those elections was that Joe Biden was the leading vote-getter in more states with more people by larger margins than Donald Trump.

In fact, the latest tally of all votes cast shows Joe Biden has received more votes, 81.2 million, than anyone in history, outdistancing his vanquished rival by an astounding 7 million votes.

Second, the next important date in the electoral process is today, December 14, which is the first Monday after the second Wednesday and the date set by federal law, when the men and women chosen by the voters of their respective states gather in the several state capitals to cast their votes for President and Vice-President.

While there are a number of events yet to take place that are required by the Constitution and our laws, it is beyond any reasonable dispute what the culmination of these events will yield: an announcement on January 6, 2021 at a Joint Meeting of the Congress in the House of Representatives, by the President of the Senate, MIKE PENCE, to the nation and the world that Joseph R. Biden is elected as the 46th President and that KAMALA D. HARRIS is elected the 49th Vice-President of the United States.

While this meeting is popularly known as the Electoral College, it should be noted that this particular term is nowhere mentioned in the Constitution itself.

Instead, the Electoral College should properly be understood as a process, not a place, for electing the President and the Vice-President.

In every state, this process begins with the nomination by the state's political parties of candidates for the position of presidential elector.

Next, is the ascertainment of which slate of candidates were selected to be the electors,

which in every state is determined by the outcome of the presidential election held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in the preceding November.

After the electors have been ascertained, they are provided a writ of election by the state governor directing them to assemble in the state capital at a time specified on the first Monday after the second Wednesday in December to cast their votes for separately President and Vice-President.

Any judicial disputes regarding the appointment of electors that are decided in accordance with state laws in place before the election at least six days in advance of the meeting are conclusive are conclusive as to the validity of the appointment.

Thirty-one states and the District of Columbia by law require electors to cast their votes for the candidate of the political party that nominated them and most of the rest require the elector to sign a pledge committing him or her to do so, but again, since electors are typically faithful members or workers of the political party that nominated them, such pledges merely state the obvious.

As I speak, all 50 states and the District of Columbia have certified the results of the presidential election, and since this was done at least six days before the meeting of electors, under Section 5 of the Electoral College Act, 3 U.S.C. 1 et seq., it is conclusive on the issue of whether the electors in those states were "lawfully certified."

The Certificates of Ascertainment appointing the electors transmitted to the National Archivist and the President of the Senate will document that enough candidates nominated by his party were elected to cast at minimum 306 electoral votes for Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS to be elected President and Vice-President of the United States, which is 36 more than the needed 270 vote majority.

Put another way, Joe Biden is slated to receive the exact number of electoral votes that were deemed to constitute a landslide, blow-out, historic triumph by the current President just four short years ago.

Third and finally, after the electors meet in the various state capitals next Monday, they will transmit their Certificates of Vote to the National Archivist where they will remain until opened on January 6, 2021 by Vice-President PENCE and counted in public before a Joint Meeting of the Congress.

When all the votes are tabulated, the Vice-President will then announce and make official what we all know right to be true: Joe Biden has been elected the 46th President of the United States and KAMALA HARRIS has been elected the 49th Vice-President and President of the Senate.

Two weeks later on January 20, at noon, on the steps of the West Front of the U.S. Capitol, Joe Biden will be inaugurated and will enter office after taking the oath in which he will solemnly affirm that he "will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

This outcome is not in doubt and no amount of suspending disbelief will make it so.

It is all over but the shouting—and the public counting of the electoral ballots in the Joint Meeting of the Congress on January 6, 2021.

The center holds and the system is working as the Framers envisioned it.

We can all celebrate that.

REMEMBERING ERVIN JULIAN

HON. DEBBIE LESKO

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 14, 2020

Mrs. LESKO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Evie Nguyen of Glendale, Arizona, on winning the 2020 Congressional Art Competition for Arizona's 8th Congressional District.

Evie's artwork, completed in charcoal and titled "Mutual," highlights the close relationship between humans and nature by showcasing herself with a Cactus Wren, Arizona's state bird.

Evie was a senior at Deer Valley High School when the artwork was completed. Her art is currently being displayed in the U.S. Capitol along with the other Congressional Art Competition winners from around the country.

Each spring, I am proud to host the Congressional Art Competition to showcase the incredibly talented students across Arizona's 8th Congressional District.

It is an honor to represent these promising young artists in Congress.

IN HONOR OF JESS "JAY" BENTON

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 14, 2020

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jess "Jay" Benton as he departs the Hillsborough Town Council. Jay is deeply committed to serving his country and his community.

During the Vietnam War, Jay served as an officer on the USS *Lowe*, a destroyer escort. He is a graduate of the University of Southern California and is a big Trojans fan. He currently serves on the Board of Leaders at the University of Southern California Marshall School of Business.

He worked for 35 years for ABM Industries and retired as the Chief Operating Officer. In 2003, he was appointed Co-Chairman of the Expert Review Committee for the California Business, Transportation and Housing Agency and in 2004 he was appointed by Governor Schwarzenegger to the California Performance Review Commission. For several years he also served on the Town of Hillsborough's financial advisory board which, as a practical matter, offers the expert advice of global financial investors to the city council.

Prior to public service, his volunteer work included serving on the Board of Directors of the YMCA of San Francisco, as Chairman, and on the boards of Broadway by the Bay and the Hillsborough Schools Foundation. Clearly, Jay Benton is a man who relishes the challenge of responsibility.

His leap into the role of officeholder occurred when he was appointed to the city council in 2008 and solidified when he was elected in 2010. Since then, he's served three terms and as Mayor from December 2012 to December 2014. He's also been Hillsborough's member on the Central County

Fire Board, serving as Chairman in 2010 through 2011.

Jay joined the council with a willingness to learn everything, a determination to probe staff reports and to deliver for the residents of Hillsborough. I have heard how Jay saved the town \$1 million on a computer system purchase by challenging the cost.

Jay became the city's expert on water issues when he was appointed to a local agency charged with serving the interests of Peninsula cities receiving water from San Francisco's Hetch Hetchy system. Hillsborough owns its own water system but is reliant on the Hetch Hetchy system for water. There have been a few droughts and numerous public policy challenges, including an expensive capital improvement program, during Jay's tenure. He is described as having a "passion" for water. He is quick to point out opportunities to operate better and always well prepared for the agency's meetings.

Twice per year, Hillsborough's civic leadership gathers to compare notes and to coordinate. Present are leaders from public and private schools, the town, nonprofits and civic organizations of various types, and interested citizens. The convocation is known as the Hillsborough Community Roundtable and its purpose is to let everyone know about the plans for civic events and government services for the next six months. Jay Benton has presided over this semi-annual meeting and won accolades from all involved because he is both a good listener and, not surprisingly, a good leader.

Jay Benton is the devoted husband of Ann and they have been married since October 7, 1967. They have five children: Bill (Susan), Tom (Jane), Jim (Mari), Jenny, and Andy (Morgan). Jay also has ten grandchildren. On December 13, 2020, the day before he steps down from the city council, Jay will turn 80 years old, yet another example of age not being a liability in public life.

Madam Speaker, Jay Benton will leave with the city's finances strong, its capital stock well maintained, its spirits high despite the challenge of the current pandemic, and the future of the community well charted for many years to come. In Jay, the town has a leader who stood the test of time. His neighbors, friends and constituents wish Jay, in the hopeful language of naval adventurers, fair winds and following seas. It has been my privilege to serve with Jay Benton, a great local leader.

HONORING TRENT YACONELLI

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 14, 2020

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor and recognize Trent Yaconelli, the Executive Director of St. Helena and Calistoga Boys & Girls Club.

Trent Yaconelli was born in La Mesa, California, and grew up in Yreka, California. In 1993, he graduated from Sonoma State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Teacher Education. He has also received a Non-Profit Management Certification from The University of Texas at Austin in 2012. Mr. Yaconelli has used his education to aid his community through times of hardship, serving as the Ex-

ecutive Director of the Boys & Girls Club since 2017. Before serving as Executive Director, Mr. Yaconelli had served on the Club's staff for more than 20 years and as Associate Executive Director for four and half years.

Drawing on his years of community service, Mr. Yaconelli has shown an immense capacity to exercise moral leadership and empathy through natural disasters and on-going adversity. He worked with the Club staff to deliver more than 25,000 meals to the community, day-to-day, during the devastating Glass Fire. Recognizing that many of the people who were affected by the fire had lost their homes and were ineligible to receive disaster relief funds, Mr. Yaconelli worked with the Club to distribute more than \$70,000 in direct gifts to fifteen club families. Particularly, he helped distribute three cars to families that lost their vehicles in the fire, along with an additional \$15,000 in individual grants to help them get back on their feet.

Trent Yaconelli's tireless work over these past fourteen years should not go unnoticed. The support that he has given to the families and children of Calistoga and St. Helena has undoubtedly improved the livelihood of his community. In this spirit, Mr. Yaconelli is currently serving the students of the St. Helena Unified School District while they are participating in distance learning. His encompassing knowledge of his community continues to serve the youth and the families that need him the most.

Madam Speaker, Trent Yaconelli exemplifies strong integrity and leadership through his dedication to public service. It is therefore fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF TONY LEE

HON. PRAMILA JAYAPAL

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 14, 2020

Ms. JAYAPAL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of longtime Seattle resident Tony Lee, who died on November 12, 2020. Over his more than 30-year career, Tony had a deep and personal impact on our community. He leaves behind a tremendous legacy of dedicated public service.

Tony Lee was a kind-hearted friend, activist and advocate, and a devoted family member. He was humble and wise. Those of us lucky enough to have known him will forever remember his booming, infectious laugh.

Tony joined the Seattle community at a young age, when he immigrated to the United States from China via Brazil with his family. He went on to graduate from Harvard and earn a law degree from the University of Washington. Upon starting his career as a lawyer, Tony quickly found his true calling: civil rights advocacy.

Tony began his career as an attorney for Evergreen Legal Services, representing the needs of indigent clients as well as immigrants and refugees. He later served as the Advocacy Director for Solid Ground, where he led the anti-poverty, anti-racist organization's work to save cash assistance programs for people with disabilities and mental illness, expand Medicaid to cover dental care, and overcome housing discrimination in Washington State

over 21 years. He is widely recognized for his leadership in creating and maintaining critical safety net services for immigrant and refugee communities, making Washington State a shining example for immigrant inclusion nationwide.

Tony's advocacy and activism stretched well beyond his formal work positions, putting him frequently at the forefront of important efforts and movements. Among these, Tony fought for rent control, on peace and social justice issues and for economic justice. He helped found the Statewide Poverty Action Network and create the Food Assistance Program, which promotes expanding public benefits and broadening the safety net for low-income people in Washington State. He served as a leader with the Equity in Education Commission, the King County Chapter of the Asian Pacific Islander Coalition, Seattle Human Services Coalition, Church Council of Greater Seattle, the Washington Association of Churches, and the Catholic Archdiocese.

Even after his semi-retirement in 2014, Tony could still be found advocating in the halls of the Washington State Legislature, where he was, in the words of Representative Frank Chopp, the "conscience of Washington State."

I had the pleasure of working with Tony over the more than decade I spent organizing for immigrant rights, doing lobby days in the state capitol, advocating for poor people and the most vulnerable and fighting for immigrants and refugees, and there was simply no one who knew the subject matter better or was more devoted than Tony Lee.

Tony will be dearly missed, and his tremendous legacy promoting a more just and kind Seattle will continue to grow through the communities and lives he touched. He is survived by his wife, Angela Bartels; former wife, Sharon Lee; his son, Chris; siblings Bernadette, Cecilia, Joe, Marie, and Mary; and many nieces and nephews.

For his years of dedicated and compassionate service. I am proud to express my deep appreciation for Tony Lee and his advocacy for the most vulnerable members of our community. My heart is with his loved ones during this difficult time. May he rest in power.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOE SCHUMACHER'S 20 YEARS OF DEDICATED PUBLIC SERVICE TO VIRGINIA'S FIRST CONGRES- SIONAL DISTRICT

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 14, 2020

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Joe Schumacher in honor of his 20 years of dedicated public service to Virginia's First Congressional District. Joe began his service to Virginia's First District with my predecessor, Congresswoman Jo Ann Davis, and has been with my office for the entirety of my time in Congress as well. I would like to take this time to recognize Joe's milestone of 20 years with Virginia's First District.

Joe is a native Virginian, an Air Force veteran, and a graduate of the University of Virginia. During his time as my District Director, Joe has exemplified the meaning of a "Servant Leader". From overseeing the district staff