

He is a writer who is working on a novel. He is a musician and a member of the Arkansas Sympathy Youth Orchestra. He hopes to attend Northwestern University in Chicago, and I expect him to succeed wherever life takes him. I congratulate Clayton on his hard work and keen interests.

Keep it up, Clayton, and make Maumelle High School and your family proud.

FAREWELL ADDRESS TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ROSE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROSE of New York. Mr. Speaker, this may be the last time I get to address this hallowed Chamber, and for that I am grateful for this opportunity.

I want to start by thanking my staff. It may come as a surprise to some of my colleagues, as well as the press, but I do have some flaws. My staff worked with me for 2 years—some of them even longer—and together we—not me, we—accomplished an extraordinary amount for the great people of southern Brooklyn and Staten Island.

As I leave to pursue new adventures, I want to depart, though, with a few words of optimism for our great country, as well as a warning.

We live in a tough time for truth, and it is causing faith in our government to corrode. There is not a person in this Chamber who thinks the American people trust us. There is not a person sitting here right now who thinks the American people believe in our government.

This didn't happen overnight. It was death by a thousand disappointments, a thousand scandals, and a thousand lives broken by politicians who mock a virus until it kills their neighbor; who carve us up into blue States and red States, yet have the nerve to question someone else's patriotism; who saw no problem whatsoever giving a trillion-dollar tax cut to Big Pharma and companies that are killing our planet, but then they clutch their pearls when we say we want to be there for poor people and when we say we want to be there for the most vulnerable.

During my few years in politics, I have seen how we can beat back this festering cynicism: when we fight like hell for what is right, especially for those who need us most, when we bring converts to our side by promoting truth where there is injustice, and by appealing to common sense and—God forbid—humanity.

I have seen constituents who thought their government was there only to screw them over; begin to hope that maybe that wasn't the case when we passed the Victim Compensation Fund; and when we cut through the red tape to finally begin the construction of the East Shore Seawall, the largest resiliency project in New York City history. I saw it when we reunited families torn apart by the racist Muslim

ban and when we secured millions to combat the opioid epidemic.

In retrospect, those were the good days.

Then there were days when it felt like our politics was absolutely irredeemable, when a peaceful march for justice in my community was used as a weapon to tell my constituents that it is impossible to believe that Black Lives Matter while also believing that the vast majority of police officers are heroes. Those marchers were called thugs and they were called rioters just for believing that peaceful protests could change this country. The public was told that their movement was dangerous and not something you should listen to but something you should be afraid of. Yet for those who saw it with their own eyes, the truth cut through all those smears.

I remember being outside of a supermarket. It was raining, and I was miserable. An off-duty police officer came up to talk to me. He assured me he was no Democrat, but he had been working that day of the march. He had been skeptical, but those young men and women changed his mind, and he was proud of them. That officer saw past the lies and past the differences others have used to divide us. He witnessed his fellow Americans in pain, and for him it changed everything. In typical Staten Island fashion, though, right after, he told me he wasn't going to vote for me and that I was going to lose for a thousand other reasons.

But conversations like that refreshed my memory and my faith that this country can one day live up to its promise. We can put the government back on the side of working people from New York City to Washington, D.C., and everywhere in between.

That is the America we know is possible: One where, in the face of unimaginable vitriol, we don't hate back; in the face of unimaginable adversity, we don't give up fighting until it doesn't matter what you look like and where you come from, but in this country you can accomplish your dreams—a safe America, a just America, our America.

In light of recent electoral results, some have begun to wonder if Democrats should soft-pedal the fight for equal justice, if they should take a step back from fighting for economic security or even just give up. I am here to say absolutely not. This cannot wait. Justice cannot wait. If you aren't willing to risk everything to build a better country, then you do not belong here in the first place.

Mr. Speaker, to close, representing Staten Island and south Brooklyn has been the honor of my life. On behalf of Leigh, Miles, and myself, I thank the people of the 11th Congressional District for this extraordinary privilege. I am not sure what life has in store for us, but I will be on the front lines making sure our city and our country live up to its promise.

May God bless my colleagues with the strength to do what is right, and may God bless this great country.

REMEMBERING CHAIRMAN BOB SMITH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate and honor the life and legacy of former Congressman Bob Smith. An Oregon native—born in Portland and raised in Burns—he had a deep understanding of what it meant to be an Oregonian and he knew the needs of the surrounding communities, especially the rural part of our State.

He went to Willamette University in Salem and received a degree in agriculture. He would go on to put that degree to work on his own ranch.

In 1960, Bob's career as a public servant began when he was elected to the Oregon House of Representatives. He served in the State house until 1972. He was speaker of the Oregon House during the 1969 and 1971 sessions.

I remember as a 13-year-old youngster going with my father, whom they were recruiting to run for the legislature, down to Salem to see Bob Smith and the speaker of the house. I was about this tall. I looked up, and here was this giant of a man. He was a giant of a man in Oregon politics, but a very kind soul.

He then served in the State senate from 1973 to 1982. When Oregon got its fifth congressional seat, he ran for that and was elected. He actually ran 31 different times for election and never lost a single one.

In the State house, Bob passed a number of pieces of legislation. He always stood up for farmers and ranchers in eastern Oregon and for lower taxes. He led the effort in the Congress to pass a balanced budget amendment. In the State senate, he actually helped pass the kicker law, which said when Oregon collects more tax revenue than anticipated, that goes back to the taxpayer. That went into the constitution eventually.

Bob went on to serve here, as I said, for 14 years, from 1983 to 1995, and then came back to chair the Agriculture Committee when he returned from 1997 to 1999.

I am joined here on the floor today by a colleague from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS), who served with Chairman Smith on the Agriculture Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS).

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. It is an honor to be here. Discussing my Agriculture Committee chairman and my colleague for 2½ years, Bob Smith, is truly an honor.

When I was sworn in, in a special election and I first surveyed this body, one of the faces I recognized was this huge figure of a man standing at the back brass rail. I can still almost see

Bob right over there surveying the House floor and watching the process.

Bob was one of those folks who had a quiet, calm demeanor. He was a wonderful mentor to me in that first 6 months, then he went home to the ranch for 2 years, and then we begged him to come back and lead the Agriculture Committee for the next 2 years.

Bob was a wonderful mentor to me. He was a wonderful mentor to the underclassmen. The first times that I went with the committee on trips to understand agriculture around the world was with Bob, and he had a diplomat's style and skill. He was firm. As Congressman WALDEN remembered, he wouldn't take anything from anyone. He had a way about him. He gained your trust and he gained your confidence.

It is hard to believe that he is not with us anymore. But Bob was one of those folks whose personality, his heart, and his intellect were just as big and broad as those shoulders were. I consider myself fortunate for having served with him. I know the family will miss him with intensity forever. But, Mr. Speaker, 89 years is a good, long life. I can promise you in the time I served with him here, he lived it to the fullest.

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Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. Speaker, Bob did live life to the fullest in every measure. And when he and Kaye and Matt and Tiffany and Chris all lived back here, they had a farm outside in Virginia, and then he would commute to Oregon. But on weekends when he was here, he and then-Commerce Secretary Mac Baldrige would rodeo. They would go out and rope and participate in rodeos around, and here you had a sitting Member of Congress and the Secretary of Commerce out in the rodeo grounds.

Mr. Speaker, Bob lived a life big and bold. And "free man," like his middle name, he believed in freedom. He believed in freedom in America. He stood up for eastern Oregon and for our farmers and ranchers and our communities.

Those of us who fly in and out of central Oregon owe a big thank-you to him as well since he used his ability in this body to get us a tower there so we could have real flights in and out of central Oregon, and improved, certainly, the interchange of I-5 and Highway 62.

Mr. Speaker, Bob did so much for our State. He stood strong for our country. He believed in freedom. He was a dear friend.

And to Kaye and to Matt and Chris and Tiffany and the whole Smith family, we extend our deepest condolences. What a life well-lived, a public service career that will be tough for anybody to ever top.

VFW POST 334 CELEBRATES 75TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. SLOTKIN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SLOTKIN. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to celebrate the 75th anniversary of VFW Post 334 in Oxford, Michigan.

Since its founding, VFW Post 334 has served the local community in Oxford. Whether it is their shelf at the Oxford/Orion food pantry, a float in the annual Christmas parade, a regular fish fry, or maintaining the Orion Veterans Memorial, residents can count on the post to show up and support the community.

Post 334 is committed to making a difference in the lives of veterans. By praying for those deployed, supporting their families at home, providing a forum to gather and share experiences of service, and honoring those who are no longer with us, the VFW preserves the bonds that are forged through military service.

For its work, Post 334 was recognized in 2019 as a Michigan All-State Post for the third year in a row. Most recently, it was awarded the Diamond Jubilee Award, given to VFW charters that have demonstrated exceptional service for three-quarters of a century.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I thank Quartermaster Chuck Haskin, Senior Advisor Commander Randy Stetson, and Post Commander Jim Hubbard for their leadership and their service to the North Oakland community.

The spirit of Post 334 is perhaps best said by Commander Hubbard: "We honor the dead by helping the living."

Mr. Speaker, in addition to these remarks which will live on in the RECORD of the people's House, it is my privilege to recognize their service by arranging for a flag to be flown over the Capitol in their honor. This flag will be presented in Oxford to recognize their continued service to community and to country.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Post 334 on a successful 75 years and wish them the best in the 75 years to come.

OCC FAIR ACCESS RULE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency's recently proposed rule to ensure fair access to banking services.

The fair access rule is a welcomed development in a time when political correctness and public relations pressure are driving the Nation's largest banks' lending decisions rather than risk metrics associated with an underlying loan.

Banks are deciding to cut off access to capital, divest their holdings, or otherwise limit financing to legally operating businesses just because those businesses are politically unpopular with outspoken critics on the far ex-

treme left. Politicizing access to capital needs to end, and the Fair Access rule is a step in the right direction.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed rule-making codifies longstanding principles and OCC guidance that banks should provide access to capital and credit based on the assessment of an individual borrower's risk as opposed to making broad-based decisions impacting entire industries. It is guided by fundamental principles of non-discrimination and would ensure that banks can't pick winners and losers in the marketplace. This rule will have meaningful impacts on some of America's strongest industries and the Americans they serve.

The prohibition against redlining based on race, ethnicity, or neighborhood, regardless of an individual's qualifications and creditworthiness, is a well-established principle in Federal law. That prohibition and that principle should be extended to lawful creditworthy businesses as well.

Mr. Speaker, over the last several years, we have witnessed many cases of banks publicly committing not to do business with certain legal companies. Some banks refuse to finance new coal-fired plants; others have refused to provide credit for legally permissible drilling operations; others boycotted firearms manufacturers.

But these decisions were not based on the creditworthiness of the borrowers; they were based purely on politics.

Coal keeps the lights on. Oil and gas heat our homes and fuel our vehicles.

Should coal or oil or gas companies be subjected to a different lending standard just because of their public perception by a select few? Of course not.

These industries should not be penalized simply because of the nature of their business and private lenders' desire to placate the far left. In fact, these are companies that provide the most affordable and reliable forms of energy to the American people. They are being punished only because they are politically unpopular.

Under the rule, banks can no longer make these qualitative decisions to redline entire industries. Industries that play crucial roles in the everyday lives of Americans deserve fair access to America's financial system and should not be demonized as pawns in the politics of the day.

Banks are in the business of assessing, measuring, and managing risks. Banks should be making lending decisions based on quantifiable risks associated with a loan. If a legally operating business is a sound credit risk by objective standards, banks should not be permitted to cut off financing simply because the business isn't in the good graces of certain politicians.

Many of the rule's detractors say it is an overreach by the OCC or somehow motivated by partisan goals; but, in reality, the rule simply implements directives under Dodd-Frank to promote fair access to financial services and