

loans for critical rural utility service providers, and for other purposes.

S. 4156

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4156, a bill to require the Secretary of Agriculture to provide relief from hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic to agricultural producers, and for other purposes.

S. 4177

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 4177, a bill to authorize supplemental funding for supportive housing for the elderly, and for other purposes.

S. 4235

At the request of Mr. TILLIS, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4235, a bill to amend the Defense Production Act of 1950 to include the Secretary of Agriculture as a member of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 4258

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) were added as cosponsors of S. 4258, a bill to establish a grant program for small live venue operators and talent representatives.

S. 4285

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4285, a bill to establish a pilot program through which the Institute of Museum and Library Services shall allocate funds to States for the provision of Internet-connected devices to libraries.

S. 4299

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4299, a bill to provide grants for tourism and events support and promotion in areas affected by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), and for other purposes.

S. 4308

At the request of Ms. SINEMA, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4308, a bill to amend the Social Security Act to include special districts in the coronavirus relief fund, to direct the Secretary to include special districts as an eligible issuer under the Municipal Liquidity Facility, and for other purposes.

S. 4324

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4324, a bill to facilitate

the availability, development, and production of domestic resources to meet national personal protective equipment and material needs, and ensure American leadership in advanced research and development and semiconductor manufacturing.

S. 4340

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4340, a bill to ensure that a State or local jurisdiction is ineligible to receive or use funds allocated, appropriated, or authorized to address COVID-19 if that State or jurisdiction discriminates against religious individuals or religious institutions, and for other purposes.

S. 4345

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4345, a bill to amend section 212 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to ensure that efforts to engage in espionage or technology transfer are considered in visa issuance, and for other purposes.

S. 4371

At the request of Ms. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4371, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require employers to cash out the flexible spending accounts of employees who separate from employment, and for other purposes.

S. 4372

At the request of Ms. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4372, a bill to provide for unused benefits in a dependent care FSA to be carried over from 2020 to 2021, to provide for benefits to be accessed after termination of employment, and for other purposes.

S. 4393

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 4393, a bill to improve the provision of health care and other benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs for veterans who were exposed to toxic substances, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 624

At the request of Mr. COONS, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 624, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the activities of Russian national Yevgeniy Prigozhin and his affiliated entities pose a threat to the national interest and national security of the United States.

S. RES. 663

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the names of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) were added as cosponsors of S.

Res. 663, a resolution supporting mask-wearing as an important measure to limit the spread of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

S. 4407. A bill to amend the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 to give the Department of Education the authority to award competitive grants to eligible entities to establish, expand, or support school-based mentoring programs to assist at-risk students in middle school and high school in developing cognitive and social-emotional skills to prepare them for success in high school, postsecondary education, and the workforce; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 4407

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Mentoring to Succeed Act of 2020”.

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is to make assistance available for school-based mentoring programs for at-risk students in order to—

- (1) establish, expand, or support school-based mentoring programs;
- (2) assist at-risk students in middle school and high school in developing cognitive and social-emotional skills; and
- (3) prepare such at-risk students for success in high school, postsecondary education, and the workforce.

SEC. 3. SCHOOL-BASED MENTORING PROGRAM.

Part C of title I of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2351 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 136. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR SCHOOL-BASED MENTORING PROGRAMS.

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) AT-RISK STUDENT.—The term ‘at-risk student’ means a student who—

“(A) is failing academically or at risk of dropping out of school;

“(B) is pregnant or a parent;

“(C) is a gang member;

“(D) is a child or youth in foster care or a youth who has been emancipated from foster care, but is still enrolled in high school;

“(E) is or has recently been a homeless child or youth;

“(F) is chronically absent;

“(G) has changed schools 3 or more times in the past 6 months;

“(H) has come in contact with the juvenile justice system in the past;

“(I) has a history of multiple suspensions or disciplinary actions;

“(J) is an English learner;

“(K) has one or both parents incarcerated;

“(L) has experienced one or more adverse childhood experiences, traumatic events, or toxic stressors, as assessed through an evidence-based screening;

“(M) lives in a high-poverty area with a high rate of community violence;

“(N) has a disability; or

“(O) shows signs of alcohol or drug misuse or abuse or has a parent or guardian who is struggling with substance abuse.

“(2) **DISABILITY.**—The term ‘disability’ has the meaning given the term for purposes of section 602(3) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401(3)).

“(3) **ELIGIBLE ENTITY.**—The term ‘eligible entity’—

“(A) means a high-need local educational agency, high-need school, or local government entity; and

“(B) may include a partnership between an entity described in subparagraph (A) and a nonprofit, community-based, or faith-based organization, or institution of higher education.

“(4) **ENGLISH LEARNER.**—The term ‘English learner’ has the meaning given the term in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

“(5) **FOSTER CARE.**—The term ‘foster care’ has the meaning given the term in section 1355.20 of title 45, Code of Federal Regulations.

“(6) **HIGH-NEED LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.**—The term ‘high-need local educational agency’ means a local educational agency that serves at least one high-need school.

“(7) **HIGH-NEED SCHOOL.**—The term ‘high-need school’ has the meaning given the term in section 2211(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6631(b)).

“(8) **HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTHS.**—The term ‘homeless children and youths’ has the meaning given the term in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a).

“(9) **SCHOOL-BASED MENTORING.**—The term ‘school-based mentoring’ means a structured, managed, evidenced-based program conducted in partnership with teachers, administrators, school psychologists, school social workers or counselors, and other school staff, in which at-risk students are appropriately matched with screened and trained professional or volunteer mentors who provide guidance, support, and encouragement, involving meetings, group-based sessions, and educational and workforce-related activities on a regular basis to prepare at-risk students for success in high school, postsecondary education, and the workforce.

“(b) **SCHOOL-BASED MENTORING COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall award grants on a competitive basis to eligible entities to establish, expand, or support school-based mentoring programs that—

“(A) are designed to assist at-risk students in high-need schools in developing cognitive skills and promoting social-emotional learning to prepare them for success in high school, postsecondary education, and the workforce by linking them with mentors who—

“(i) have received mentor training, including on trauma-informed practices, youth engagement, cultural competency, and social-emotional learning; and

“(ii) have been screened using appropriate reference checks and criminal background checks;

“(B) provide coaching and technical assistance to mentors in each such mentoring program;

“(C) provide at-risk students with a positive relationship with a skilled adult offering support and guidance;

“(D) improve the academic achievement of at-risk students;

“(E) foster positive relationships between at-risk students and their peers, teachers, other adults, and family members;

“(F) reduce dropout rates and absenteeism and improve school engagement of at-risk students and their families;

“(G) reduce juvenile justice involvement of at-risk students;

“(H) develop the cognitive and social-emotional skills of at-risk students;

“(I) develop the workforce readiness skills of at-risk students by exploring paths to employment, including encouraging students with disabilities to explore transition services;

“(J) encourage at-risk students to participate in community service activities; and

“(K) encourage at-risk students to set goals and plan for their futures, including encouraging such students to make plans and identify goals for postsecondary education and the workforce.

“(2) **DURATION.**—The Secretary shall award grants under this section for a period not to exceed 5 years.

“(3) **APPLICATION.**—To receive a grant under this section, an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary an application that includes—

“(A) a needs assessment that includes baseline data on the measures described in paragraph (6)(A)(ii); and

“(B) a plan to meet the requirements of paragraph (1).

“(4) **PRIORITY.**—In selecting grant recipients, the Secretary shall give priority to applicants that—

“(A) serve children and youth with the greatest need living in high-poverty, high-crime areas, rural areas, or who attend schools with high rates of community violence;

“(B) provide at-risk students with opportunities for postsecondary education preparation and career development, including—

“(i) job training, professional development, work shadowing, internships, networking, resume writing and review, interview preparation, transition services for students with disabilities, application assistance and visits to institutions of higher education, and leadership development through community service; and

“(ii) partnerships with the private sector and local businesses to provide internship and career exploration activities and resources; and

“(C) seek to provide match lengths between at-risk students and mentors for at least 1 academic year.

“(5) **USE OF FUNDS.**—An eligible entity that receives a grant under this section may use such funds to—

“(A) develop and carry out regular training for mentors, including on—

“(i) the impact of adverse childhood experiences;

“(ii) trauma-informed practices and interventions;

“(iii) supporting homeless children and youths;

“(iv) supporting children and youth in foster care or youth who have been emancipated from foster care, but are still enrolled in high school;

“(v) cultural competency;

“(vi) meeting all appropriate privacy and confidentiality requirements for students, including students in foster care;

“(vii) working in coordination with a public school system;

“(viii) positive youth development and engagement practices; and

“(ix) disability inclusion practices to ensure access and participation by students with disabilities;

“(B) recruit, screen, match, and train mentors;

“(C) hire staff to perform or support the objectives of the school-based mentoring program;

“(D) provide inclusive and accessible youth engagement activities, such as—

“(i) enrichment field trips to cultural destinations; and

“(ii) career awareness activities, including job site visits, informational interviews, resume writing, interview preparation, and networking; and

“(iii) academic or postsecondary education preparation activities, including trade or vocational school visits, visits to institutions of higher education, and assistance in applying to institutions of higher education; and

“(E) conduct program evaluation, including by acquiring and analyzing the data described under paragraph (6).

“(6) **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 6 months after the end of each academic year during the grant period, an eligible entity receiving a grant under this section shall submit to the Secretary a report that includes—

“(i) the number of students who participated in the school-based mentoring program that was funded in whole or in part with the grant funds;

“(ii) data on the academic achievement, dropout rates, truancy, absenteeism, outcomes of arrests for violent crime, summer employment, and postsecondary education enrollment of students in the program;

“(iii) the number of group sessions and number of one-to-one contacts between students in the program and their mentors;

“(iv) the average attendance of students enrolled in the program;

“(v) the number of students with disabilities connected to transition services;

“(vi) data on social-emotional development of students as assessed with a validated social-emotional assessment tool; and

“(vii) any other information that the Secretary may require to evaluate the success of the school-based mentoring program.

“(B) **STUDENT PRIVACY.**—An eligible entity shall ensure that the report submitted under subparagraph (A) is prepared in a manner that protects the privacy rights of each student in accordance with section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (commonly referred to as the ‘Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974’) (20 U.S.C. 1232g).

“(7) **MENTORING RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SERVICE COORDINATION.**—

“(A) **BEST PRACTICES.**—The Secretary shall work with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to—

“(i) refer grantees under this section to the National Mentoring Resource Center to obtain resources on best practices and research related to mentoring and to request no-cost training and technical assistance; and

“(ii) provide grantees under this section with information to promote positive youth development, including transitional services for at-risk students returning from correctional facilities, and transition services for students with disabilities.

“(B) **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**—The Secretary shall coordinate with the Corporation for National and Community Service, including through entering into an interagency agreement or a memorandum of understanding, to provide technical assistance and other resources to support grantees under this section as they provide mentoring and community service-related activities for at-risk students.

“(C) **AUTHORIZATION OF FUNDS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2020 through 2025.”

SEC. 4. INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES STUDY ON SCHOOL-BASED MENTORING PROGRAMS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Education, acting through the Director of the

Institute of Education Sciences, shall conduct a study to—

(1) identify successful school-based mentoring programs and effective strategies for administering and monitoring such programs;

(2) evaluate the role of mentors in promoting cognitive development and social-emotional learning to enhance academic achievement and to improve workforce readiness; and

(3) evaluate the effectiveness of the grant program under section 136 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as added by section 3, on student academic outcomes and youth career development.

(b) **TIMING.**—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Education, acting through the Director of the Institute of Education Sciences, shall submit the results of the study to the appropriate congressional committees.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mr. DAINES):

S. 4431. A bill to increase wildfire preparedness and response throughout the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President. I rise to speak in support of the bipartisan Emergency Wildfire and Public Safety Act of 2020, a bill that Senator DAINES and I are introducing today to protect our constituents from the increasing threat of catastrophic wildfires.

As a result of climate change, California and other Western States are experiencing a growing crisis. Over my 27 years in the Senate, I have witnessed dozens of massive wildfires. But the level of destruction we have seen in recent years and the transformation of wildfire from a seasonal phenomenon into a year-round threat require bold, new action. Our bill would do just that by giving Federal, State, and local governments new tools to better manage wildfires and protect communities.

While California has always had dangerous wildfires, the particularly devastating fires in 2017 and 2018 were a wake-up call and a harsh example of the consequences of inaction on climate change. The latest National Climate Assessment found that, over the past three decades, the number of acres burned in the Western United States is double what would have burned if the climate weren't changing. Nowhere is this being felt more than in California.

The 2018 Camp Fire killed 86 people in town of Paradise and destroyed 15,000 homes. That fire spread as fast as 80 acres a minute according to some estimates. After the 2017 Tubbs Fire, I visited the Coffey Park subdivision of Santa Rosa, which was destroyed when wildfire swept through Napa and Sonoma. The devastation was unlike anything I have ever seen.

According to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection statistics, 10 of the 20 most destructive wildfires in California state history have occurred in just the last 5 years and 2018 was the most destructive wildfire season in recorded California his-

tory: nearly 2 million acres burned in our State, displacing hundreds of thousands and leading to billions of dollars of damage.

These problems will only grow worse as temperatures continue to rise as a result of climate change. But we can't simply wait for the world to roll back emissions to address our wildfire problem. Preparing for these challenges will require an all-of-the-above approach utilizing the latest science, even if some solutions aren't politically popular.

There are more than 150 million dead trees in California's forests, the result of both the historic drought and bark beetle populations that are thriving as temperatures warm. A single spark in the middle of those dead trees can lead to an inferno. And while 60 percent of the forestland in California is owned by the Federal Government, fires don't stop at the borders between federal, state, and private land, so any action must be coordinated.

I have joined California leaders and environmentalists in opposing the wholesale clearing of forests. There is a growing consensus around what appropriate forest management actions consist of, and I am encouraged by cooperative efforts such as the Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative.

We can and should increase the use of firebreaks to stop massive wildfires from spreading into communities, and we can identify landscapes that are overgrown and restore resilience to our forests. But we must do it in a smart and sustainable way.

We should also continue to expand commercial markets for timber and wood products. Biomass energy generation would not only help remove overgrowth from the forests but would also provide energy for California homes and businesses.

We should increase our use of advanced detection systems to identify outbreaks sooner, and invest in safer power transmission lines and other methods to harden infrastructure. While California has requirements for defensible space around at-risk homes, incentives should be provided for homeowners to use fire-safe building materials. The Federal Government should also increase support for outreach efforts, so that risks and mitigation strategies are communicated to vulnerable individuals and communities.

This is why I am introducing The Emergency Wildfire and Public Safety Act of 2020. Our bill would protect communities by reducing wildfire risk in Federal forests, getting the private sector more involved in addressing wildfire risk, improving best practices for addressing wildfire, and creating more resilient communities and energy grids.

The bill would authorize the Forest Service to undertake three priority wildfire mitigation projects that would be limited to 75,000 acres in size, would allow for expedited environmental re-

views regarding the installation of fuel breaks near existing roads, trails, transmission lines and pipelines, and would include a technical fix to ensure that the Forest Service consults with the Fish and Wildlife Service when new public peer-reviewed research demonstrates potential harm to threatened or endangered species. The bill would also codify an existing administrative practice that allows the Forest Service to expedite hazardous fuel removal projects in emergency situations where it is immediately necessary to protect life, property, or natural and cultural resources.

The bill also makes important changes to stimulate the private market for low-value timber that poses a wildfire danger. The bill would establish a new \$100 million biomass infrastructure program to provide grant funding to build biomass facilities near forests that are at risk of wildfire and to offset the cost of transporting dead and dying trees out of high-hazard fire zones. The bill would also lift the current export ban on unprocessed timber from federal lands in the west for trees that are dead, dying, or if there is no demand in the United States. These measures are necessary to ensure that we can mitigate wildfire in a commercially viable way, and not just through continued government funding.

In terms of utilizing the latest science and techniques, the bill would also expedite permitting for the installation of wildfire detection equipment such as sensors, cameras, and other relevant equipment and expand the use of satellite data to assist wildfire response. The bill would also establish a new prescribed fire center to coordinate research and training of foresters and forest managers in the latest methods and innovations in prescribed fire practices to reduce the likelihood of catastrophic fires and improve the health of forests.

Given the generational shortage of workers in the forest management field, the bill would authorize a new workforce development program to assist in developing a career training pipeline for forestry workers.

Lastly, the bill would create more resilient communities and energy grids by expanding the Energy Department's weatherization program to allow for the retrofit of homes to make them more resilient to wildfire through the use of fire-resistant building materials and other methods, and by establishing a new \$100 million grant program to help critical facilities like hospitals and police stations become more energy efficient and better adapted to function during power shutoffs. The new program would also provide funding for the expanded use of distributed energy systems, including microgrids. Finally, the bill would allow FEMA hazard mitigation funding to be used for the installation of fire-resistant wires and infrastructure as well as for the undergrounding of wires.

It is important to be realistic about the threat we face. There have always

been wildfires in the West, and there always will be. But we must face the reality that climate change and rising temperatures will mean more risk of wildfires. We can and should prepare for this future beginning today. That is why we have introduced this new bill, and I urge my colleagues to take it up and pass it as soon as possible.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S.J. Res. 75. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relative to the fundamental right to vote; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in the days since we lost our colleague Congressman JOHN LEWIS, many of us have come to the floor to talk about his extraordinary courage and tenacity.

At the age of 25—25—he joined 600 civil rights activists to march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, AL, in pursuit of the right to vote. We have talked about how that day became known as Bloody Sunday, after John and the other courageous marchers were met with brutal beatings from Alabama State troopers, and how, in the days that followed, President Lyndon B. Johnson called on Congress to pass the Voting Rights Act.

It was 55 years ago this week that President Johnson sat at a desk in the President's Room right off this Chamber, a room that we walk by many times each week, and signed the Voting Rights Act into law. He noted at the signing ceremony:

[L]ast March, with the outrage of Selma still fresh, I came down to this Capitol one evening and asked Congress and the people for swift and for sweeping action to guarantee to every man and woman the right to vote. In less than 48 hours, I sent the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to Congress. In little more than 4 months the Congress, with overwhelming majorities, enacted one of the most monumental laws in the history of American freedom.

Those were the words of Lyndon Johnson. He signed the Voting Rights Act in 1965.

Well, we have made significant progress since that day, thanks to great men like John Lewis, who marched to enact the Voting Rights Act, and the advocates and litigators who battled for decades to enforce it.

But there is a grim reality. Insidious voter suppression efforts still continue in America today. These efforts may not seem as obvious as the old-school poll taxes and literacy tests. But make no mistake. They are aimed at denying the fundamental right to vote, and all too often they are successful.

When I was chairman of the Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Human Rights, I decided to travel to the States of Florida and Ohio for public hearings to speak to officials and experts on the ground and to determine why those States,

through their legislatures, were passing laws—what I considered burdensome laws, such as reducing opportunities for early voting. Why were they making it harder to vote in Ohio and Florida?

In both States I asked witnesses, under oath, what evidence of widespread voter fraud prompted these laws that made it more difficult for people to vote and limited the time when they could vote. The answer was simple. Under oath, what was the evidence of fraud? There was no evidence of fraud.

It turned out that there were a handful of election fraud cases here and there, rarely prosecuted, and that is it.

In contrast to the mere specter of widespread voter fraud, we learned that these voter suppression laws really had consequences. We heard over and over that restrictive voting laws have a disproportionate impact on whom? Low income voters, Black voters, Brown voters, young voters, elderly, vulnerable voting populations.

When you make it harder to vote, it is tougher for these people to show up and vote. Someone knew that.

After the hearings, we learned more about the real reason behind those laws. According to news reports, Republican consultants and former officials admitted after the 2012 election that the Florida law discussed at my hearing was literally designed to suppress the vote, particularly among those leaning toward the Democratic column.

A year later, the Supreme Court announced its decision in *Shelby County v. Holder*. In a 5-to-4 vote, the divided Court struck down the provisions of the Voting Rights Act that required certain jurisdictions to preclear any changes in their voting laws with the Department of Justice.

The decision effectively gutted the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and in the aftermath, several State legislatures pushed through discriminatory restrictions on voting that previously would have required approval by the Justice Department ahead of time.

As an example, in North Carolina the legislature enacted a massive voter suppression bill, including a strict photo ID requirement, early voting cutbacks, and the elimination of same-day registration, out-of-precinct voting, and preregistration for teenagers who were about to turn 18 before an election.

What did a three-judge Federal panel have to say about this North Carolina law? They said “it targeted African Americans with almost surgical precision” and “enacted the law with discriminatory intent.”

Those are unequivocal words. Despite all the press releases to the contrary, the Court knew exactly what was going on in North Carolina. They were trying to stop African-American voters in that State from being counted.

Unfortunately, litigation targeting these voter suppression efforts has faced an increasingly uphill battle, as

President Trump has packed the Federal courts with partisan, rightwing judges, including several with appalling records on voting rights.

And though the Supreme Court continues to state that the right to vote is both “fundamental” and “preservative of other basic civil and political rights,” the Court has also continued to permit broad assaults on America's access to the ballot box.

Let me give you an example. In April, the Court forced thousands of Wisconsin primary voters in April of this year to choose between their health and exercising their right to vote in the middle of a COVID-19 pandemic. The Court refused to extend the deadline for returning absentee ballots, despite the public health national emergency we face.

A State official in Wisconsin recently said that at least 71 people were infected with COVID-19 after voting in person or working at the polls during that primary election.

In June, the Supreme Court turned down a request to reinstate a Texas district court judge's order which would have ensured that all voters in the State could ask to vote by mail, in light of the pandemic.

And just last month, the same Court refused to lift a stay in Florida that will prevent hundreds of thousands of otherwise eligible Floridians from voting in this month's primary election, simply because they can't pay the fines and fees imposed on them long ago as part of a criminal sentence.

What did Justice Sotomayor say in her dissent about this Florida case? “This court's inaction continues a trend of condoning disfranchisement.”

Well, it is time for this to end. I am introducing today a joint resolution. I don't do this lightly.

In the time that I have served in Congress, I believe that this is only the second time that I have proposed an amendment to this Constitution.

I believe, at least personally, that I am humbled by this document. I know it was far from perfect when written. We have learned that over the years with all the amendments and the history that has followed. But I have never thought myself worthy to add words to that document. One other time, on abolishing the electoral college, I had a bipartisan measure that I offered. But this is only the second time I have done it.

This joint resolution would create and enshrine an explicit, individual right to vote in the U.S. Constitution, and protect all Americans who seek to exercise this fundamental right.

Specifically, the amendment would provide an affirmative right to vote for every American citizen of legal voting age at any public election held in the jurisdiction in which they reside.

It would also require that any efforts to limit the fundamental right to vote would be subject to the strictest level of review in the courts.

Additionally, it would ensure that States could no longer rely on section

2 of the 14th Amendment to prevent Americans from voting due to an earlier criminal conviction.

Finally, the amendment would provide that Congress has the irrefutable authority to protect the right to vote through legislation.

If ratified, this constitutional amendment would protect against nefarious election administration changes that lead to long lines and people beating on doors, trying to get in to vote. These long lines have reduced voter turnout on election day. How in the world can we be a stronger nation if fewer people participate in the most important part of democracy?

It would protect against photo identification requirements that disproportionately harm low-income voters and African Americans and Hispanics.

Black lives matter. Brown lives matter. American lives matter. And when it comes to voting, this insidious effort to undermine the opportunity for these people to vote has to be called out for what it is.

It would also provide a path to end discriminatory criminal disfranchisement laws that are a relic of the Jim Crow era and yet continue to strip millions of citizens of their fundamental right to participate in our democracy.

Some may ask why we should pursue this amendment, when there are clearer, perhaps easier, steps that Congress can take right now to protect voting rights under its existing constitutional authority.

Let me give you an example. The Senate can quickly pass the JOHN LEWIS Voting Rights Act amendment, which the House passed last year, but that would rely on the decision by Senator MCCONNELL to actually let the Senate vote on a measure coming over from the House. There is little hope that is going to happen.

Given the ongoing ruthless assault on voting rights in America, it is clear that additional tools are necessary to push back against widespread voter suppression. I recognize that amending the Constitution is no small matter. I am well aware that introducing this amendment today is not going to lead to any immediate change, but I also believe that this moment represents the next step in a movement—a movement in America that will ultimately lead to a ratification of this amendment.

I am going to work with my colleagues and constituents to build support. I will ask opponents as to why they believe that fundamental right, preservation of all other rights in America, should not be affirmatively granted to the American people and literally enshrined in the United States Constitution—the right to vote. I plan to work with grassroots organizations who are fighting for their voting rights to be restored.

I am going to work with Representative MARK POCAN of Wisconsin, who has led this effort in the House, and I plan to work with civil rights leaders, in-

cluding an old friend, Jessie Jackson, who for years has called for this amendment to be introduced in the Senate.

I want to thank Reverend Jackson for his timeless leadership and advocacy. I am grateful to have the support of the Rainbow/Push Coalition as we introduce this amendment, along with the Advancement Project national office. Let me thank Senators WARREN, SANDERS, MERKLEY, HIRONO, MARKEY, VAN HOLLEN, and BLUMENTHAL for co-sponsoring, and I hope others will join us.

By accident, I was given a book several years ago entitled “White Rage,” written by Carol Anderson. Carol Anderson is a professor at Emory University. The book was given to me by my brother-in-law, and I was skeptical that I would even read it, let alone like it. Well, I have to state that I have read it and recommended it over and over to my colleagues in the Senate, including giving a copy to then Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid. He decided, after reading the book, that it was so good that he invited Professor Carol Anderson to come speak to our caucus. She is an amazing person and a great historian.

She followed “White Rage” with this book, “One Person, No Vote.” In it she tells the history of voter suppression. It is an eye-opener.

After the Civil War and all those deaths to end slavery, after the assassination of Lincoln and after the effort was made to finally give to Blacks in the South a chance to become full-fledged citizens, they ran into Jim Crow laws.

She talks about something which I had heard of but knew little about. I would like to say a word from the book.

The question is about the efforts made to suppress the Black vote in the South, and she writes:

That became most apparent in 1890 when the Magnolia State passed the Mississippi Plan, a dizzying array of poll taxes, literacy tests, understanding clauses, newfangled voter registration rules, and “good character” clauses—all intentionally racially discriminatory but dressed up in the genteel garb of bringing “integrity” to the voting booth. This feigned legal innocence was legislative evil genius.

Virginia representative Carter Glass, like so many others, swooned at the thought of bringing the Mississippi Plan to his own state [of Virginia], especially after he saw how well it had worked. He rushed to champion a bill in the legislature that would “eliminate the darkey as a political factor . . . in less than five years.” Glass, whom President Franklin Roosevelt would one day describe as an “unreconstructed rebel,” planned not to “deprive a single white man of the ballot, but [to] inevitably cut from the existing electorate four-fifths of the Negro voters” in Virginia.

One delegate questioned him: “Will it not be done by fraud and discrimination?”

“By fraud, no. By discrimination, yes,” Glass retorted. “Discrimination! Why, that is precisely what we propose . . . to discriminate to the very extremity . . . permissible . . . under . . . the Federal Constitution,

with a view to the elimination of every negro voter who can be gotten rid of, legally, without materially impairing the numerical strength of the white electorate.”

Unapologetic, straight in his remarks, his racism was rampant, and so it was across the country.

Black lives matter. America matters. And our democracy matters. Once and for all, the right to vote should be enshrined in our Constitution. People died for it. It is time for us to work hard to show that we care.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S.J. RES. 75

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring therein), That the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States:

“ARTICLE—

“SECTION 1. Every citizen of the United States, who is of legal voting age, shall have the fundamental right to vote in any public election held in the jurisdiction in which the citizen resides.

“SECTION 2. The fundamental right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State or political subdivision within a State unless such denial or abridgment is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest and is the least restrictive means of furthering that compelling governmental interest.

“SECTION 3. The portion of section 2 of the fourteenth article of amendment to the Constitution of the United States that consists of the phrase ‘or other crime,’ is repealed.

“SECTION 4. The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article and protect against any denial or abridgement of the fundamental right to vote by legislation.”.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 666—HONORING THE FAITHFUL AND UNWAVERING SERVICE OF CIVIL AIR TRANSPORT AND AIR AMERICA TO THE UNITED STATES

Mr. CASSIDY (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Select Committee on Intelligence:

S. RES. 666

Whereas, over the course of 4 decades, the courage, dedication to duty, superior airmanship, and sacrifice of the men and women of Civil Air Transport and Air America set high standards for future covert air operations;

Whereas, during the Cold War, aircrews and ground personnel of Civil Air Transport and Air America gave selflessly in service to the worldwide battle against communist oppression;

Whereas, across multiple active military theaters from the Far East to Southeast Asia, the legendary men and women of Civil Air Transport and Air America served heroically, and many of those men and women gave their lives in the defense of freedom;