

David (Jennifer) Kapper, Deborah (Kelly) Dodson, Jon (Nancy) Kapper, and Christopher (Collen) Kapper; grandchildren, Abbie, Alex, Charlie, Hannah, Ben, Frances, Nicole, and Kevin; great grandchild Violet; and brothers Dick, Tom, and Glenn. He was preceded in death by his parents Raymond and Marcine, and his grandson, Andrew.

I cannot thank Ray enough for his dedicated service to the City of Akron and Summit County. It is a great honor to represent the people of Akron in this chamber, and Mr. Kapper deeply exemplified the spirit of the city. My deepest condolences go out to his family and to all whose lives were touched by Ray.

REMOVING THE DEADLINE FOR THE RATIFICATION OF THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 17, 2021

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. I rise in support of equality and the principle that our Constitution was designed, not to shore up the dominance of the historically powerful, but to ensure the rights of all and to foster a society in which each of us is free to shape our future based on our abilities. The resolution today seeks to remove the deadline Congress put in place for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. While ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment is imperative to enshrine equal rights for women, I do not believe it is necessary to strike the deadline for ratification. However, by voting on this legislation, we may imply that it is necessary for Congress to lift a self-imposed deadline in order for the ratification to be effective. I do not prescribe to this view.

Congressional authority to propose Amendments to the Constitution and the mode of ratification is outlined in Article V of the Constitution. Article V requires two-thirds of the House and Senate to propose an amendment. Congress can choose ratification through three-fourths of the state legislatures or state ratifying conventions. Once the amendment is proposed to the states, there is no Constitutionally imposed time limit on the ratification process. Article V of the Constitution is silent with regard to when a state must consider and ratify an amendment. In fact, the ratification process for the 27th Amendment took more than two hundred years.

Historically, Congress has ratified amendments without specific time limitations. The first amendment to contain a time limit was the 18th Amendment, which established the prohibition of alcohol. The text of the 18th, 20th, 21st, and 22nd Amendments each contained language limiting the time frame for ratification. In contrast, the text of the Equal Rights Amendment ratified by the states does not contain a time limit. It is the proposing clause sent to the states for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment which contains a seven-year time limitation. Notwithstanding a lower district court ruling to the contrary, the language of a proposing clause is not legally binding. The ratification process of the Equal Rights Amendment was properly before the states and was reasonable and sufficiently

contemporaneous. Therefore, having been ratified by Virginia and a sufficient number of other states pursuant to Article V, the ERA, in my judgement, has become part of the Constitution.

This resolution is unlikely to add to the argument that the ERA has been ratified, and, because it implies that the deadline needs to be removed, it may strengthen arguments against because if the deadline is binding, then passage of this resolution in the House, without passage in the Senate, certainly does not cure that defect. And even with Senate concurrence, the effect of the resolution on state ratifications between the deadline and the removal of the deadline is unclear. So the passage of the resolution in the House and Senate will at best add confusion to the debate and at worst will strengthen arguments against the conclusion that the ERA has been ratified. Nevertheless, forced with a vote, it makes more sense to vote in favor than to oppose the resolution.

Regardless of the outcome of this resolution on the ERA itself, the fight for equality must continue. Women still face hurdles in the pathways to success. On average, women still earn less than men for the same job functions. Pregnant women often lack basic protections and reasonable accommodation in the workplace. Perhaps most concerning of all, violence against women is still widespread and undermines the educational and social potential of women and young children in this country.

I am proud to have worked with my Democratic colleagues in the House to pass legislation to remedy these inequalities. The House recently passed the Protect the Right to Organize Act (H.R. 842) which protects workers who are trying to form a union. While in most of America, women earn less than men, women and men working under a union contract receive equal pay for equal work. We have worked to fill the gaps in the patchwork of existing laws governing how and when workers take time off to care for themselves and their families. Expanding the Family and Medical Leave Act to cover more working parents and low wage workers who are currently excluded from leave policies is a top priority.

There are other initiatives being considered to address inequities. Nearly two thirds of minimum wage workers in the United States are women. The Raise the Wage Act (H.R. 603) will raise the income levels of the most economically insecure households and would be a step in the right direction towards pay equity. The Pregnant Worker's Fairness Act (H.R. 1065) is important legislation that will provide reasonable accommodations to pregnant women in the workforce. The Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act (H.R. 1620) which expands protections and provides critical funding for victim services, law enforcement training, and data collection, is now pending in Congress.

However, even if all this legislation were to become law, it would not be the same as amending the Constitution to guarantee women equal rights. Discrimination in the workplace, violence in the home, and institutional barriers require systemic legal and cultural change. Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment provides an additional legal tool for combatting discrimination on the basis of sex.

We will continue the fight for equality and work towards a more inclusive and equitable society.

HERMAN ROBERTS—BLACK BUSINESSMAN, CIVIC LEADER, CHICAGO ICON

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2021

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to one of Chicago's brightest lights who recently passed away at the age of 97, Mr. Herman Roberts. The Chicago Sun-Times wrote that Herman Roberts came to Chicago with nothing during the "Great Migration and ended up a tycoon". At one time or another he owned 35 taxis, eight motels, a nightclub, which swung with some of the world's greatest stars, a bowling alley, a skating rink, and oil wells on a 2000-acre ranch in Oklahoma. Mr. Roberts grew up as one of six children in Beggs, Oklahoma, around his age of about 12 his family moved to Chicago where he went to Burke Elementary and Englewood High School on the southside of the city. After high school he went into the taxicab business and built a fleet in the Black Community when and where white owned cabs usually would not transport Black patrons. In the early 1950's he opened his first lounge, the Lucky Spot and a few years later The Roberts Show Lounge in a garage building where he had once housed his taxicabs. Mr. Roberts was a genius at booking and showmanship. Stars like Nina Simone, Dinah Washington, Sarah Vaughan, Sammy Davis Jr., Jackie Wilson, Sam Cooke, Red Foxx, Moms Mabley, Dick Gregory and others were regular features. In 1960, he built his first motel on 63rd Street, then six more. In 1974, he installed a removable stage in the parking lot and brought in stars like Count Basie, Billy Eckstine, Ramsey Lewis, Della Reese and Nipsey Russell to name a few. Mr. Roberts did not only spend time looking after his business in Chicago; but also spent time at the ranch in Oklahoma. At its peak his ranch had several oil wells, 100 horses, pigs, French breed of cattle and peacocks. In addition to everything else that Mr. Roberts was and did, the Roberts Motel 500 Room was a major launching pad for the official kick off of The Harold Washington Campaign for Mayor which changed Chicago Politics forever. I say congratulations to Mr. Herman Roberts on all his outstanding achievements and thanks to his children and grandchildren for keeping his legacy and spirit alive, especially to his daughter Sharla Roberts, Director of Procurement Diversity at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2021

Mr. KATKO. Madam Speaker, I missed the vote on Roll Call No. 84 on March 17, 2021. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 84.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LOUIE GOHMERT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2021

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, this morning I was notified of a death in my family for which I had been legally designated to make all of the arrangements and decisions. It came unexpectedly and I have scrambled to get back to Texas on the first accessible plane. For this reason, I am missing the votes today, and will miss the votes tomorrow.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHRIS JACOBS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2021

Mr. JACOBS of New York. Madam Speaker, on March 17, 2021 I missed the vote on H.R. 1652, the VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act of 2021. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 89.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2021

Mr. NORCROSS. Madam Speaker, during the vote on final passage of H.R. 1620—the Violence Against Women Act, I was detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 86.

CONGRATULATING THE PIRATES
BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM**HON. SCOTT FITZGERALD**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2021

Mr. FITZGERALD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Pewaukee Pirates High

School boys' basketball team for winning the Division 2 state championship earlier this month.

In the state championship game, the Pirates played incredibly well, never once trailing in the contest as they raced out of the gate with an eight-point lead. They hit shot after shot as they built on their lead. The Pirates closed the first half with an impressive 12–0 run on their way to a 54–37 win. This remarkable victory is the Pewaukee team's first state championship win and their second appearance in the tournament.

I applaud Coach Burkemper and the entire team for their first state championship title. This team has overcome many obstacles in the face of the COVID–19 pandemic, but they persevered and brought home impressive hardware to show for it. Congratulations to the Pirates for their hard work all season. This achievement is well-deserved.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CONSIDER
TEACHERS ACT OF 2021**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2021

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today, I rise to introduce the Consider Teachers Act of 2021, which would improve the service obligation verification process for Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Program recipients. The Senate passed a version of this bill last Congress, and Senators MIKE BRAUN and KYRSTEN SINEMA are introducing the Consider Teachers Act of 2021 today.

The TEACH Grant Program was created by the federal government in 2007 to attract the best and brightest to the teaching profession in underserved communities. The TEACH Grant Program provides up to \$4,000 a year in grants to students who agree to serve for at least four years as a full-time teacher in a high-need field in a public or private elementary or secondary school that serves low-income families. The obligation to teach four years must be completed within an eight-year period. Those who do not fulfill their service requirement but have been given grants have their grants converted into Federal Direct Un-

subsidized Stafford Loans, which must be paid back with interest. These loans cannot revert to grants.

According to the Office of Management and Budget, 66 percent of the grants are converted into loans. Though 21,000 recipients have completed the program without conversion, 94,000 recipients have had their grants converted to loans. Those conversions are often triggered by small paperwork issues, such as submitting the annual form one day late or missing a date or signature.

In 2018, the U.S. Department of Education (Department) released a reconsideration process for recipients who had their grants converted into loans but had either fulfilled, or could still fulfill, their teaching requirements. The Department also turned back the clock to allow teachers who left the TEACH Grant Program once their grants were converted to give them more time to complete their requirements. These changes allowed the Department to lift the debt of 2,300 recipients.

This bill would codify this reconsideration process and mandate that the Department continue to implement it, creating a safeguard from changes in Department leadership. This bill would also outline yearly deadlines and notification requirements to rectify some of the TEACH Grant Program's previous administrative mishaps. Furthermore, with the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, many recipients have had trouble finding qualifying work. This bill would create a grace period for these individuals by extending the fulfillment period by three years for anyone who was fulfilling their obligations when the coronavirus pandemic began.

This past year has given us all a hard lesson in the invaluable service that teachers and educators provide to our society. As many young students have turned to homeschooling and remote learning, we have all come to appreciate the hard work and incredible talent of our teachers, who foster the mental, physical and emotional growth of our children every day. This bill ensures that that pipeline of talent for the teaching profession remains strong and that we do not unduly burden TEACH Program recipients, who have dedicated themselves to serving our most vulnerable communities.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill.