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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2021, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

HONORING SARAH LUMPKIN ON HER RETIREMENT

The SPEAKER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize an amazing public servant. The city clerk of Hinesville, Sarah Lumpkin, is retiring after over three decades of service in local government.

Sarah began her career with the city of Hinesville when she joined the city team as an accounts payable clerk and rose to the rank of assistant city clerk by 1991.

Throughout her career, she accumulated a long list of awards and accomplishments, including being named the first recipient of the Hinesville City Hall Employee of the Year Award in 1994, and being designated Certified Municipal Clerk by the International Institute of Municipal Clerks in 1996.

She took her leadership skills to new heights when she served as president of the Georgia Municipal Clerks and Finance Officers Association of the State of Georgia from 2006 to 2007.

Sarah's guidance and expertise throughout her career paved the way

for tremendous growth and success for the city of Hinesville, and I am very grateful for all she accomplished.

I wish her the best of luck as she begins her retirement.

CONGRATULATIONS TO BRITNEE KINARD

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate SD Gunner Fund's Britnee Kinard for receiving the President's Lifetime Achievement Award because of her outstanding service to fellow Americans.

The AmeriCorps President's Lifetime Achievement Award is the highest honor of the President's Volunteer Service Award and it recognizes individuals, families, and groups who achieve a remarkable number of service hours.

In receiving the lifetime achievement award, Britnee is being recognized for her over 4,000 hours of service to ensure the continuation of America's unrivaled commitment to improving countless lives.

Britnee is the founder and president of SD Gunner Fund, which is an incredible organization that assists veterans, exceptional children, and first responders in receiving vital resources, such as service dogs, therapy dogs, emergency assistance, community advocacy and education, and much more.

She was inspired to start the successful SD Gunner Fund when she left her high-profile career in business to become a full-time caregiver to her husband after he suffered life-altering injuries while serving our country in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

I want to thank Britnee for her selfless commitment to service through SD Gunner Fund, and I wish her the best. I am extremely proud to have Britnee here in the First Congressional District of Georgia.

NATIONAL PHARMACIST DAY

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize National Pharmacist Day, which takes place in January annually to recognize

and honor pharmacists across the Nation.

As a pharmacist myself, I thoroughly understand the role each pharmacist plays as an integrated member of the healthcare team. Every day, pharmacists are directly involved in patient care, and pharmacists are the most accessible healthcare professionals in the country. Ninety-five percent of Americans live within 5 miles of a pharmacy.

As we battle COVID-19, pharmacists should be recognized, as they are on the front lines dispensing the vaccine. Because of their work, lives will be saved. They have been vital resources throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and they will continue to play an active role in combating the virus.

I ask that you join me in recognizing all pharmacists by thanking them for their work.

THANK YOU, JOHN LEWIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. DEMINGS). The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, this past Sunday was Bloody Sunday. For some who are not familiar with that terminology, the Congressional Black Caucus did a special tribute last evening. But I think it is also a recognition that elections count, determination counts, conscience counts.

So this morning I want to emphasize Bloody Sunday and what it really meant. It was, in fact, to restore or to initiate or to give Americans the free and equal right to vote. The late John Lewis, our friend, our brother, the conscience of the Congress, may not have known what historical steps he was walking in when he stared down the Alabama State Troopers standing with Hosea Williams and Albert Turner and other foot soldiers, staring them down because voting counts.

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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I rise to pay tribute to that kind of determination. As we proceed to debate the American rescue package, I want the Members, my friends on the other side of the aisle, to recognize that elections count, that people are looking for us to stare down the devastation of COVID-19, the devastation of poverty, and the devastation of lack of jobs.

They are looking for diversity in terms of vaccinations, reaching out to neighborhoods. They are looking for the child tax credit, the earned income tax credit, and that is because John Lewis stood tall for the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

In fact, after that Bloody Sunday, President Johnson rose to this podium and said: "I speak tonight for the dignity of man and the destiny of democracy. . . . At times, history and fate meet at a single time in a single place to shape a turning point in man's unending search for freedom. So it was at Lexington and Concord. So it was a century ago at Appomattox. So it was last week in Selma, Alabama."

So when we debate, I want us to be reminded that people died for the Voting Rights Act because elections count: people like Jimmie Lee Jackson, who was shot by a State trooper in Marion, Alabama, after a peaceful rally to vote; women like Viola Liuzzo, a Detroit housewife who was driving people back and forth between Montgomery and Selma. She, a mother of 5, was shot to death.

So today I rise to emphasize that Bloody Sunday is not just Bloody Sunday. It is a continuation of the fight for justice and the fight for voting rights. It is what we will do tomorrow. It is the PRO Act. It is the Violence Against Women Act. It is the vote for the American rescue package that does not disallow the fact that all Americans, those impoverished, those who have lost loved ones to COVID-19, those teachers who want to get in the classroom and teach. All of this will be part of the American rescue package.

Thank you, John Lewis, for beginning to tell us what America should be and what America can be. It is because of that kind of strength that we are here today. To John Lewis, we commit to you to pass H.R. 1 in the Senate, to pass the Voting Rights Act enhancement number four, after Shelby, Alabama, destroyed and undermined the very strength of the Voting Rights Act. Because we would not be here today; we would not have the opportunity to have the American rescue package; we would not have the opportunity to have the Violence Against Women Act; we would not have the opportunity to have the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, whose family was here last week when we debated it, if we did not have the right to vote.

So it is my belief today that, as we go into this debate, as we go into the rest of the week, as we vote for the universal background checks and the Charleston, South Carolina, closing the loophole, it is not a frivolous authority

or power that we utilize. It is because people were willing to be beaten and to be almost killed, but certainly unbowed, as Shirley Chisholm said, for the precious right to vote.

Bloody Sunday may be one day, March 7, but all the years that I have gone and crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge, chosen to highlight a Confederate segregationist, but we turned that lemon into lemonade. When thousands and thousands and thousands every year marched across that Edmund Pettus Bridge, we weren't marching for segregation, we weren't marching for the violence that was perpetrated against the foot soldiers year after year. We were marching for freedom and the right to vote.

So this right to vote will be exercised on the floor of the House this week. I ask and beg my colleagues to join us in what is good. Join us in the American rescue package. Join us in the PRO Act. Join us in the universal background checks. Join us in closing the Charleston loophole. Join us next week in the Violence Against Women Act. Join us to make America the country of John Robert Lewis, standing for what is good.

Madam Speaker, I know we will do good and get into good trouble.

A QUESTION OF LIFE AND DEATH IN TEXAS

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

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, and still I rise, a proud, liberated Democrat unbought and unbosomed.

I rise today to address the question of life and death, the question associated with the Governor of the State of Texas indicating that on tomorrow people may go out into the public and to public venues without a mask. He is leaving it to the public to make decisions associated with life and death. Life and death in Texas because the 7-day average for hospitalizations is 6,000. The number of people that died on last Sunday was 65. Life and death. And he leaves it in the hands of people who may somehow believe that he is risking his life. Not so. Not to the extent that the public will be, those who haven't been vaccinated because on December 22 of last year the Governor was vaccinated.

The Governor has resources. If by chance he should contract the virus, the Governor will have access to the finest medical care in the world. The Governor will get to the hospital expeditiously either by some car that will have some officer driving at a high rate of speed because the road will be cleared for him or he will pursue his needs by way of helicopter. The Governor has resources.

Better example. The former President, who called the virus a hoax, when he contracted the virus, he went to the finest medical center, received the finest medical care, and he survived.

His friend, who attended one of his rallies and 9 days later contracted the virus, died. This is a matter of life and death. The virus has not dissipated. It has not gone away.

So to the people of Texas, I love you, but I say this to you: If you don't have the resources that the Governor has, if you don't have a helicopter, if you don't have access to the best medical care in the world, if you don't have a doctor that will be waiting on you when you get to the hospital, if you have to go to the emergency room—the Governor won't go to the emergency room, he will bypass that.

So if you can bypass the emergency room and you can have the finest medical care in the world, maybe you should consider going into public venues without a mask. But if not, remember, it is a question of life and death, and the life you save may very well be your own.

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PANDEMIC HELP AND TESTING FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

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

Ms. SCHRIER. Madam Speaker, I am so proud of the wins in the American Rescue Plan, and in particular with what this means for America's children. As a pediatrician, my life's work has been the health and the wellbeing of children.

This pandemic has been particularly hard for children and families. The most important thing we can do to bring relief to our communities is to end the pandemic. This means getting shots into as many arms as possible as quickly as we can. It also means taking steps now to ensure that when children return to the classroom, our schools and our small businesses can stay safe and stay open.

Testing is key to keeping our schools and workplaces safe. And, frankly, we have not used testing in a way that significantly curbs the spread of this disease. Rapid home testing, in particular, is a critical public health tool that we have yet to really deploy. And there is funding in the American rescue package to support more strategic widespread testing.

Rapid tests can give results in about 15 minutes, and they can be done at home. Imagine testing in the morning before brushing your teeth. By the time you are done with breakfast you would have a result. If positive, you would stay home and avoid spreading coronavirus to others. This is how we break the chain of transmission and starve the virus. What we need now is to get these tests evaluated, approved, scaled up and priced such that everyone can use them two to three times a week. Frequent testing means you will catch infections early while people are