

wage gap so that every individual, regardless of gender, can receive a fair wage for work they do.

REPARATION

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, we have had a tumultuous, but yet invigorating 2 weeks. Just a week ago, we were able, in the Judiciary Committee, to pass H.R. 40, the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals.

Those who voted for it came from all parts of the country and represented all racial groups. It was a wonderful experience of understanding the cruciality and recognizing the slave history of African Americans and further developing proposals to deal with the dastardly impacts on African Americans.

We are delighted to have the support of Japanese Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Pacific Americans, and, of course, White Americans because they understand the healing power of H.R. 40.

Then we just recently had a judgment—as I have said on this floor, I know the Floyd family. They are America's family.

We had a judgment on Tuesday that showed the strength of America and her justice system and the recognition that we are all created equal and each one has to be held accountable for his actions.

So this has been a good week. America needs to know that. We look forward to passing H.R. 40 on this floor in celebration of the commemoration of Juneteenth when slaves were finally freed and passing the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act.

ISSUES OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, it is my honor to yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. CAMMACK).

FARMERS TO FAMILIES FOOD BOX PROGRAM

Mrs. CAMMACK. Madam Speaker, last week the press—not the Department of Agriculture—reported that the Trump administration's Farmers to Families Food Box Program would come to an end.

In subsequent reporting and an unapologetic email from the USDA, it was made clear that the only reason for its termination was because of the man who created it.

The Farmers to Families Food Box Program had open eligibility, making certain anyone and everyone in need, regardless of status, income, or household size, had supplementary access to

fresh meats, dairy, and produce. Since May 2020, this program has provided more than 156 million boxes to households across the United States.

Farmers to Families provided an alternative market for food intended for restaurants and food service, creating outlets for supply chains. Due to COVID this food could not easily be realigned to retail markets quickly enough to prevent spoilage. Even today, Farmers to Families provides fresh products in greater quantities than traditional emergency feeding programs—items such as dairy, meat, and fresh produce, which have always presented unique logistical challenges for distribution.

The program reemployed workers in the commercial food distribution sector whose work was halted by the closure of restaurants, hotels, and other food service industries during COVID.

□ 1300

In my own district, L&M Farms, a participant in the program, managed to supply more than 600,000 boxes of fresh produce to those in need.

Regardless of the various hiccups heard during USDA's listening sessions in previous hearings and from Members of this very House, the program worked exactly as intended, as a lifeline for consumers and producers alike during a challenging time.

Nine hours after the press broke the story, USDA relayed, via email, that commodity purchases will “continue to occur and be directed to existing, reliable channels of distribution.”

This leads me to believe that locally focused producers and distributors who benefited greatly from Farmers to Families are being traded in for billion-dollar organizations that have already received billions in government aid to perpetuate dependence instead of eradicating it.

Madam Speaker, I hope this body comes together to voice their strong opposition to the termination of this small piece of salvation that had a positive impact on all of our local communities, particularly those in rural areas.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend from Florida, who truly is my friend, for her comments.

At this time, it is my privilege to yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BAIRD), my friend, a Baird man.

PLIGHT OF LAKES SHAFER AND FREEMAN

Mr. BAIRD. Madam Speaker, I appreciate my good friend from Texas allowing me to share with this body the program that I have for today.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the overwhelming challenges plaguing a community in my district. It is located in White and Carroll Counties of west central Indiana. The communities surrounding Lakes Shafer and Freeman are a recreation destination for Hoosiers from all across the State and from Americans across the country.

The Twin Lakes, as they are known, straddle the small community of Mon-

ticello. In the nearly 100 years since the two reservoirs were created by damming up the Tippecanoe River, their far-reaching attraction has created a flourishing local economy built on tourism, replete with the trappings of a family vacation, including its own amusement park, cruise boat, resort, marina, and much more.

Despite all the buildup of amenities of this Hoosier destination, the lakes remained the focal point of the community and the driving force of the regional economy. Unfortunately, lake conditions can also have a negative impact on the local area.

At the hands of Mother Nature and outside forces, these crown jewels of the region have been tarnished. On multiple occasions, Lake Freeman, because of drought conditions, has been drained to the riverbed that flows at the bottom.

Unfortunately, these episodes of diminishing lake levels have come at an increasingly frequent rate in recent years and in times of even moderate drought conditions. These droughts caused the lake to become almost completely drained and resulted in devastation to the natural ecology and the local economy.

Businesses, homes, property—both real and personal—tax revenue, and the loss of family time are all impacted. The past 7 months have been one of those times as drought conditions last summer once again caused Lake Freeman's water level to plummet by more than 13 feet, completely draining the vast majority of this 1500-acre reservoir.

One victim of this devastation is the disruption of local ecological balance. During the worst parts of the episode, area residents walked the lake bed only to find dead turtles, fish, mussels, and more that had succumbed to the lack of water.

Safety also became a tremendous challenge for locals and boaters as water levels sank, exposing stumps, sharp objects, and other items usually covered by the water.

These impacts on the lake quality are especially disappointing to a community that has prided itself in its conservation stewardship of the lake. Members of the community have banded together to form Shafer & Freeman Lakes Environmental Conservation Corporation, also known as SFLECC.

This volunteer group raises thousands of dollars every year to fund the Summer Lakes Clean Up project. Over the years, this group has volunteered over 17,000 hours in helping preserve the beauty and natural environment of the lakes.

Residents are facing tremendous economic costs as well. Property values have plunged; local drinking water and drinking wells have dried up; retaining walls have buckled, threatening to collapse; and boats are stranded and unable to be winterized.

The financial costs to solve these issues are too high for many residents.

Even if they wanted to move, the values of their homes have dropped considerably. One resident who moved to Lake Freeman after she retired said: "We built a retirement home 10 years ago. It is probably not worth half of what we have in it. It is very depressing."

Another resident told our office about the difficulties they have faced after their water well dried up. In order to use any water, they have to drive miles away to purchase their water from a grocery store.

Small businesses are facing the same tough financial decisions. The Madam Carroll, a cruise boat and entertainment venue, struggled significantly to keep their business above water, literally. Because of the dried-up lake, the owners of the vessel had to dock their boat that usually sails year-round. "It is almost as bad as it can get," Chris Peters, co-owner of the Madam Carroll, told me.

Tall Timbers, a marina that helps prepare and store boats for the winter, saw a dramatic drop in their business. In an average year, they process and winterize around 500 boats but were only able to house around 200 boats this year due to them being unable to access the customers' boats.

Susan Wagner, who owns the convenience store and gas station on the shores of the lake, described the situation as bleak. She had to let her employees go earlier than usual because of the lack of business.

I am proud of the resiliency that the Hoosiers of this magnificent community have shown. They have exhausted many options to find a solution to this constant problem.

While I am disappointed and saddened for these Hoosiers because of the difficulty that these conditions have created, I am happy to report that conditions have finally been restored to normal just recently because of the rains after more than 7 long months of this kind of condition.

I want the Hoosiers in my district and all those impacted by Lake Freeman's challenges to know that I hear their concerns, that I am here on their behalf, and that I will do everything I can to remedy this problem.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments. It is obviously an important issue. We have been taking up such issues, but it is not necessarily the best way to proceed.

For one thing, the bill that was passed today to make the District of Columbia a State flies in the face of the brilliance of the Founders when it came to setting up our Federal Government.

Before we had the Constitution ratified in 1789, our first President was sworn in under the new Constitution in 1789, George Washington, and the first Vice President, John Adams. They were all sworn in in Federal Hall there in New York City, so that was technically the first Capital under the new

Constitution. Before that, under the Articles of Confederation, they used Philadelphia and, obviously, New York.

But in the Constitution itself, there was a provision for a Federal district 10 miles by 10 miles square. It included land that was ceded from Maryland that was on the east side of the Potomac River, as well as a little bit less land from the west side of the Potomac from Virginia.

The reason the Founders felt it was so important to have a separate Federal entity that was not wholly contained within a State, not contained within a city, but a Federal enclave as the Capital, was so that—the big reason—no State, no city government could try to extort or hold the Capital hostage.

For example, if the Capital got its water from or through a State or city, then they would be subject to having their water turned off. Of course, that was a rather big issue back in the day.

We know that New York City had a problem with disease and lack of water to put out fires. A guy named Aaron Burr, who ended up being Vice President and hoped to be President, he and some partners made a proposal for legislation that would create the Manhattan Water Company that would provide all the water that was needed, and it would be clean. That would help stop the disease.

They would provide water free to put out fires, and so that seemed very attractive. The thing is, though, they said they needed a monopoly so that they could afford to pay for all they were going to do.

They had Alexander Hamilton review it. They got him to sign on that it was a worthy, honorable project. Somewhere after Alexander Hamilton reviewed the language for that, other words were inserted not only to provide for the Manhattan Water Company, or water business, but also such other economic practices or businesses they felt appropriate.

Well, that was the scheme the whole time, to create a bank that was not created under other Federal law. So, the Manhattan Bank was created. Aaron Burr and his partners let Manhattan suffer without the water. So, even back then, in the late 1700s, early 1800s, water was a big deal.

Electricity was, obviously, not a big deal yet, but the same thing. If you have to get things you need to subsist through another State or city, then there is always a possibility that you could be extorted.

We saw the brilliance of the Founders back last summer when we had a Democrat Mayor that did not like the President of the United States. Some of us were wondering whether she was going to authorize Washington, D.C., police to protect the White House itself.

Obviously, she didn't provide much help to stop fires from being lit at the historic church right there, catty-corner to the White House. But some of us

observed what was going on and a Mayor who didn't seem to care too much about the President.

Wow, what if you saw that play out? It is exactly what the Founders wanted to avoid, the U.S. Capital, the U.S. Government, being held hostage. You could see how it could very easily have played into that situation.

So, it was brilliant. The Federal enclave, the Federal district that was provided for in our Constitution, would not be part of any State, would not be part of a city. It would be the District of Columbia. It was brilliant.

Now, as the majority leader pointed out, purely for politics—this was all about politics. The majority decided they wanted to make the District of Columbia a State unto itself. If that were to become a part of our system here, then this government would be totally subject to the whims of the State of Columbia.

□ 1315

We could be prevented from going into session. We could be prevented from leaving. It creates a situation down the road for when things could truly get out of hand.

And even though the mainstream media and our friends across the aisle referred to the at least \$2 billion of damage, the deaths, shooting, looting, government buildings being burned as peaceful demonstrations, they certainly weren't in the areas where things were being burned, stores were being looted, and destruction was the lot.

That could come back again, and you could have people who would be that active. It certainly appears that BLM is more concerned about making this a socialist country, an Orwellian, a totalitarian country than they are about any race. Antifa is just all about creating chaos, because they figure, out of chaos, will come a totalitarian, Orwellian government.

So this time we are going through right now will be looked at historically in other countries and whatever this country becomes, and this will be pointed to as a very, very important time.

Now, we were accused of playing politics with this issue on the Republican side. I can't speak for everyone, but I can speak for all the Republicans I have talked to. This is still an important concept that we not have a Capital subject to being held hostage. And if D.C. becomes a State, that scenario is then set up, and it is not good for the country.

In wrestling with these issues after I got here—you know, I saw the license plate, and I mentioned this before in years past—that, at first, when I saw "taxation without representation," you know, I didn't get it. It didn't seem appropriate. But then you find out that actually every territory that does not have a full voting Member of the House of Representatives that is a territory of the U.S.—whether it is Puerto Rico,

Guam, Samoa, U.S. Virgin Islands, a number of places—if they don't elect a full voting representative, they do not pay Federal income tax.

And in going back to the Revolution—and I put this in what is H.R. 1295, in this Congress, but I filed it back several Congresses ago, and I filed it, I think, in most every Congress since because I believe it is the right thing to do. To me, it is not a matter of politics; it is a matter of being consistent with an ideal.

As Ben Franklin said, if we don't elect one Member of the British Parliament, they have no right to tax us.

That was a righteous concept, and it still is. As a matter of principle, I have to agree with that. The people of D.C. are right, they shouldn't have to pay a Federal income tax.

But as I put in my bill and have in all these different Congress sessions we have been through, as I filed it each time, the phrase “no taxation without representation” was a rallying cry of many American colonists during the period of British rule in the 1760s and early 1770s. The slogan gained widespread notoriety after the passage of the Sugar Act on April 5, 1764. American colonists increasingly resented having taxes levied upon them without having any legislators they elected who were voting in Parliament in London.

The idea that there should be no taxation without representation dated back even further. This issue became even more defined in 1765, with the passage of the Stamp Act, which was the first true attempt to levy a direct tax on the American colonies. Ultimately, that tax was repealed, but the idea of no taxation without representation persisted.

Article I, Section 2, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution says: “The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States.”

That is why, unless someone was from a State, then under the Constitution, they didn't get a full voting Member of the House.

By the same token, if we are going to be consistent with the founding principles, the residents of the District of Columbia should not be paying Federal income tax, just as those in Puerto Rico and other territories don't pay Federal income tax.

So the bill goes on, and it points out that Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, all of these, don't pay Federal income tax.

So the rest of this bill, H.R. 1295, in this Congress, just has, in effect, the residents of D.C. shouldn't have to and don't pay Federal income tax.

Now, since I have been here, this issue has been coming up, just as it has over the centuries, about the District of Columbia representation. It came up back in 1847. The Federal Government

was not really utilizing the land west of the Potomac, and the people there were saying, Look, we want to elect two Senators, Representatives as our population allows; and you are not using our land; let us go back to being part of Virginia.

So, in 1847, Congress, the House and Senate, signed by the President, ceded land back to Virginia, the State from which it came, because to do otherwise would have been to cheat Virginia, because Virginia gave that land for the purpose of being used as part of the Federal enclave, the Federal Capital.

So if the U.S. Government had done anything besides use it as a Federal enclave for part of the U.S. Capital, without Virginia's permission, that basically the Federal Government would have stolen that from Virginia. The right thing, the proper, honorable thing to do, if it wasn't going to use the land, was to give it back to Virginia.

Now, some of us can see why it might have been nice if they had said, No, we are going to use it, so we are not going to cede it back, but you don't have—when Federal income tax came along, you don't have to pay that.

But that is not what happened. It was ceded back to Virginia. That is why, when anyone sees a map of the District of Columbia, it is not a perfect square. On the west, it follows the Potomac River.

So I have that bill. I have had it for many Congresses now. I wish that when Republicans were in the majority, I could have gotten our leadership to bring it to the floor, because it should have been brought to the floor and it should have passed. But I really thought that at some point—and I had even offered to redo the bill and put any Democrats, including Delegate ELLEANOR HOLMES NORTON, have it as her bill. She has not chosen to ever be part of this bill. And then we hear today, well, it is all because of politics.

Well, I have not ever proposed this for politics. I am proposing it because I know our history and I know this is the right thing to do. They should not have to pay Federal income tax.

What I have offered in prior years is, Look, you are trying to have D.C. have a full voting representative with just legislation. That will be unconstitutional at some point. Why don't you at least go ahead and get this bill passed, especially while Democrats are in the majority, so that until such time as D.C. has a full voting representative, you at least don't have to pay taxes without full representation?

But I have never gotten Democrats to agree to do that. So it was not brought to the floor by Republican leaders over the years. That may well have been for political reasons. But it is being pushed by me, and has all these years, as a matter of principle, and it still is.

Why wouldn't Democrats agree to go ahead and do this bill until such time, when and if, it becomes unnecessary?

Why would Democrats continue to allow taxation without representation to go unchanged?

I have been trying to do this for 13 years or so. Apparently, it is a problem on both sides of the aisle. I wish people would quit playing politics and just be fair to the people of Washington, D.C.

Back when I first proposed a bill to eliminate the Federal income tax—as Puerto Rico knows, there is no Federal income tax, but they have a very, very substantial local tax, which is what happens when you have approaching 30 percent of the workers working for the government. You are going to have a lot of taxes to pay.

But on the other hand, in 1847, since land was ceded west of the Potomac back to Virginia, if you are bent on giving people two Senators to vote for, as well as at least one Representative, then the proper thing to do would be to cede the land back to the State from which it came; don't cheat that State. The Federal Government should not be in the business of cheating people or cheating States.

This bill—it has had another number before, but in this Congress it is 2651, and it is cited as the “District of Columbia-Maryland Reunion Act.” It goes through and gives some history. I am kind of big on that. It is important to know where we came from so we know where we should go. It cites some of the things I have already mentioned, but then it gets into actually drawing a descriptive line around the Federal buildings, to include the Capitol and the White House and the important Federal buildings—so that would still be Federal property—and then ceding the rest of the land back to Maryland.

Now, I would prefer just to keep the District of Columbia and the residents not pay Federal income tax, rather than trying to do what is unconstitutional—it seemed pretty clear to me—to cheat Maryland out of the land they gave. I mean, it is a bait and switch. Yeah, you gave it for the Federal enclave, but we are going to take it and make it a separate State. And, yes, each time you create a new State, it weakens the power of those States already in existence, because their two Senators' votes are not quite as important as they once were. But this would be a constitutional and appropriate solution if the majority chose to go that way.

□ 1330

I still think, regardless, even as the majority persists in trying to create a State, which I think should ultimately be struck down, why not go ahead and give the residents of the District of Columbia the relief they deserve and say, In the meantime, Congress has full authority to say who is taxed and who isn't, and the residents of the District of Columbia do not elect a full voting Representative yet, so they don't pay any income tax.

And, again, I will extend that offer. I was told by State senator Bill Ratliff—

and I can't remember who he quoted—but "It is amazing what you can get done if you don't care who gets the credit." I have often been willing to say, put whoever's name will help this bill get through.

In fact, sometimes I have made my own leadership mad enough that, you know, if I had a good idea, I would provide it to somebody on the committee of jurisdiction and say, "This is a good bill, why don't you lead on it?"

"Well, why don't you do it?"

"Because you are on the committee of jurisdiction, and I have made Republican leaders mad, and so it has got a better chance if you do it." And it has been nice to see people make good use of their authority in that way.

Of course, there has been plenty of things written about this issue. There is one from a blog of the National Archives, "Unratified Amendments: D.C. Voting Rights," interesting article there.

National Review has an article from March of this year, "D.C. Statehood is an Idea Whose Time Should Never Come."

Another from David Harsanyi, "Concerning D.C. Statehood, the Founders Have Already Spoken." That is from March of this year also.

Something called the Wayback Machine has an article on "Constitutional Amendments Not Ratified," and of course, D.C. statehood is one such, as is the idea of giving full representation, though the Constitution says it will come from the several States. That was something we had voted on in a prior Congress since I have been here.

There is a great letter from the Attorney General of South Carolina, Alan Wilson, on this issue, and he makes a great argument just stating how Article IV, Section 3 provides that new States may be admitted by Congress in the Union, but goes on to explain why the only lawful way to provide statehood to the District of Columbia is to amend the Constitution. The District of Columbia's creation traces to Article I, Section 8, Clause 17 of the Constitution, and he goes on and makes a very compelling case.

So I don't know what the Senate is going to do. I hope that at least some of the Democrat Senators will understand that this is no time to be violating our Constitution when things have been going out of control. You have got even some people right in our own House of Representatives that are calling for and have called for confrontation, getting in people's faces, making them miserable, intimidating, threatening, making sure they aren't feeling welcome.

This is a tragic time. The Founders would normally quote Voltaire—some say the attribution lies elsewhere—but the statement was, "I disagree with what you say, but will defend to the death your right to say it." And nowadays it seems like the majority in power in Congress and the White House more takes a position: I disagree with

what you say, and I am truly woke, so I want you fired. I want you never to be able to get work again. I want your children harassed. We are going to threaten to rape, kill, destroy, do all kinds of damage to your family, and we hope that, you know, your family is destroyed and no longer exists very soon.

I mean, that is a long way from where we came. We have come so far, and in each century we made major steps forward so that the Constitution would mean exactly what it says. And now we are arriving at a time where, instead of reaching what Dr. King dreamed of, people being judged by the content of their character and not the color of their skin or anything else, we are going back to being a more racist society. We do want segregation.

I mean, there was a time when segregation was considered evil. You shouldn't segregate people by their skin color. Yes, Franklin Roosevelt believed in it, Democrat that he was. Democrat Woodrow Wilson believed in segregation and did so and used segregation inappropriately.

And now we are coming back to a time where people on the left are advocating for segregation, advocating for judging people by their skin color. It is still wrong. It has always been wrong. It still is.

One of the beauties of a country founded on Judeo-Christian principles was, regardless that slavery existed, if this country was going to continue under the principles on which it was founded, there was going to have to be a day of reckoning when people who were leaders in this country said, Look, we were endowed by our God, our Creator with certain inalienable rights, and it doesn't matter what your skin color is.

Those things don't matter. God loves every human being. There are some things we are told in the Bible God hates. Lying lips is one that God detests, and that is easy to understand. But God doesn't want for any of us to stumble, and he doesn't want people causing others to stumble. We seem to have been approaching that more closely than ever in our history.

It took a Civil War, it took a Christian minister named King preaching nonviolence, peaceful demonstration, not getting in people's faces and intimidating them or using violence. We were making so much progress. We had come further than any country in the history of the world.

I heard somebody this week say we are really probably the most racially diverse country, and we don't penalize people for their race. That has been a problem throughout history for the world, and yet we have made so much progress, and now we have people on the left advocating for segregation and advocating for judging people by characteristics instead of by the content of their character.

It was also shocking this week in debate in the Judiciary Committee to hear somebody across the aisle saying

that no Democrats have ever advocated for defunding the police, and I am sure it was intended as an honest statement. The trouble is it is simply not true. And you don't have to do much of an online search. Even with Google and Facebook and Twitter covering for the Democratic Party, you still don't have to work too hard to find so many Democrat-controlled cities that are defunding the police. They are cutting funds to the police. It is easy to find. And there are more even in this body itself that are advocating to just completely do away with the policing like we have.

Having dealt with the justice system for most of my adult life, I know the police are not immune to having bad apples, but it always struck me that there were a whole lot fewer bad apples, percentage wise, in law enforcement than there were in most any other area of life, of any other profession. And they are owed our respect. That is why it becomes very unpleasant when anyone in control ends up using law enforcement as a political battering ram against those who are not in the majority.

We have known for many weeks now that there was and is, according to the chief of Capitol Police and Sergeant at Arms, no intelligence from any source that any Member of Congress is a threat to any other Member of Congress, which means the metal detectors that the Speaker has had installed around the west, east, and north entrance were totally unnecessary.

And then, of course, after I pointed out that I was being fined \$5,000 for going to the restroom right out that door, where there was no metal detector there or at the other end of the Speaker's lobby, and I didn't avoid the metal detectors. I went through the metal detector on the west and did so satisfactorily, and for days when I was in here for a long period of time, I could go right there to the restroom, the guards right there at the entrance of the Speaker's lobby could see you go in, see you come out. They checked out the restroom, you know. There is not even a tank where you could do like was done in "The Godfather" where a gun was put in the tank of the toilet. Not even a tank to do that in there. I had never been told you need to be wanded or checked or anything. That was totally new. But since I raised that, now metal detectors have been put there so that Democrats can go after Republicans. And I say that because we now have examples of even the Speaker and others who have gone through metal detectors, set off the metal detector, and refused to be wanded and have not been fined.

Now, I understand the majority whip may have done that today. I am very sorry for Mr. CLYBURN, they may have to make an example of him just to keep the pressure, to keep me from getting out of my fine, but it doesn't change the fact that to this time the use of the metal detectors has been

very arbitrary and capricious, and the enforcement of the metal detectors has been very arbitrary and capricious.

Hopefully, those being utilized to harass Members of Congress—especially since a couple of our folks have missed votes. If they hadn't had to go through the metal detector, they would have gotten in here in time to vote.

□ 1345

It is time to open things up. Then we get word: Well, we are going start opening up, but you have to go through us, tell us anybody you are proposing to meet with and what the purpose is, this kind of stuff. We are not letting a good crisis go to waste. We are going to be very Orwellian here, and we are going to use this as an excuse to control who Members of Congress can see, who they can talk to, and really have an iron grip on what people can do.

It has gotten really sad around this place.

Here is an article from Stephanie Pagonis, "Cities such as Austin, L.A., Minneapolis, New York City, and Portland have shifted funds from police departments." Obviously, this lady, Stephanie, knows that when Democrats have said they are not defunding the police, that is not true. Democrats around the country are pushing for and actually getting budgets slashed for police departments.

"Cities in parts of the U.S.," she said, "that slashed their police department funding last year, in part as a result of police-involved shootings, have seen an uptick in certain crimes over the past year, according to data analyzed by FOX News. Cities such as Los Angeles, Minneapolis, New York City, Portland, Oregon, and Austin, Texas, have shifted funds from police departments to social services programs. Such cuts have led some departments to lay off officers, cancel recruiting classes, or retreat from hiring goals.

"As police departments were left to make do with shrunken budgets and less support, some big cities have seen sometimes drastic upticks in murders and other violent crimes. . . . The 'defund the police' movement is not necessarily about gutting police department budgets, though some groups have tried. And budget cuts were already expected as a result of alternative needs for funding because of the coronavirus pandemic."

Then, the article goes on and looks at the cuts that some of these cities have had.

Here is an article: "Democrat Representative MAXINE WATERS Demanded Special Police Motorcade and Escort Before Calling for Violence at Anti-Police Event," by Jordan Davidson at The Federalist.

Daily Caller's Henry Rodgers reports: "'The Squad' Pushes to 'Defund the Police' While Spending Thousands on Private Security to Protect Themselves."

You have to have some protection from somewhere. Otherwise, you are

not going to be able to maintain a position of authority in government. There are always going to be evil people, in this world at least, who are going to attempt to bring down people in authority.

This article is from Matt Palumbo, December 30, 2020: "2020 Homicide Surge Sets RECORD Amid 'Defund the Police' Hysteria." It has facts and figures on that.

One other thing I want to touch on. Since we have some people who believe climate change is the most pressing issue of our time, I was surprised to hear the former leader of NASA say that they had found that our Moon, the Earth's Moon, is slightly changing its orbit because I had not read that or seen that anywhere, and that even Earth's orbit around the Sun is slightly changing.

Of course, I had seen previously that the ice caps were melting, and some people say it is because of the cars, pollution. But it still doesn't explain to me why the ice caps on the planet Mars have melted or have been melting for cow flatulence or different things here on Earth. How is that causing the ice caps on Mars to melt?

Here is an article from NASA, from February 27, 2020. It says: "Our lives literally revolve around cycles: series of events that are repeated regularly in the same order. There are hundreds of different types of cycles in our world and in the universe. Some are natural, such as the change of the seasons," that is one form of climate change, "annual animal migrations, or the circadian rhythms that govern our sleep patterns. Others are human-produced, like growing and harvesting crops, musical rhythms, or economic cycles."

It goes on to point out something called the Milankovitch cycles, and they include: "The shape of Earth's orbit, known as eccentricity; the angle Earth's axis is tilted with respect to Earth's orbital plane, known as obliquity; and the direction Earth's axis of rotation is pointed, known as precession." It goes on to discuss this.

Apparently, there is another article from Forbes from April of last year, "Earth Is Spiraling Away From the Sun for Now, But Eventually Will Crash Into It." I had not heard or read that before, about our Moon's orbit changing at all or the Earth's orbit around the Sun changing at all. I don't know what, if anything, could be done about that, but there is no question that the Moon's orbit changing or Earth's orbit changing around the Sun can't help but have significant effects on our climate.

This article, the headline says that Earth will eventually crash into the Sun. Well, it is amazing. I remember in the 1970s reading that we were at the beginning of a new ice age. It was very early in the new ice age, but eventually, Earth would be covered by ice. It would mean the end of life as we knew it.

As a Christian, I was thinking that is not how the Earth is going to end, and

I didn't really believe that. Lo and behold, it wasn't too many years later we find out, or we are told: Well, the Earth is warming, and the Earth's warming is going to destroy the planet. It is global warming.

Then, of course, global warming, we found out some places it was cooling. As one witness said some years back, actually, the Northern Hemisphere is not nearly as warm as it was back when the Norse were coming over and having these big farms in what we now call Greenland.

There are cycles, and there is something that could come into play in the great design of our Creator that would keep Earth from crashing into the Sun. But in the meantime, it is important that we not run around like Chicken Little and destroy the rich blessings we have out of fear that we may miss out on other blessings. Let's use the wisdom and common sense that most of our constituents have.

In the meantime, I think we really need to find out more about the changing orbit of Earth around the Sun and the changing orbit, if any, of the Moon around the Earth. It is a lot to learn.

If we are going to help contribute to the downfall of the greatest experiment in self-government in the history of the world, then making our Nation's Capital where it could be subject to being extorted, held hostage, then these other things may not matter anyway.

In the meantime, we have a responsibility to the Nation, our oath, and the Constitution to ensure that we keep this experiment in self-government going.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

WAITING FOR ANSWERS ABOUT JOSHUA JOHNSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, and still I rise. And I rise today because I am deeply saddened.

I am saddened because today represents the day in the life of a constituent that she will never forget, that her husband will never forget.

I rise to call to the attention of the world the words of a constituent. These words were printed in the Houston Chronicle. I am grateful to the Chronicle for publishing this story because this story speaks to a circumstance unlike that with George Floyd. I will say more about that in just a moment.

But I rise, grateful to the Chronicle, with the words of a mother. Here are her words: "Our son was killed before George Floyd, but we are still waiting for answers."

Their son lost his life 1 year ago today in Houston, Texas, in my congressional district. He lost his life several houses down from his home, the