

quotes, they were extremely skeptical about the effectiveness of coronavirus vaccines when Donald Trump was in charge.

Of course, when Biden became President, the vaccine suddenly became entirely effective and highly encouraged. But Jen Psaki still maintained in July that mandating these vaccines is “not the Federal Government’s role.”

But now President Biden is forcing millions of Americans to choose between keeping their jobs or getting the vaccine. My office is flooded daily with calls from constituents who risk losing their livelihoods because of this administration’s mandate. Apparently, protecting Americans’ freedoms to make their own healthcare decisions is too much to ask.

So far Joe Biden’s Presidency has been defined by his out-of-touch agenda. A vaccine mandate is not what Americans want and is inconsistent with our national values, Madam Speaker.

Tennesseans value freedom from government tyranny. That is why we elect leaders like Governor Billy Lee and members of the Tennessee General Assembly, who are fighting outrageous vaccine mandates.

Our country prospers when elected leaders protect Americans’ constitutional rights and freedoms. Unfortunately, this is a radical concept to President Joe Biden.

#### EVERYONE DESERVES A FRESH START

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

Ms. SCANLON. Madam Speaker, for millions of Americans, a minor or decades-old criminal record can pose an insurmountable barrier to full employment, housing, and education. All too often, individuals in this situation are unable to get a fresh start because having eligible records sealed or expunged is so burdensome or expensive.

Bureaucratic delays and high legal fees perpetuate the cycle of poverty and make it more difficult for people to transition back into society successfully after being incarcerated.

That is why I was proud to join Representative DAVID TRONE and a bipartisan group of our colleagues from the House and the Senate to introduce legislation last week to help these Americans get the second chances they deserve.

The Fresh Start Act of 2021 provides Federal grants for States with record sealing or expungement procedures to help improve their automated record infrastructure.

As we rebound from a once-in-a-century pandemic and in the name of fairness and equity, we need to eliminate barriers to employment and champion opportunities for our communities to recover and thrive.

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#### MORE UNNECESSARY SPENDING

(Mr. COMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, I rise to express my continued concern and opposition to the efforts from the Democrat majority to pass another \$3.5 trillion worth of unnecessary spending.

If you ask any American right now what the biggest challenge they face is, it is inflation. We have inflation today primarily because of the last unnecessary spending that was passed in this House, and that was the \$1.9 trillion stimulus bill that Democrats passed on a partisan basis in this House. That has led to inflation.

We have more inflation than we have had in my adult lifetime. Yet, this body wants to continue to pass more unnecessary spending that will lead to more inflation. Enough is enough. We need to move on from this bill and take care of the business that the American people deserve Congress to address.

#### HONORING MANNY ONTIVEROS

(Mr. CORREA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CORREA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a great community leader and a good friend, Manny Ontiveros.

As an Anaheim native and friend, Manny has devoted over 30 years of his life to serving the community, first as a trustee of the North Orange County Community College District and then as a Federal probation officer for almost 30 years. He was also a member of the Anaheim Parks and Recreation Commission and the Anaheim Independencia board of directors.

Today, Manny is looking to retire from his Federal job as a Federal probation officer. I congratulate him and his family. Job great done. Career great done.

Madam Speaker, I am honored that he calls me his friend, and everybody in the community is honored to have Manny Ontiveros serving us well.

#### ATLANTA BRAVES ADVANCE TO WORLD SERIES

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Atlanta Braves for advancing to the World Series for the first time since 1999.

In a season plagued by injuries, what the Braves have accomplished is nothing short of remarkable. On August 1, the Braves had a losing record, and things were looking grim. Through much adversity, the Braves relied on some unlikely stars to shine in the

postseason during the month of October.

What this team has achieved is nothing short of special, and we hope to continue shocking the world.

After caving to the lies of the Democrats, Major League Baseball moved the All-Star game out of Atlanta, depriving the community of hundreds of millions of dollars. Well, you may be able to move the All-Star game, but you can’t move the World Series, and Truist Park is going to be electric.

In addition to the players, I would also like to congratulate manager Brian Snitker and the rest of the coaching staff for the tremendous job they did in assembling and guiding this team to the 2021 World Series. Go Braves.

#### OBSESSION WITH ABORTION

(Mr. GROTHMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, a lot has been said about the reconciliation bill that we may or may not vote on. Obviously, the spending is tremendously out of control and will further fan the flames of inflation. There are several provisions in there designed, one more time, I would argue, to replace fathers and the family.

Madam Speaker, today, I will address, one more time, the majority’s obsession with abortion. We have already seen this cycle, efforts made in the White House to get rid of the Mexico City policy and have the United States involved in pushing abortion around the world, kind of a very strange and sad thing given how blessed this country has been by the Almighty during our tenure.

In this bill, one more time, be it including \$10 billion in public health funding grants that do not include the Hyde amendment, or abortion coverage for ObamaCare and plans covering individuals up to 138 percent of the Federal poverty line, this is one of the most extreme pro-abortion bills that I have seen yet, and it is another reason not to vote for the reconciliation bill.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF DEREK ASDOT

(Mrs. CAMMACK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAMMACK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute and to honor the life of my dear friend, Green Cove Springs Police Chief Derek Asdot. Chief Asdot passed away last month after a prolonged and hard-fought battle with COVID-19.

He started his distinguished career in law enforcement with Duval County Schools and, in 2002, joined Green Cove Springs Police Department. During his nearly 20 years of service to the Green Cove Springs community, he served in multiple capacities, including patrolman, narcotics task force, and, finally, as chief of police starting in 2017.

He leaves behind a wonderful wife and two children, as well as a community full of grateful citizens, grateful for his decades of faithful service to the community and its people and grateful for having had a chance to know a man like Derek.

I am personally saddened by this loss. Chief Asdot was a friend, a mentor, and a colleague who showed me what selfless public service looks like. He did his duty with integrity, passion, grit, and I am forever thankful to have known him.

Rest easy, Chief. We've got your 6.

#### VOTING RIGHTS UNDER ATTACK

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

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TORRES of New York. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. TORRES of New York. Madam Speaker, where did we get this notion that the filibuster is more worth preserving than the right to vote? That is surely not the lesson of American history. That is surely not what we teach our students in the classroom or our children at home. Yet, that is the lie that dictates what happens here in the Nation's Capitol, a lie that comes at a heavy cost to American democracy.

It seems that there is nothing sacred in American politics—not the truth, not the peaceful transfer of power, not the full faith and credit of the United States, and, indeed, not even the right to vote.

The enforcement mechanisms of the Voting Rights Act have been all but eviscerated.

First, there is section 5, otherwise known as preclearance, which enables the executive branch, the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice, to enforce the Voting Rights Act. Then there is section 2, which enables the judicial branch, the courts, to enforce the Voting Rights Act. Both of these provisions have been gutted at the hands of rightwing judicial activism.

The end of the Voting Rights Act as we know it has been a political windfall for the Republican Party, which is intent on holding power by any means necessary, even if it means disenfranchising Black and Brown voters.

We are here to tell you that the Congressional Black Caucus will not stand by idly while the voting rights of Black Americans come under systematic assault. We will fight back because fighting is what we do in the Congressional

Black Caucus and because there were many before us who were bloodied and bludgeoned and beaten so that we can have the right to vote. The least we can do is fight back.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY), our dynamic leader, our dynamic chair.

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, I thank Congressman TORRES for yielding.

Madam Speaker, it is indeed my honor to stand in this Chamber tonight to speak up, to speak out about voting rights, voter suppression, fighting back, disenfranchised, section 4, section 5, section 2, all of which you will hear about tonight.

We are here as members of the Congressional Black Caucus because we want to make sure that all of our colleagues hear our story, a story that they, too, should know so well, the story of a lady by the name of Fannie Lou Hamer, a civil rights activist from Mississippi who didn't even know that she could have had the right to vote.

Recently, her granddaughter told that story. As I read that and thought about how she dedicated her life to voting rights, fast-forward, think about our beloved friend, colleague, mentor, the late Congressman John Lewis, who stood on this floor at this microphone and told us his story, told us about that day when he was crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge, what it felt like—dogs, hose, police officers, knocked down, and could have died.

But the story ends with a good message because he would have done it all over again. He told us, if you see something, say something. He reminded us that it is our role to get in good trouble.

So tonight, we want our colleagues, especially those on the other side of the aisle, to know that this is one of our top priorities. We want them to know that four times Republican Presidents reauthorized the Voting Rights Act. We want our colleagues in the Senate to know this should not be something that we are fighting over. This is something that we should be honoring and celebrating.

As we gather here in this sacred Chamber, on the floor of the people's House, to discuss voting rights in America, to amplify Our Power, Our Message, we boldly announce that we are not going to let the clock be turned back.

Let me end by saying on behalf of the members of the Congressional Black Caucus that this is something that we are asking all of our colleagues to join in and help us make sure that we can proudly say that we are reauthorizing the Voting Rights Act.

Madam Speaker, I close by saying the CBC will do everything in our power to defend the right to vote. We are prepared to work overtime. We are prepared to go what I like to call old school: stand up and make some noise, march, protest, and, yes, even get arrested.

□ 1945

I remember that day clearly, fighting, marching, protesting. I thought of Fannie Lou Hamer. I thought of John Lewis and so many other soldiers, pioneers. I stand on their shoulders.

Tonight, I ask us, let's stand together.

Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure, as chair of the Congressional Black Caucus to recognize the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL), my colleague and my friend.

I like to call her the current day mother of voting rights, fighting, and telling her story, leading us with John Lewis every year since I have been in Congress, and before, across that Edmund Pettus Bridge.

Listening to her so scholarly debate the lawsuits that we have been confronted with, *Shelby v. Holder*.

Listening to her explain preclearance and why we must fight and why we must have hearings. Why we must get it right because there is so much at stake.

Mr. TORRES of New York. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL).

Ms. SEWELL. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the illustrious chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus, JOYCE BEATTY, for her leadership. I want to thank RICHIE TORRES for leading us in this Special Order hour. Nothing could be more profound in this hour than to be talking about voting rights.

As we speak, our Nation is facing the most concerted effort to restrict the right to vote in a generation. Just this year, 400 bills have been introduced in State legislatures across this Nation to restrict the right to vote. In 19 States, at least 33 of these bills have become law, including the most egregious of State legislatures, Georgia, where now it is a crime to give a bottle of water to a voter as they stand in line.

Even as our democracy comes under attack, we see Republicans standing firm in their opposition to protecting the right to vote, a bedrock principle that should never be partisan.

Just last week, we watched as every Senate Republican voted to block debate on the Freedom to Vote Act, a commonsense bill that would ensure that every American has access to the ballot box.

What are they afraid of, I ask? What are they afraid of?

Last week's vote made clear that Senate Republicans are unwilling to even debate voting rights, let alone hold a fair vote. This just further demonstrates that in order to protect our democracy and the sacred right to vote; we must reform the filibuster to create a path forward for must-pass pieces of legislation.

Madam Speaker, almost 3 weeks ago we saw Senator LEAHY introduce S. 4, the John Robert Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act in the Senate. But unless we take action on the filibuster, and take action now, this critical bill