

Ossoff	Sasse	Toomey
Padilla	Schatz	Van Hollen
Peters	Schumer	Warner
Portman	Scott (SC)	Warnock
Reed	Shaheen	Warren
Risch	Sinema	Whitehouse
Romney	Smith	Wicker
Rosen	Stabenow	Wyden
Rounds	Tester	Young
Sanders	Thune	

NAYS—23

Barrasso	Hagerty	Marshall
Blackburn	Hawley	Paul
Boozman	Hoeben	Rubio
Cotton	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cramer	Kennedy	Shelby
Cruz	Lankford	Sullivan
Daines	Lee	Tuberville
Ernst	Lummis	

NOT VOTING—6

Booker	Cassidy	Murkowski
Braun	Inhofe	Tillis

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). On this vote, the yeas are 71, the nays are 23.

The motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Ohio.

REMEMBERING ELSIE STEWARD YOUNG

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, last week, Ohio and our Nation lost a champion for civil rights, Miss Elsie Steward Young of Highland County, a conservative, rural county in Southwest Ohio.

Miss Elsie, as everyone called her, had just celebrated her 105th birthday. She is a legend in Southwest Ohio. Her courage, her leadership made a difference for children not only in her community but all over the country.

In 1954, after the Supreme Court issued its landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision and ordered an end to segregation in American schools, the two all-White primary schools in Hillsboro—again, a small town, Highland County, southwest of Columbus—refused to integrate. The district continued to send Black students to a single all-Black school which was woefully underfunded.

I remember the stories my mother would tell me of growing up in Mansfield, GA. She said she knew and she told me—when busing became such a controversy in the 1960s and 1970s, she told me that she knew all about busing.

In the South, when she grew up in the twenties and thirties, they would bus Black students past the newer, better kept White schools to the segregated Black schools that were falling apart. No criticism of “forced busing” in those days.

That was essentially what was going on in Hillsboro, OH, and Elsie Steward Young wouldn't stand for it.

She and a group of mothers—this is in the 1950s—took matters into their own hands. They became the Marching Mothers of Hillsboro. Every single day for two long years, they marched for miles to the town's all-White primary school; every day they were sent home.

They carried on. Eventually, the community and the State and the country noticed. They joined with the NAACP to file a lawsuit against the Hillsboro board of education. It made it all the way to the Supreme Court, and they won.

Because of Miss Elsie and her fellow mothers' advocacy, the Court ordered the schools to integrate and paved the way for integration in other northern cities.

Her activism showed us why ordinary students and ordinary citizens—what they can achieve when they join together to fight for justice.

It is a reminder of how far we have come, how much work we have to do to achieve justice and opportunity for all children in our country.

Three years ago, Elsie Steward Young was inducted into the Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame. That fall, we honored the Marching Mothers of Hillsboro and the children—of course, now adults—who marched. We honored them with our office's Canary Award at our annual Ohio Women's Conference.

Then-Senator KAMALA HARRIS, now the Vice President, was supposed to speak. We were going to present Miss Elsie with the award. She was already past 100 at that point. We both had to stay in Washington at the last minute because of Supreme Court votes.

So many Ohioans at that conference told me later that, frankly, I am not sure that the Vice President—the future Vice President and I were missed that much, not with Miss Elsie there. She not only filled the void, she provided so much energy with her forceful, inspiring words; and during that conference she was 102.

Throughout the conference, people lined up to get pictures with her. When the video played depicting the bravery and determination of the marchers and when Miss Elsie spoke accepting the award, of course, there was hardly a dry eye in the audience.

She talked about how she and other mothers only did what any mother would do for her children.

So many Ohioans will miss Miss Elsie Steward Young. Our thoughts are with her three surviving daughters, her two surviving sons, and, get this, her 36 grandchildren.

We know her legacy lives on through her success, through her victories, through her fight for justice, through her families, through the future generations of young people whom she inspired to stand against justice.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Miss Elsie Steward Young, Ohioan mother, determined champion for civil rights.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Mr. President, for the first time in decades, workers are beginning to gain some power in our economy.

Because of President Biden's leadership, because of the American Rescue Plan, America's economy is roaring back. We have had record job creation. We gained more than 3 million jobs since this President took office, more jobs created in the first 5 months of any Presidency in modern history.

It is not only the jobs numbers—those are important—but those, of course, don't tell the full story. It is the quality of those jobs.

We are starting to see signs of increased bargaining power for American workers: power to negotiate higher pay, solid working conditions, better benefits, more control over their schedules, opportunities for career advancement, all the things that turn into good, stable, middle-class careers.

I want to see employers competing for workers. That is a good thing. It is how you get rising wages, which get spent in the community and then create growth for everyone, whether in Sante Fe or Columbus.

For decades, corporations have had all the power in our economy. It is going to take a lot of work to undo those decades of bad trade and tax policy that gave corporations every single day the upper hand.

We are starting to see glimmers of progress. Wages are starting to go up. Wages have been rising all year. They are surging for workers who have been paid too little for decades, working tough jobs in restaurants and hotels and other service jobs.

Last week, the Washington Post declared “Welcome to the year of wage hikes.” They reported, in the past 3 months, rank-and-file employees have seen some of the fastest wage growth in 40 years. Think about that, the fastest wage growth since Ronald Reagan said it was morning in America.

It is what should happen—what happens when you invest in people who make this country work, not the CEOs, not multinational corporations, not money that never really trickles down.

We invested in America's greatest asset, our workers. Putting money directly in people's pockets, putting kids back in school, putting workers back in jobs, that is starting to unleash the true potential of our economy.

We don't stop here. On Friday, President Biden issued a sweeping Executive order to increase competition in the economy. It is one more way we start to tilt the job market toward workers. Capitalism without competition is just exploitation.

It is just common sense, when you have a tiny number of corporations, a shrinking number of corporations that get bigger and bigger, that control entire industries and huge portions of the economy, it drives up prices, and it drives down wages.

Research shows that industry consolidation decreases worker pay by as much as 17 percent. Companies force workers to sign noncompete agreements as a condition of getting a job, even in jobs like fast food and construction. They tuck them into the fine print of job contracts, making it harder for workers to switch to better paying options.

Sometimes they are not even enforceable, but employers put them in there anyway because it scares workers away from taking another job.

We are putting a stop to this. No company should be allowed to tell you you can't take a job offering higher pay. President Biden is cracking down

on corporate mergers. Towns all over Ohio have seen what happens when companies merge and create just one employer in a community. It often means plant or store closures. It means workers have no competitors in town to go to for higher wages.

Rural towns in Ohio and across the country watch companies come in, knowing they are the only game in town, and they offer workers a take-it-or-leave-it offer at rock-bottom wages that don't even pay the bills, but it is the only place to go.

Sometimes that is the whole point of the merger, to cut what corporations call labor costs, what the rest of us call jobs, paychecks, or livelihoods.

Now the President is making it clear that when we review mergers, we need to look at and take into account whether they will lead to lower wages for workers.

All actions come down to the same goal, increasing workers' power by cutting through redtape that keeps workers' wages down.

We build on this progress, these important steps, by passing the Protect the Right to Organize Act. To have a strong, growing middle class, we have to have strong unions. The Protecting the Right to Organize Act would start to level the playing field and finally give workers a fighting chance against corporate union-busting tactics.

We all saw what happened with Amazon this year. One of the most powerful corporations in the world, and they would not be raking in profits without the hard work and dedication of its hundreds of thousands of American workers. Yet it unleashed all of its billions and billions and billions of dollars' worth of power to fight its own workers.

When workers try to organize in 21st century America, it is never a fair fight. This bill would strengthen the punishment against companies that violate workers' right to organize and that retaliate against union organizers.

It would close loopholes that allow employers to misclassify their employees as supervisors and independent contractors, often stripping them of their overtime they have earned and avoiding paying their fair share and giving workers the benefits they deserve.

A union card is a ticket to middle-class life. We just need corporations to let workers organize to take control over their career and their families.

In closing, last week, I was up in the far northwest corner of my State in Bryan, OH, visiting the Spangler Candy Company. It is a family-owned business more than a century old. They have had success for all those years by treating their workers and the Teamsters Union, which represents their workers, as partners. They have the same goal: to make a great product, to make the company successful. They work together.

We in this body, with the American Rescue Plan, saved their union pensions in that plan. Now the company is

expanding production and hiring 40 more union workers. That is what we can achieve when we invest in the people and places that make this country work.

When you love this country, you fight for the people who make it work. That is what President Biden is doing. It is what all of us must continue to do to respect the dignity of work, so all work pays off and workers finally have real power in this economy.

I yield the floor.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

CUBA

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, the world and the country yesterday watched these images out of Cuba. It is really unprecedented. In 62 years of communist tyranny on the island of Cuba, we have never seen and there has never been what now is up to 40 cities in which people took to the streets—organically, unorganized, grassroots—to ask for the end of that tyranny. And I think it is important for a lot of people that are new to the issue to sort of understand what that means and what it is all about.

I think the first lesson we need to take away from it is that Marxism, socialism doesn't work. The way socialism, the way Marxism has always worked—the way it has always empowered itself—is it goes to a people and it immediately divides them. It says: There is the suppressor class, and then there is this victim class. And these evil oppressors—capitalists, in the case of socialism or traditional Marxism—they oppress the victims. And what you have to do is you have to give us the power in government to take care of these oppressors and to go after these oppressors, and if you give us that power, we will deliver you security and we will protect you from the oppressors. They ask for security in exchange for freedom. That is always the price that socialism asks for—security.

And what you wind up with is a country of people that hate each other, and they are angry at each other. A significant portion of the people in the country have to leave, have to flee, go to jail, because they are the oppressor class. Their lives are destroyed. Their family lives are destroyed.

But the socialism can't deliver the security. And when it can't deliver the security, you don't get your freedom back. And, in fact, when you start to complain about that, that is when the repression comes.

Well, that is what happened in Cuba. Socialism and Marxism has done to Cuba what it has done everywhere in the world that it has been tried. It has failed. It has failed. They gave up their freedom. Or they were told: Give up your freedom in exchange for a world-class healthcare system.

It is not a world-class healthcare system. In fact, it is a healthcare system that does not even have the ability to deal with COVID at its very basic level.

They said: Give up your freedom for economic security.

What economic security? People are hungry, homes are crumbling, and there is no economy. There is no real economy in Cuba.

Give up your freedom and you will have an education—free education for everybody.

That education—No. 1, you are a doctor, but you can drive a taxicab in Cuba and make more money. Or, No. 2, you get sent, forced to go, overseas and work basically on slave wages, no pay—barely any pay at all. It is basically human trafficking, as our own Department of State found when it looked at the Cuban doctors' program and how it has been abused.

So what has happened in Cuba is that socialism has failed. It has to repress people who complain about it. You don't get your freedom back.

And like socialists always do, they have to find someone to blame. And whom do they blame? No. 1, they blame anybody in the country who doesn't agree with them. You are immediately a counterrevolutionary. You are immediately a pawn of the imperialists. And, then, of course, they always blame the United States.

The problem in Cuba for the regime is that the people aren't falling for those lies anymore. They are not. The embargo, that is the first thing they blame: It is the embargo. The embargo is causing all of this.

Why aren't fishermen and farmers in Cuba allowed to fish or grow things and sell it to people? It is not the embargo that keeps them from doing that. It is the regime.

Why can't Cubans own a small business? Why can't a Cuban do in Cuba what they can do in Miami, what they can do in Washington, and what they do in countries all over the world, and they can't do it in Cuba? They can't open a small business. That is not the embargo that keeps them from doing it. In fact, U.S. law allows us to trade and to do commerce with small businesses that are independently owned by Cubans. Do you know why Cubans can't own small businesses? It is not the embargo. It is not the United States. It is the regime that doesn't allow it.

People have seen these lies. How can they afford to build luxury, four-star, world-class hotels for tourists, but they cannot afford to deal with the crumbling homes that Cubans are living in, with roofs literally falling in over their heads and with water leaking into operating rooms at hospitals?

Look at what they do with the money. Oh, it is because you don't allow more money to be sent. When an American or a Cuban American sends money to their family members in Cuba—in the past, through Western Union—the regime takes 10 percent off the top, and then they take those dollars you sent and they force the Cubans to convert it into worthless Cuban currency. They keep the dollars. And, then, guess what: If you want to buy anything, you have to buy it from a government store, and guess what the