

in 49 States. Nineteen States have already passed voting restrictions in 2021, with even more coming this year.

These are acts of voter suppression occurring in nearly every State of the Union, targeting Black and Brown communities, working-class and poor communities, telling them that their votes and voices shouldn't be heard, violating the sacred concept of one person, one vote.

Make no mistake, Madam Speaker: The restrictive voting laws that have passed and continue to be passed and pushed have directly targeted Black and Brown poor and working-class communities, directly targeting communities of color to make it harder for them to access the ballot box and to participate in our democracy.

As we continue to honor Dr. King and his legacy today, the Senate has a choice: Abolish the filibuster or let democracy die.

Madam Speaker, the filibuster is an arcane piece of Senate procedure that came to be by accident. It is a direct legacy to segregation and continues to hold back progress on civil rights to this very day.

Its most famous use was against the Civil Rights Act of 1964, where its opponents filibustered for nearly 60 days. But it wasn't the first time, and it won't be the last.

White southerners also invoked the filibuster to block a voting rights bill in 1891, with many of the same Senators filibustering again in the 1930s to block antilynching laws.

Imagine that. The filibuster was used to block antilynching laws.

We have a choice, Madam Speaker, between having a democracy or allowing racist systems to continue. It is simple. The filibuster is a monument to white supremacy, and we have to tear it down.

I refuse to hear any cheap excuse about why protecting the very founding principle of this Nation isn't possible because of it, not when it has been changed 161 times.

The filibuster, in the last five decades, has been changed 161 times to pass trade deals, tax cuts for the rich, Supreme Court Justices, and just recently for the debt ceiling.

But that is not what we remember the filibuster for. We remember the filibuster for its racist roots, deeply embedded in Jim Crow, used to stop antilynching legislation.

Madam Speaker, history will not look fondly on those who stand in the way of progress.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF ELLEN WELCH

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Ellen Welch, a crime scene specialist in Morgan County and founder of the Hero Tree.

Ellen has exhibited an unwavering commitment to Morgan County's law enforcement as she works as a crime scene specialist and investigator.

Each year, during the holiday season, Ellen takes on the role of lifting up the community's fallen law enforcement officers and K9s. 2021 has marked the third year that Ellen has spearheaded this service to the community, and it continues to grow.

Every year, Ellen, her mom, and her niece paint each ornament and write the name, death date, and agency of each fallen officer. Then they place the ornaments on a tree that stands in the Morgan County squad room until January.

Unfortunately, this year was especially hard on law enforcement. Ellen had to get a much larger tree as violence against police officers spiked.

Ellen has exhibited a selfless commitment to our police officers, and for that, we are very grateful. I thank Ellen for what she does and encourage her to keep it up.

RECOGNIZING AVA DORMINEY

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary student in my district, Ava Dorminey, for her work building the Students Helping Students Succeed mentorship program.

Now a senior at Savannah Arts Academy, Ava founded the SHSS mentorship program in her junior year to help struggling students.

The COVID-19 pandemic and related school closures, which proved difficult for many students, are what prompted Ava to take action. Her desire to help students' mental health and academic success culminated in the creation of the Students Helping Students Succeed mentorship program. Ava wanted to assist her fellow students while also working to instill essential qualities like confidence, teamwork, and leadership in our youth.

Her work has been instrumental in helping students through these trying times. I am extremely proud to represent a district where young people's work, like Ava's, is on display for the whole Nation to see.

She inspires me and gives me even more confidence in our future, and I want to thank her for the work she is doing in our community.

I hope Ava's story and work inspire other young people to find an avenue that can help their communities be successful as well.

CONGRATULATING RINCON, GEORGIA

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Rincon, Georgia, for being recognized as one of 24/7 Wall Street's best cities to live in, in the South.

Rincon is a gem of a town in the First District that is well deserving of this recognition. Its population growth, high median household income, and low unemployment rate are just some of the features that caught the attention of 24/7 Wall Street, an independent news organization that

ranks cities based on affordability, quality of life, economy, and community.

Incorporated as a city in 1927, Rincon has a rich history as a rail town in the 1800s. When World War II came to America, Rincon, like the rest of the First District, answered the call to arms. Due to its proximity to Savannah, Rincon citizens were instrumental in the construction of U.S. Liberty ships.

Since then, the city has continued to grow and flourish into what it is today. I know the citizens of Rincon, Georgia, and myself are proud of this recognition.

As someone whose grandparents lived in Rincon, I was in Rincon most Sundays every week as a young man. I can tell you how proud I am of the city of Rincon and Effingham County and the tremendous growth they have seen while still maintaining a great quality of life.

ENDING FILIBUSTER TO PASS VOTING RIGHTS

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity to stand here this morning with a very solemn heart, overwhelmed, one would say, with a sense of grief. And in that grief, there is joy.

The grief, of course, is to feel the personal pain of the lack of unity around the very core of democracy, and that is the right to vote.

As has been evidenced by Members over and over again, as I listened to Senators last night, everyone acceded to the point that voting is the core of democracy. It means that the individual in pain, in frustration, in affirmation, in the understanding of policies, gets to select a person of their choosing. It is not about those who are elected or candidates or the elections. It is about the voters having that right.

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Right now, today, in the hands of the other body is the crux of democracy. I am, frankly, undone by the usage of an insignificant procedural rule that has been used over the decades and centuries to crush democracy.

The filibuster is insignificant. It is an order. It is not a statute; it is not the Constitution; it is not the 15th Amendment or the 14th Amendment; it is not the 13th Amendment, which freed slaves. It is also the recognition that voting rights is for all persons irrespective of their race, color, creed, or religion, and their party affiliation.

Why is the other body, under the leadership of Minority Leader McCONNELL, not coming to the table of unity? I extend an olive branch.

The filibuster has been changed already over 161 times. Do we recognize that between 1866 and 1890 many landmark pieces of civil rights legislation

that were essential to protecting the constitutional rights of Americans of color—this was during Reconstruction—they were, if you will, voted along party lines? But from 1917 to 1994, civil rights were crushed by the use of the filibuster.

And so I rise today to ask for the better angels of the other body, two Members who happen to be Democratic Senators, and others who are in total lockstep in the other party.

But listen to William E. Mason saying: “But every schoolboy in the United States knows that the Senate is practically the only parliamentary body in the world where the majority cannot transact the public business, and where the minority instead of the majority transacts the business of the country.” Senator William E. Mason, April 21, 1897, a Republican.

I ask for mercy. As someone who worked for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, who had the privilege of being here for the reauthorization in the mid-2000s, who wrote the Coretta Scott bill legislation that was added that said no mid-term redistricting, and as well helped rename the bill at that time to many icons of diversity.

I want to conclude my remarks by referring to Martin Luther King’s mountaintop speech, to read as much of it as I can. He speaks at the beginning by saying if he had sneezed when he was knifed by a demented woman in the 1950s, he says, I wouldn’t have been around in 1962 when Negroes in Albany, Georgia, decided to straighten their backs up. And whenever men and women straighten their backs up, they are going somewhere, because a man can’t ride your back unless it is bent.

If I had sneezed, I wouldn’t have been here in 1963 when the Black people of Birmingham, Alabama, aroused the conscience of this Nation and brought into being the civil rights bill.

If I had sneezed, I wouldn’t have had a chance later that year, in August, to try and tell America about a dream that I had had.

If I had sneezed, I wouldn’t have been in Selma, Alabama, or Memphis.

And then they were telling me, now, it doesn’t matter, now. It really doesn’t matter what happens. I left Atlanta this morning, and as we got started the pilot said we had to stop for a moment because Dr. Martin Luther King is on the plane, we have to check and see if there were bombs.

And then I got into Memphis. And some began to say the threats or talk about the threats that were out. What would happen to me from some of our sick brothers, who did not look like me?

Well, I don’t know what will happen now. We’ve got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn’t matter with me now because I’ve been to the mountaintop.

And I don’t mind.

Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I

am not concerned about that now. I just want to do God’s will. And He has allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I’ve looked over, and I’ve seen the promised land.

That is today, today, January 19, 2022.

I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight that we, as a people, will get to the promised land. And so I’m happy tonight.

I’m not worried about anything.

I’m not fearing any man.

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.

Those who say they honor him, do not disgrace him. Vote for the Voting Rights Act.

CELEBRATING MARY LOU HAND’S 100TH BIRTHDAY

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

Mr. PFLUGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a true American patriot, a true American hero. Ms. Mary Lou Hand just turned 100 years old on January 15, 2022. She is from Wall, Texas.

Mary Lou served this country as a nurse in the Army in World War II. After first being stationed in Maryland and Mississippi, she was sent to England, where she provided critical care for the wounded; and, more importantly, she raised soldiers’ spirits by spreading laughter.

It was during her service in England that she met her husband, Bob. The two had six children together and lived in three countries and subsequently seven States.

Ms. Mary Lou Hand has 6 children, 13 grandchildren, 25 great-grandchildren, and 3 great-great-grandchildren. She has cultivated a life of love and family, filled with gratitude.

Throughout her century of life, she has dedicated her time to helping others. Her selfless dedication has played out through her commitment to her family as well as her impressive career serving our country and caring for others.

Mary Lou, thank you for your service and happy birthday.

RECOGNIZING THE CAREER OF JOHN “J.B.” BYERS, SR.

Mr. PFLUGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to tell you about another patriot. You know, we have patriots, and we have leaders, servant leaders throughout our entire country. This is a special one that I would like to talk about in the community of Staten Island, Mr. John “J.B.” Byers, Sr.

A New Jersey native, Mr. Byers began his remarkable 40-year career delivering letters for the U.S. Postal Service at the USPS Mariners Harbor Post Office and subsequently served 18 years at the Port Richmond office.

During his four decades of exemplary service, John has become a fixture of the community. He has become beloved by those he happily served for so many years on his daily route.

The best measure of John’s success was not how efficient he was at his job, but it was the undeniable impact he had on his neighbors in the communities that he served so well. He went above and beyond in his duties, taking time to engage in the community, the lives and the livelihoods of the people he served every single day.

His influence is evident by the meaningful and positive impact he made on those who knew him best, his neighbors, his colleagues, and his friends. Story after story from coworkers and community members alike show J.B.’s generosity, kindness, and work ethic. So much so that on John’s last day at the U.S. Postal Service, those on his route threw him a surprise party to demonstrate how much the service that he did for them meant to them and their lives.

John dedicated his life to his community through his career, and he became a trusted friend and familiar face to all. But even with his tenured and successful career, I know the greatest joy for him today stems from the beautiful family he and his wife, Kathleen, have raised. As he enters retirement, John and Kathleen are celebrating the birth of their first grandchild, Madison Patricia Byers, who was born on December 23, 2021.

More than a mailman, J.B. has brought great joy and integrity to countless families and neighborhoods, and we thank him for his service to his community.

HONORING MRS. PAM BURKE

Mr. PFLUGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the hard work and dedication of Mrs. Pam Burke of San Angelo, Texas.

Mrs. Burke runs the Wesley Soup Kitchen, a wonderful ministry that has been providing meals, along with love and care, to all those in need since 1948.

Mrs. Burke has been at the Wesley Soup Kitchen for the past 12 years, preparing over 200 meals a day. In addition to feeding the homeless and those less fortunate, this ministry provides holiday meals and has been a consistent combatant of malnutrition and hunger throughout the community.

Mrs. Burke is a wonderful example of God’s calling in John, chapter 21 to feed His sheep. For no monetary gain of her own, Mrs. Burke dedicates her time and her energy to opening her arms and caring for the community.

I know I am not alone in saying that I am grateful for the mission of the Wesley Soup Kitchen and am honored to know that wonderfully impassioned individuals like Mrs. Pam Burke are working throughout each of our communities.

PROTECT THE RIGHT TO VOTE

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

Ms. SEWELL. Madam Speaker, this great Nation was founded on a fundamental promise, a promise that, as