

or the institutions created by it; no matter how noble that hope is. In effect, everything rises and falls in our Republic as a consequence of the character of the people.

As a Nation, we live or die by the standards of our own moral character. The Founders knew this, but many of us know we are forgetting it.

"We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Avarice, ambition, revenge, or gallantry would break the strongest cords of our Constitution as a whale goes through a net. Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

John Adams wrote that to the militia of Massachusetts. What he is saying is this: The power of the State is not secured by the power of arms. It is anchored in the honesty and decency of the people.

Today, this may seem a quaint notion. I hope it is not. But the Founders who experimented in government to create a just and free society understood explicitly that freedom and justice are not the products of institutions, but, rather, institutions that defend freedom and justice are the product of a moral people.

Freedom cannot exist without morality. George Washington understood this. John Adams understood this. Abraham Lincoln understood this. Dr. Martin Luther King understood this. I believe this, not because they believed it, but because it is true. I believe that most Americans understand this.

When we drift from the Creator, we drift from the source of our own liberty. When we forget our duties to God, we forget our duties to each other. When we become proudful and lazy and forget the father of all rights, we become orphans of oppression. We are lost without the guiding hand of the Almighty.

It may seem that Congress is not the place to introduce an appeal to God. I disagree. Insofar as all our rights and all our institutions are based upon the presumption of a just and Almighty God, and since this Congress itself rests upon the foundation that our Creator gave us the right to govern ourselves, to quote my hero, Abraham Lincoln: "It is altogether fitting and proper that we do this."

It is precisely because of America's distinctive belief that I rise in this House to offer a resolution to humble ourselves and entreat wisdom from God, the Father of all blessings and mercy; a resolution of contrition, prayer, and fasting; a resolution in the great tradition of our free people.

We have, as His guidance many times before, a resolution to return to the wellspring of liberty and our rights; a resolution to depart from iniquity and entreat His guidance; a prayer that we remember Him as the Father of every good thing that we have, and every-

thing as a Nation and people we aspire to be.

Whereas, We the People of the United States of America continue our search for a more perfect union and;

Whereas, we are a people conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all are created equal, yet like in the days of Abraham Lincoln, when he observed that "We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied, and enriched, and strengthened us;"

Whereas, "We have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own;"

Whereas, we confess we are self-consumed, prideful, and unloving, quick to point out the speck in another person's eye while missing the log in our own;

Whereas, we are trusting in our wealth and skill, and leaning on our own understanding;

Whereas, we have become ungrateful, lovers of pleasure, stubborn, hard-hearted, divisive, and unforgiving;

Whereas, we confess that instead of speaking of forgiveness, we cry out for vengeance. We have allowed the poisonous root of bitterness to grow up and trouble us;

Whereas, the global pandemic of COVID-19 has intensified fear, unknowns, chaos, and confusion;

Whereas, the impact of lockdowns and isolations has been severe, further exacerbating the breakdown of mental health, families, communities, and our Nation;

Whereas, we are divided, perhaps like we haven't seen since the Civil War, when Abraham Lincoln, President Abraham Lincoln, by faith, prayed, saying:

May we again devote ourselves to prayer and acknowledge as a people and as a Nation our dependence upon the overruling power of God. Let us confess our sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with the assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon;

□ 1530

Whereas, by faith, at the 1787 Constitutional Convention, when the outlook looked grim, Benjamin Franklin appealed to the delegates and urged prayer, asking: "I have lived a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth—that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid?" and

Whereas, during World War I and at the signing of the Armistice, President Wilson proclaimed: "Complete victory . . . God has indeed been gracious, let us thank him." and

Whereas, this year marked the 80th anniversary of the initial National Bible Week declaration made by President Franklin D. Roosevelt just weeks before the start of World War II; and

Whereas, George Washington Carver, born a slave during the Civil War, tes-

tified in 1921 in front of the House Ways and Means Committee expounding on the myriad of ingenious uses for the peanut transforming the economy and which had been revealed to him by faith as he regularly walked through the woods at 4 a.m., and

Whereas, President John F. Kennedy said: "The guiding principle of this Nation has been, is now, and ever shall be 'In God We Trust,'" and

Whereas, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., encouraged to us "Pray daily to be used by God in order that all men might be free,"

Therefore, be it resolved by those assembled, we pray that in this hour of our great need, our Sovereign God will come and do again as He has done in days gone by; we pray for a time of healing from our brokenness, broken lives, broken families, broken communities, and broken systems.

We resolve to humble ourselves, pray, seek God's face, turn from our wicked ways, and thank and praise the God of our ancestors who has given us wisdom and strength and who controls the course of events; and

Therefore, it behooves us to call upon the people of our Nation to humble ourselves before our Creator and acknowledge our complete dependence upon Him, to repent of our pride and selfishness, and to ask the Lord to break our hearts for the things that break His heart;

That we may not miss hearing His voice, and that He will pour out His spirit, once again, on our Nation and leaders; and

We proclaim a year of National Humiliation, Fasting, and Prayer. What might God do in the next 365 days if we commit to reading His Word daily and praying together for our Nation? In our families? For the young generation, this generation in misery and despair? We are expectant that He will do immeasurably more than all we could ask or imagine and that He will hear from heaven, forgive our sins, and heal our land. May He be as original with us as He has been with others. Amen.

THE FENTANYL CRISIS IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. RYAN. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to come to the floor this afternoon about a topic I wish we didn't have to address. This is the plague in our country of fentanyl and fentanyl overdoses that so many families throughout this country have had to deal with.

Coming from Ohio, we have, unfortunately, been on the front-end of the opiate crisis. We have been on the front-end of the heroin crisis. And now we are on the front-end of the fentanyl crisis.

I have a picture here of Rachel, who is from Akron, Ohio, who died at 17

years old. Her life was tragically cut short because she took a fatal overdose of cocaine that was unknowingly laced with the synthetic opioid carfentanil.

Carfentanil, for those of you who haven't been paying close enough attention to all of these issues, is 100 times more potent than fentanyl and 10,000 times more potent than morphine.

So we have young, talented, beautiful people—in this case, a high school student—who had so much promise, so much life, so much personality. I speak with her mom often and listen to stories about and see pictures of this beautiful young woman.

Now, her mom, Cindy, carries on her daughter's legacy, providing peer-to-peer programming at local schools and in the local community.

We failed Rachel. This country failed Rachel and her mom and her family and all of the families across this country.

We thought we had at one point enough attention on the issue of opioids, on the issue of heroin, now on the issue of fentanyl. Then the pandemic came, and this issue has been on the back burner.

My remarks here today on the floor of the United States House of Representatives, one of the greatest deliberative bodies in the entire world, are to try to bring attention to this issue, to try to scream from the rafters so that we don't have any more Rachels, we don't have any more families that have to experience the heartache, the tragedy, the gut-wrenching experiences that so many families have had over the past few years.

This is something that we can do. Think about this: 80 percent of the overdoses in Ohio are from fentanyl.

The fentanyl starts in China, it goes to Mexico to get processed, and then it comes over the border. So as a country, we have to focus—and I will give the Biden administration a credit. We have seen progress in this regard. We have seen progress. We have seen an increase in people getting busted at the border, which is appropriate, but we have a long, long way to go.

We need an awareness campaign across the country so that young kids, who otherwise would make a simple mistake and now it ends their life, that they know, that their peers know, that their schools know. There is not a corner of Ohio, Madam Speaker, that I can go to that I won't meet families who have experienced this kind of tragedy.

It is incumbent upon us. As one of the co-chairs of the Addiction, Treatment and Recovery Caucus, we have been dealing with this in a bipartisan way. We passed the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, the CARA Act, in a bipartisan way.

We know that there are so many issues we can fight about. There are so many issues we can argue about here in this body. But I hope and pray that one of them isn't this issue that we need to address collectively here in the United States Congress.

We need to, I think, begin by going back to the opiate issue, going back to the Sackler family, going back to all the profits that were made off of getting so many millions of Americans hooked on opiates, hooked on painkillers, and merge that in with a broken economy where there is so much hopelessness in so many quarters of the United States, where so many communities have been disinvested in, deindustrialized, left to rot. Then you have families that are knowingly increasing the amount of opiates, playing with the FDA, going through the loopholes, which is what the Sackler family has done. They need to be punished to the point where they don't get the right to the deal that they want, Madam Speaker; they don't get the right to the deal that they want, because that is how it has been in the United States.

If you are a wealthy corporation, you can get away with just about anything. If you are a rich person in the United States, it almost doesn't matter what crime you commit; you are going to get away with it.

But, meanwhile, in Youngstown, Ohio; Steubenville, Ohio; Portsmouth, Ohio; or Akron, Ohio, it trickles down. It has been those communities who have suffered greatly, including Dayton, Ohio, because of this epidemic.

Over the holidays, my wife and I were able to watch an amazing documentary on Hulu called "Dopesick," with Michael Keaton, Rosario Dawson, and others, that went through the Sackler family approach to painkillers. It was set in Virginia. Michael Keaton is from western PA and a graduate of Kent State in Ohio. They were highlighting Virginia, but this is an issue everywhere, where these good and honest and decent people found themselves getting hooked because of the wealth and profits that one family wanted to earn on the backs of the American people.

So here we are today. We need to make sure that the Sackler families of the world are punished and put out of business, quite frankly, and we need to also make sure that we begin to take the bold steps we need to take to make sure that the Rachels and the other kids and the other people across this country, to the tune of a 100,000 deaths last year, because of fentanyl.

So I believe we need to take a firmer stance. While I support what the Biden administration has done, we need to go a hell of a lot further. I believe we need to start having a conversation in this country, knowing that China knows that they are sending fentanyl to Mexico that makes its way into the United States, that they need to be punished with tariffs. They need to be punished. They are killing our kids. This is killing our kids.

We can't just stand around. We need to take the money from the tariffs, support our border, support the cops who are on the beat in these different communities. We need to put that

money towards addiction treatment, to make sure everybody can get better if they have got some issue, and we need to grow the economy in these communities.

□ 1545

But we can't just stand by and hope this problem goes away, because it is not. It will get worse, and there will be more families, more destruction, more hopelessness, more ruined lives.

As we are trying to compete against China economically, we need to make sure that Rachel and these other young, bright minds are on the economic field playing for the United States of America. That is what this is all about.

So we have to have a whole-of-government approach. We have a whole-of-government approach when it comes to the pandemic, right? The only way you can have any success is when you have a whole-of-government approach. This means Federal, State, and local coordination. This means coordination with nonprofits. This means coordination with law enforcement. This means coordination with the Border Patrol.

This is about us all coming together. You can't tell me we don't have the imagination in the United States to figure this out. This is about making it a priority.

What I am doing here tonight, and what many activists across the country are doing, is trying to get this back on the front burner because other than a few articles in the paper, it has been on the back burner.

We need to make sure we increase the resources necessary to keep this garbage out of our country or to know who has it the second they bring it in here. We have to make sure all of our kids are aware that this could be put in cocaine or meth or something else and that if you have an issue with drugs, you can actually get the treatment that you need and that no one is priced out of the market so that they can get better and get healthy and become self-sufficient and become good citizens and members of society and off to the races we go to try to outcompete China because we care about our citizens. That is what this is all about.

You are going to be hearing a lot from me in the coming weeks and months. We are building a coalition of the families around Ohio and across the country who want to begin to move this issue forward.

I do want to take a minute or two to talk about the power of fentanyl. I mentioned carfentanil. But 1 kilogram of fentanyl—1 kilogram; 1—has the potential to kill 500,000 people.

The money that is being made off of this substance will blow your mind, which is why it continues to come over the border from China, from Mexico. Much of the fentanyl comes through the southern border that is being looked at by the cartels. A lot of the China-sourced fentanyl comes through the international mail, and some comes from China through Canada.

As I said, fentanyl is responsible for 80 percent of Ohio's overdose deaths. Roughly 79 percent of meth, cocaine, psychostimulant overdose deaths in Ohio were from supplies contaminated with fentanyl. The pervasiveness of fentanyl contaminating other drugs has made overall fatality rates for all drugs much higher than before, and we are seeing it across the board.

We have the STOP Fentanyl Act. We have legislation with ANNIE KUSTER and others. There is a Manchin-Portman bill in the Senate, which permanently makes fentanyl-related substances a schedule I controlled substance. This is something that we have to address, and we have to address it in a bipartisan manner.

I would just like to say, lastly, Madam Speaker, that these parents have been through the ultimate tragedy. Having to put one of your own kids to rest, there is no greater heartbreak. There is nothing worse that could happen to a parent.

So I am pledging, and I know other Members are pledging, to keep up the fight because, as some of these parents have told me, there is nothing left to lose for them. These parents have had their hearts ripped out of their bodies. They live with the pain every day. They wake up in the middle of the night and open their eyes and hope it was a nightmare, open their eyes in the morning and hope it didn't really happen, that they could walk down the hall and their kid would still be lying in their bed.

There is nothing more inspiring than seeing these giants, these parents who are taking their pain, taking their experience, taking their heartache and are saying: We have to fight. We can't let this happen to another parent, to another brother or sister, to another family member.

People like Cindy started Rachel's Angels, which is a group back in Akron, Ohio, and there are so many groups across the country that have sprung up because of these tragedies. We want to unite these groups. We want to take the fight to the American people, to Congress, here in the House and in the Senate, and get the resources we need to make sure that these overdose deaths stop, that the companies producing these kinds of drugs get punished, that the people peddling this stuff get punished, and that we get the resources we need to keep this garbage out of our country.

While this may be the first time this year that I stand up and speak on this topic, it will not be the last. We are encouraging everybody, Madam Speaker, to reach out to their Members of Congress, whether they are Democrats or Republicans, and let's get this issue of fentanyl deaths back on the front burner of the agenda here in the United States Congress.

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

PAYING TRIBUTE TO AMERICA'S ABOLITIONIST HEROES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. TENNEY) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. TENNEY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous materials.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. TENNEY. Madam Speaker, today is a very special day. I want to thank my good friend and colleague, Congressman BURGESS OWENS. BURGESS OWENS and I are leading the charge here in Congress to tell the courageous stories of America's abolitionist heroes, particularly those from upstate New York.

It was an honor for me to welcome Burgess recently, in October, to upstate New York to tour our region's sacred abolitionist sites, including the Gerrit Smith Estate National Historic Landmark and the National Abolition Hall of Fame in Peterboro, as well as the home of abolitionist, suffragette, and true American heroine Harriet Tubman.

Opposite me, there is a photo here of Gerrit Smith. This is a picture of Gerrit Smith from Peterboro. Peterboro is named after his father, a guy named Peter Smith, and I just wanted to tell a little bit about how this all happened in Peterboro, New York. I am sure a lot of people don't know the history.

It all kind of started with an abolitionist named Reverend Henry Highland, who told his good friend Frederick Douglass, when describing Peterboro, New York—which, by the way, I am honored to represent here in Congress. Many people don't even realize this little hamlet of Peterboro, up in bucolic Madison County, which happens to be my mother's home county, played a vitally important role during the abolitionist movement.

This was in large part due to one of its most famous residents, Gerrit Smith. As I said, the little hamlet of Peterboro was named in honor of his father.

Mr. SMITH was a successful businessman and a committed philanthropist. He previously served this body, actually, as a Representative from New York's 22nd Congressional District, the same district that I currently represent. He was also a three-time Presidential candidate.

Gerrit Smith always opposed slavery, but he firmly joined the political cause of abolitionism in 1835. He was at a meeting of about 600 abolitionists in a church in the nearby city of Utica, which is in Oneida County. Upon learning of the meeting, a violent mob

stormed the church and disrupted the proceedings, forcing the abolitionists to flee.

Smith realized then that he could put his wealth and property to use. He invited the abolitionists to his home in Peterboro. A year later, he was elected president of the New York State Anti-Slavery Society. The rest, as they say, is history. We are going to tell you a little bit about that today with Congressman OWENS.

In Smith's view, slavery was completely incompatible not only with our founding documents but also with the natural laws of God. We were born free, and no law or institution could take away another man or woman's innate right to freedom.

From 1835 until his death in 1874, Gerrit Smith dedicated his whole heart to the abolitionist cause, and Peterboro was his base of operation. Giants like Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison, Elizabeth Cady—eventually Stanton, whose husband, Henry Stanton, was actually a cousin of Smith's—spent considerable time there, strategizing and mobilizing support.

Gerrit Smith played a key role in funding abolitionist causes across our country. Smith maintained a lifelong friendship with Frederick Douglass and provided funding and other support to *The North Star*, which was Douglass' abolitionist newspaper. In today's terms, Gerrit Smith would be considered a billionaire, and he gave what then was \$100 a month to Frederick Douglass' cause to pay for his newspaper, which in today's dollars, with inflation, would be about \$7,000 per month to make sure that this newspaper was able to continue to thrive and flourish and inform people.

In a letter from Douglass following Smith's death in 1874, Douglas credited Smith's generous support as the financial engine that kept his abolitionist movement going.

Smith's estate in Peterboro was also a stop along the Underground Railroad. As enslaved people made their way north to Canada, Smith would offer them shelter, food, and support. Exact numbers are hard to come by, but it is safe to say Smith bought and helped secure the freedom of hundreds of enslaved people from around the country.

This is why Reverend Henry Highland said: "There are yet two places where slaveholders cannot come, Heaven and Peterboro." Peterboro was synonymous with freedom.

Just a short drive from Gerrit Smith's estate in upstate New York is the home of another titan of the abolitionist movement, the great Harriet Tubman. Like Congressman OWENS, this was my first visit to Harriet Tubman's home in Auburn. I want to show you a little picture of mighty Harriet Tubman, who is an amazing figure. I may have to go back to some of these. This is a great photo of Congressman OWENS and me at Harriet Tubman's