

critical issues with regard to the climate crisis now.

I have directly witnessed the devastating effects of wildfires on homes and livelihoods in my community, which is why I am proud to support this bill and urge my colleagues to vote "yes" with me.

Current wildfires are growing larger and hotter, requiring urgent and robust action from the Federal Government. The FIRE Act allows FEMA to predeploy assets during high-risk times, improves relocation assistance for public infrastructure affected by fires, and ensures equity of assistance for Tribal communities and governments.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this amended bill.

HONORING THE LIFE OF BRANDON TSAI

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

Mr. VEASEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Officer Brandon Tsai. He was a brave member of the Grand Prairie Police Department, and he died in the line of duty this past week.

Officer Tsai bravely protected the people of north Texas and the city of Grand Prairie since January of this year, after serving 5 years with the Los Angeles Police Department.

The Grand Prairie Police Department described Officer Tsai as a loving friend, a trusted colleague, and outstanding officer whose passion provided service to the public.

I join the entire north Texas community and all of his brothers and sisters in blue in all of the metroplex departments in keeping Officer Brandon Tsai's family, friends, and all of his colleagues at the city of Grand Prairie in our thoughts and prayers during this time.

RECONCILIATION AND RESTORATION

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise this morning to engage in a limited, but hopefully important, discussion about America's history and to encourage my colleagues for collaboration. It is in reference to H.R. 40, the Commission to Study Slavery and Develop Reparation Proposals.

I stand on the perspective of how important it is for us to engage in dialogue. We are hearing across America that Americans are frightened about the discussion of our differences.

This land was first held by the indigenous people, Native Americans. Every other group came to America, whether or not you are of European heritage, Hispanic heritage, Asian-Pacific, Southeast Asian, or whether you are African heritage. As a descendant of

enslaved Africans, we are the only group that came as slaves to this country and held in bondage for over 200 years.

You have not seen African Americans refuse their patriotism, refuse to serve. We have served in every war since the Revolutionary War.

You have never seen African Americans refuse to shed blood for the freedom of this country or to wear the uniform.

You have not seen us shy away from serving as firefighters and law enforcement, teachers, businesspersons, social justice leaders, such as Dr. King, John Lewis, and, yes, Malcolm X.

You have not seen us, as women—Rosa Parks, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Coretta Scott King—stand away from the fight. We have embraced freedom, justice, and equality.

You did not see us attack this most solid and somber institution, sacred, on January 6, 2021. We were not the masses that were trying to undermine democracy. In fact, in this last election, I stood on the premise of defending democracy, and I take no back seat to my love of this Nation.

And so I ask my colleagues, why do you in any way doubt the value and importance of H.R. 40? The purpose is to acknowledge the fundamental injustice and inhumanity of slavery in the United States and to establish a commission to study and consider a national apology and proposal for reparations for the institution of slavery.

It was based on the premise of racism. There was, in fact, no compensation, no life insurance, no salaries. Slaves were born, lived, and died in slavery, never seeing freedom. They worked from sunup and beyond, and they worked until they fell dead in the fields.

They built this Nation. They built the United States Capitol. They built the White House. They, in fact, created an economic engine by making cotton king, and they created an economic engine by this transatlantic slave trade.

The traders decided to stop trading spices and gold and to use the human beings that they marched for 300 miles to weaken the slaves so they would not have a fight before getting on those ships. Many dropped into the watery grave before they got on. Many died in the dark passage.

But yet, here we are today.

And so this is not pointing the finger. This is not accusatory. This is, in fact, a reconciliation. I insist that we establish this commission, and we must establish it by a vote or establish it by executive order.

Reverend Mark Thompson, a political activist for social justice, said: If we were granted H.R. 40 by executive order, it would be America once and for all saying Black lives actually do matter and this Nation must be repaired. It is restoration and repair, but it stands on the basis of facts. There is no doubt that we have been impacted, that DNA in the trajectory of slavery to today.

For example, COVID, Black African Americans got COVID at a rate nearly 1½ times higher than that of White people, were hospitalized at a rate nearly 4 times higher, and 3 times more likely to die. COVID hit us very desperately.

Interestingly, a recent peer-reviewed study from Harvard Medical School suggests that reparations for African Americans could have cut COVID-19 transmission and infection rates both among Blacks and the population at large. Reparations are curative, they are not punishment. The analysis continued to look at data throughout the Nation.

And so as we move in this lame duck session, it is important that we come together for reconciliation, restoration, and provide the Commission to Study Slavery and to Develop Reparation Proposals.

I thank my colleagues for their support, and I believe together we make America strong, America free, America just, and America equal.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to have authored H.R. 40, legislation that establishes a commission to study and develop reparation proposals for African Americans. Congress must pass this bill to begin the process toward reconciliation with the Black community. I have also called upon President Biden to create the H.R. 40 Commission by Executive Order.

The purpose of H.R. 40 is to acknowledge the fundamental injustice and inhumanity of slavery in the U.S. and to establish a commission to study and consider a national apology and proposal for reparations for the institution of slavery, its subsequent racial and economic discrimination against African Americans, and the impact of these forces on living African Americans. The Commission is also charged to make recommendations to Congress on appropriate remedies.

Now—more than ever—the timing is ripe for the enactment of H.R. 40. We have a President in the White House who has expressed his undeniable support and we urge President Biden to institute this executive order.

My Democratic colleagues in the 117th Congress and I have made historic strides in advancing H.R. 40 since it was first introduced in 1989 by the late Michigan Congressman Rep John Conyers. H.R. 40 garnered more support over the past 33 years; it has approximately 200 co-sponsors, including 25 U.S. senators. Also, it is supported by over 300 organizations and allies, including the National Conference of Mayors.

One of my top priorities for this lame duck session of Congress in November and December, regardless of who controls Congress, is to have H.R. 40 pass the House of Representatives because. This will send a message of broad support to President Biden and strengthen our hand in urging him to create the Commission to Study and Develop Reparations Proposals through Executive Order.

Reparations are overdue. Our entire country needs reparations, to allow us to move forward as an untied society.

The concept of reparations is a well-established principle of international law, defined as the act or process of repairing or restoring.

It is payment for an injury; redress for a wrong done. In the context of Black people in

North America, the concept of reparations essentially constitutes four elements:

- 1) the formal acknowledgment of an historical wrong;
- 2) the recognition that there is a continuing injury;
- 3) the commitment to redress by the federal government which sanctioned the enslavement and subsequent discrimination; and
- 4) the actual compensation in whatever form or forms that are agreed upon.

The reparations movement does not focus on payments to individuals. The harms under discussion from the legacy of slavery and racial discrimination are seen in well-documented racial disparities in access to education, health care, housing, insurance, employment and other social goods.

Reparations settlements can be created in as many forms as necessary to equitably address the many forms of injury sustained from chattel slavery and its continuing vestiges.

Now—more than ever—the facts and circumstances facing our nation demonstrate the importance of H.R. 40 and the necessity of placing our nation on the path to reparative justice.

Reverend Mark Thompson, a political activist for social justice remarked “If we were granted H.R. 40 by executive order, it would be America once and for all saying Black lives actually do matter, and this nation must be repaired.” I along with many others share in the same sentiment.

The impact of the pandemic changed the nature of the conversation. COVID has devastated the African American community.

According to the latest estimates from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, Black people get COVID-19 at a rate nearly one and a half times higher than that of white people, are hospitalized at a rate nearly four times higher, and are three times as likely to die from the disease.

Interestingly, a recent peer-reviewed study from Harvard Medical School suggests that reparations for African Americans could have cut COVID-19 transmission and infection rates both among Blacks and the population at large.

Their analysis, based on Louisiana data, determined that if reparations payments had been made before the COVID-19 pandemic, narrowing the wealth gap, COVID transmission rates in the state’s overall population could have been reduced by anywhere from 31 percent to 68 percent.

In 2019, we have also seen hundreds of thousands peacefully take to the streets in support of Black Lives and accountability for law enforcement. Many of those protesters carried signs in support of H.R. 40 and made the important link between policing and the movement for reparative justice.

Tragically, we have also witnessed insurrectionist attack this institution, brandishing symbols of division and intolerance, that echo back to the darkest periods of our nation’s history. Clearly, we require a reckoning to restore national balance and unity.

Four hundred years ago, ships set sail from the west coast of Africa and in the process, began one of mankind’s most inhumane practices: human bondage and slavery.

For two centuries, human beings—full of hopes and fears, dreams and concerns, ambition and anguish—were transported onto ships like chattel, and the lives of many forever changed.

The reverberations from this horrific series of acts—a transatlantic slave trade that touched the shores of a colony that came to be known as America, and later a democratic republic known as the United States of America—are unknown and worthy of exploration.

Approximately 4,000,000 Africans and their descendants were enslaved in the United States and colonies that became the United States from 1619 to 1865.

The institution of slavery was constitutionally and statutorily sanctioned by the Government of the United States from 1789 through 1865.

American Slavery is our country’s original sin and its existence at the birth of our nation is a permanent scar on our country’s founding documents, and on the venerated authors of those documents, and it is a legacy that continued well into the last century.

The framework for our country and the document to which we all take an oath describes African Americans as three-fifths a person.

The infamous Dred Scott decision of the United States Supreme Court, issued just a few decades later, described slaves as private property, unworthy of citizenship.

And, a civil war that produced the largest death toll of American fighters in any conflict in our history could not prevent the indignities of Jim Crow, the fire hose at lunch counters and the systemic and institutional discrimination that would follow for a century after the end of the Civil War.

The mythology built around the Civil War has obscured our discussions of the impact of chattel slavery and made it difficult to have a national dialogue on how to fully account for its place in American history and public policy.

While it is nearly impossible to determine how the lives touched by slavery could have flourished in the absence of bondage, we have certain datum that permits us to examine how a subset of Americans—African Americans—have been affected by the callousness of involuntary servitude.

We know that in almost every segment of society—education, healthcare, jobs and wealth—the inequities that persist in America are more acutely and disproportionately felt in Black America.

This historic discrimination continues: African-Americans continue to suffer debilitating economic, educational, and health hardships including but not limited to having nearly 1,000,000 black people incarcerated; an unemployment rate more than twice the current white unemployment rate; and an average of less than 1/16 of the wealth of white families, a disparity which has worsened, not improved over time.

H.R. 40 follows the successful model of the reparations campaign for Japanese-Americans interned during WWII. The campaign began with a 1980 congressional bill establishing a commission to investigate the internment, evaluate and consider the amount and form reparations would take, and make recommendations to the Congress for remedy. Based on the Commission’s findings, President Reagan signed into law the Civil Liberties Act of 1988.

In short, H.R. 40 is not about direct payments to individuals. The legislation creates the framework for a national discussion on the enduring legacy of slavery, and the complex web of discriminatory conduct sanctioned by the Federal government well into the 20th century, to begin the necessary process of atonement and recovery.

Assessing the quantifiable amount owed to Black citizens due to generational racism and injustice should be left in a commission’s hands.

H.R. 40 seeks to establish a national commission to examine the lasting economic effects of slavery, Jim Crow segregation, and racially discriminatory federal policies on income, wealth, educational, health, and employment outcomes; to pursue truth and promote racial healing; and to study reparations.

The committee should comprise of appointed members (seen in section 4) and pioneers in the field of reparatory justice.

I also support President Eiden in creating a reparations committee through executive action.

Given the political limitations of moving legislation in the Senate, an executive order is the only practical method for establishing an H.R. 40 commission.

Black household wealth is less than one fifth of the national average.

The median black household had a net worth of just \$17,600 in 2016. Yet in that same year, the median white household held \$171,000 in wealth while the national household median was \$97,300.

The black unemployment rate is 6.6 percent more than double the national unemployment rate.

Approximately 31 percent of black children live in poverty, compared to 11 percent of white children. The national average is 18 percent, which suggests that the percentage of black children living in poverty is more than 150 percent of the national average.

In the healthcare domain, the disparities suffered by African Americans is also troubling.

Over 20 percent of African Americans do not have health insurance, compared to a national average between 8.8 percent and 9.1 percent.

One in four African American women are uninsured.

Compared to the national average, African American adults are 20 percent more likely to suffer from asthma and three times more likely to die from it.

Black adults are 72 percent more likely to suffer from diabetes than average.

Black women are four times more likely to die from pregnancy related causes, such as embolisms, and pregnancy-related hypertension, than any other racial group.

In our nation, among children aged 19–35 months, black children were vaccinated at rates lower than white children: 68 percent versus 78 percent, respectively.

Education has often been called the key to unlocking social mobility.

African American students are less likely than white students to have access to college-ready courses.

In fact, in 2011–12, only 57 percent of black students have access to a full range of math and science courses necessary for college readiness, compared to 81 percent of Asian American students and 71 percent of white students.

Black students spend less time in the classroom due to discipline, which further hinders their access to a quality education.

Black students are nearly two times as likely to be suspended without educational services as white students.

Black students are also 3.8 times as likely to receive one or more out-of-school suspensions as white students.

In addition, black children represent 19 percent of the nation's preschool population, yet 47 percent of those receiving more than one out-of-school suspension.

In comparison, white students represent 41 percent of pre-school enrollment but only 28 percent of those receiving more than one out-of-school suspension.

Even more troubling, black students are 2.3 times as likely to receive a referral to law enforcement or be subject to a school-related arrest as white students.

School districts with the most students of color, on average, receive 15 percent less per student in state and local funding than the whitest districts.

And, of course, we cannot consider the disparities between black and white in America without considering the intersection of African Americans and the Criminal Justice system.

There are more Black men in bondage today who are incarcerated or under correctional control, than there were black men who were enslaved in the 1800s.

The United States locks up African American males at a rate 5.8 times higher than the most openly racist country in the world ever did:

South Africa under apartheid (1993), African American males: 851 per 100,000.

United States (2006), African American males: 4,789 per 100,000.

Incarceration is not an equal opportunity punishment. For example, incarceration rates in the United States by race were:

African Americans: 2,468 per 100,000.

Latinos: 1,038 per 100,000.

Whites: 409 per 100,000.

African American offenders receive sentences that are 10 percent longer than white offenders for the same crimes and are 21 percent more likely to receive mandatory-minimum sentences than white defendants according to the U.S. Sentencing Commission.

Looking at males aged 25–29 and by race, you can see what is going on even clearer:

For White males ages 25–29: 1,685 per 100,000.

For Latino males ages 25–29: 3,912 per 100,000.

For African American males ages 25–29: 11,695 per 100,000. (That's 11 percent of Black men in their late 20s.)

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For White males ages 25–29: 1,685 per 100,000.

For Latino males ages 25–29: 3,912 per 100,000.

For African American males ages 25–29: 11,695 per 100,000. (That's 11 percent of Black men in their late 20s.)

And African Americans are more likely to be victims of crimes.

Black children die from firearm homicides at a rate 10 times higher than their white counterparts.

Overall, one in 50 murders is ruled justified—but when the killer is white and the victim is a black man, the figure climbs to one in six.

A handgun homicide is nine times more likely to be found justified when the killer is white and the victim is a black man.

Handgun killings with a white shooter and a black male victim exhibit an even more dramatic bias: one in four is found justified.

But then again, we knew these inequities existed because for many Black Americans, these disparities are just a part of daily life.

Examined in the aggregate, they represent a stunning chasm between the destinies of White America and that of Black America.

This is why, in 1989, my predecessor as the most senior African American on this august Judiciary Committee, the honorable John Conyers, a past Chairman of this Committee introduced H.R. 40, legislation that would establish a commission to study and develop proposals attendant to reparations.

Though many thought it a lost cause, John Conyers believed that a day would come when our nation would need to account for the brutal mistreatment of African-Americans during chattel slavery, Jim Crow segregation and the enduring structural racism endemic to our society.

I would like to take this moment to personally thank the estimable John Conyers for his work on this legislation for the last thirty years.

With the rise and normalization of white supremacist expression during the Trump administration, the discussion of H.R. 40 and the concept of restorative justice have gained more urgency, garnering the attention of mainstream commentator, and illustrating the need for a national reckoning.

H.R. 40 is intended to create the framework for a national discussion on the enduring impact of slavery and its complex legacy to begin that necessary process of atonement.

The designation of this legislation as H.R. 40 is intended to memorialize the promise made by General William T. Sherman, in his 1865 Special Field Order No. 15, to redistribute 400,000 acres of formerly Confederate owned coastal land in South Carolina and Florida, subdivided into 40 acre plots.

In addition to the more well-known land redistribution, the Order also established autonomous governance for the region and provided for protection by military authorities of the settlements.

Though Southern sympathizer and former slaveholder President Andrew Johnson would later overturn the Order, this plan represented the first systematic form of Freedmen reparations.

Since its introduction, H.R. 40 has acted to spur some governmental acknowledgement of the sin of slavery, but most often the response has taken the form of an apology.

However, even the well intentioned commitments to examine the historical and modern day implications of slavery by the Clinton administration fell short of the mark and failed to inspire substantive public discourse.

For many, it was not until The Atlantic published Ta-Nehisi Coates' *The Case for Reparations* that the mainstream public began to reckon with, or even consider, the concept of reparations.

Though the Federal government has been slow to engage the issue of reparations, individuals, corporations and other public institutions have engaged the discussion out of both necessity and conscience.

In 1994, a group of California plaintiffs brought suit against the Federal government and by 2002, nine lawsuits were filed around the country by the Restitution Study Group.

Though litigation has yielded only mixed success in court, a serious foundation was laid for alternative forms of restitution.

For example, in 2005, J.P. Morgan & Company tried to make amends for its role in the slave trade with an apology and a \$5 million, five-year scholarship fund for Black undergraduates in Louisiana.

In 2008, the Episcopal Church apologized for perpetuating American slavery through its interpretation of the Bible and certain diocese have implemented restitution programs.

In 2003, Brown University created the Committee on Slavery and Justice to assess the University's role in slavery and determine a response.

Similarly, in 2016, Georgetown University apologized for its historical links to slavery and said it would give an admissions edge to descendants of slaves whose sale in the 19th century helped pay off the U.S. school's debts.

In 2017, my alma mater Yale University announced that it would rename Calhoun College—named for John C. Calhoun—would be changed to honor Grace Murray Hopper, a trailblazing computer scientist who also served as rear admiral in the United States Navy.

The University's president, Peter Salovey, indicated that removing Calhoun's name was consistent with its values because Calhoun had a legacy of a white supremacist and a national leader who passionately promoted slavery as a positive good.

And, in April of this year, students at Georgetown University voted in favor of paying reparations to the descendants of enslaved people who were sold by the university in order to satisfy its debts.

In 1838, in a practice likely far wider spread than is likely accounted for, Georgetown Jesuits sold 272 slaves who worked on plantations.

When the results of the Georgetown poll were announced, the numbers were overwhelming: 2/3 of students indicated that payments should be funded to descendants of these slaves and would be paid for by a fee that would apply to all undergraduate students.

While the vote was nonbinding, it nonetheless represents the first time the student body of a university has voted to implement a mandatory fee to account for reparations.

These are only a few examples of how private institution have begun reckoning with their past records.

I expect that a growing number of institutions will be forced to examine their histories of discrimination, if for no other reason than increasing public scrutiny will force their history to light.

Since my reintroduction of H.R. 40 at the beginning of this Congress; both the legislation and concept of reparations have become the focus of national debate.

For many, it is apparent that the success of the Obama administration has unleashed a backlash of racism and intolerance that is an echo of America's dark past which has yet to be exorcised from the national consciousness.

Commentators have turned to H.R. 40 as a response to formally begin the process of analyzing, confronting and atoning for these dark chapters of American history.

Even conservative voices, like that of New York Times columnist David Brooks, are starting to give the reparations cause the hearing it deserves, observing that "Reparations are a drastic policy and hard to execute, but the very act of talking and designing them heals a wound and opens a new story."

Similarly, a majority of the Democratic presidential contenders have turned to H.R. 40 as a tool for reconciliation, with 17 cosponsoring or claiming they would sign the bill into law if elected.

Though critics have argued that the idea of reparations is unworkable politically or financially, their focus on money misses the point of the H.R. 40 commission's mandate.

The goal of these historical investigations is to bring American society to a new reckoning with how our past affects the current conditions of African Americans and to make America a better place by helping the truly disadvantaged.

Consequently, the reparations movement does not focus on payments to individuals, but to remedies that can be created in as many forms necessary to equitably address the many kinds of injuries sustained from chattel slavery and its continuing vestiges.

To merely focus on finance is an empty gesture and betrays a lack of understanding of the depth of the unaddressed moral issues that continue to haunt this nation.

While it might be convenient to assume that we can address the current divisive racial and political climate in our nation through race neutral means, experience shows that we have not escaped our history.

Though the Civil Rights Movement challenged many of the most racist practices and structures that subjugated the African American community, it was not followed by a commitment to truth and reconciliation.

For that reason, the legacy of racial inequality has persisted, and left the nation vulnerable to a range of problems that continue to yield division, racial disparities and injustice.

Reparations are ultimately about respect and reconciliation—and the hope that one day, all Americans can walk together toward a more just future.

We owe it to those who were ripped from their homes those many years ago an ocean away; we owe it to the millions of Americans—yes they were Americans—who were born into bondage, knew a life of servitude, and died anonymous deaths, as prisoners of this system.

We owe it to the millions of descendants of these slaves, for they are the heirs to a society of inequities and indignities that naturally filled the vacuum after slavery was formally abolished 154 years ago.

Let us also do with the spirit of reconciliation and understanding that this bill represents.

Finally, if we truly want to build better, brighter future, we can't do it on a rotten foundation. Therefore, for the house that is America, we must repair the damage caused by the original crime that separates us. A house divided against itself cannot stand.

The H.R. 40 Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans must be created by executive order. Today we call on President Biden to right this historical wrong and take a monumental step towards reparative justice.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 59 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Today, O God, we lay before You our petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving. We request that You bestow upon us the joy of Your presence among us, that when we look upon the faces of those who labor in these Halls, known and unknown, elected or employed, we may see Your image.

We pray for the health and welfare of this illustrious body, that as the scenery changes and the actors move on, around, or off the stage, You will uphold each one. Guide them in the roles You have called them to fulfill and grant them wisdom to discern the way You would have them go.

Lord, may our prayers serve as an intercession for those who do not have enough courage or strength to speak their own needs, for those who haven't enough faith to trust what lies ahead, and for those who do not know how to receive the mercy You offer us.

Then accept our offerings of thanksgiving to You for the bounty You lay before us—the gift to labor, to serve, and to contribute our energies wherever You call us, but especially here in this, our Nation's Capital.

May our words be good and pleasing to You as we pray them in Your most holy name.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

CELEBRATING PASSAGE OF THE SPEAK OUT ACT

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

Ms. KUSTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the passage of the Speak Out Act.

As the co-chair of the Bipartisan Task Force to End Sexual Violence, I have seen how perpetrators of workplace sexual assault and harassment hide behind nondisclosure agreements to sweep their heinous conduct under the rug.

Let's remember that the vast majority of assault and harassment in the workplace goes unreported, and most perpetrators are never held accountable. It takes tremendous courage for survivors to come forward.

I am so proud that under the leadership of Speaker NANCY PELOSI, this House overwhelmingly passed the Speak Out Act yesterday, and we have sent this commonsense, bipartisan bill to the President's desk.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT MONTH

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize November as National Career Development Month.

As co-chair of the bipartisan House Career and Technical Education Caucus, I was proud to introduce the National Career Development Month resolution last week with my CTE Caucus co-chair and good friend, Congressman JIM LANGEVIN.

National Career Development Month raises awareness of future career opportunities and development programs for all individuals. A highly skilled workforce is a business's number one asset and provides a competitive edge.

National Career Development Month also is a time to recognize the professionals who guide learners to become leaders of tomorrow.

Throughout the month, schools and businesses will have the chance to showcase different career paths that align with various interests and skills. These opportunities will better prepare students as they begin to enter the workforce.

As we continue through National Career Development Month, I encourage employers, students, and workers of all ages to take advantage of career development, putting them in the driver's seat of their careers.

TURNING TRANSGENDER AWARENESS INTO ACTION

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

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Transgender Awareness Week.

Trans Americans made history this year by running and winning in more elections than ever before. Breakthrough representations in media have