

What do we have instead? The work that has been done through the three strikes and you are out, in order to keep violent prisoners in prison, pay the price, has been undone by defund the police and by watering down sentencing laws. It is absurd.

We have all the anti-gunners here saying we have gun violence, yet they take away the sentence enhancements for "use a gun, go to jail." When using a gun in a crime, there used to be special enhancements in my home State. They have basically eviscerated those.

How does that make an ounce of sense, when you are anti-gun on one hand, yet you don't want to have the enhancements because you don't want people sitting in prison? Indeed, there is more and more legislation all the time to figure out how to let prisoners out sooner; some very violent offenders, to release them, those on death row who have been downgraded because they got rid of some of the death penalty requirements for certain people on death row. Governor Newsom in California has completely done away with the death penalty during his time in office by executive action. It is still on the books; he is just not enforcing it.

How is this going to deter criminals? When you see the crimes that are happening right under the noses of clerks in retail stores, jewelry stores, and they are told by their corporate officers, don't dare say anything, don't even take pictures of them. Someone lost their job because they took a picture and video of a crime happening inside their store because we have these lily-livers at the CEO level who don't want them to help enforce their own goods, therefore, driving the cost of everything through the roof because we don't enforce against crime.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION DECISION

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, this morning I rise to share with my colleagues both pain and a sense of remorse, sense of fear that many Americans will face, and attempt to have a dialogue and an understanding as will be reflected in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

I am a student of the Constitution. I have served as a senior member of the Judiciary Committee, former chair or ranking member of most of the subcommittees, covering everything from immigration to administrative law to criminal law.

I love this Nation. I would argue with anyone on any assessment other than that I am a patriot, one who views the Bill of Rights as an anchor of our uniqueness, who appreciates every day the men and women who put on the United States uniform, and who has had the privilege—obviously to my dismay—to visit every war zone during my tenure, to acknowledge those in combat, to honor and respect them

and, yes, to attend funerals of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice and to acknowledge those of years past in our veterans cemetery in Houston, Texas.

As I begin this discussion, I want it to be known that these are wonderful documents, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States of America.

If we look at the beginning of the Constitution, it is really poetry, but it is truth. As we are reminded of the Pledge of Allegiance, these words are equally potent: "We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union . . ." They remind us of the backdrop of these pioneers fleeing persecution themselves. Many listening today may be the progeny, the descendants of these people. ". . . establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

Our Founding Fathers, who recognized that slavery was an abomination, and that all Americans deserve equal protection of the laws, in essence determined that the Bill of Rights was appropriate. All of us know the First Amendment, but I don't know how many know the functioning of the 14th Amendment, which guarantees equal protection of the laws and allows all of us to live in liberty and prosperity.

I come here today to argue vigorously against the wrong-headed decision that was made by the United States Supreme Court on two issues and more to come. Citizens, law, and precedent, and the Constitution were completely ignored in the wrongheaded affirmative action decision.

Let me be very clear. This is not about words; it is not about enforcing wrongness against my fellow Americans. It is an affirmation of affirming everyone. Whether your history is embedded in Pilgrims' pride, that your ancestors came here that way, or you are part of the Irish who came because of the famine and the lack of food in Ireland, or you came early in the 1900s as Italians or many, many other ethnicities, or maybe you are now Ukrainians who are fleeing the persecution of a horrible war and the lack of democracy, you are an American who desires freedom, democracy, and opportunity, as the laws of this land will allow you to enter.

We are a potpourri. We are a place where people said this will not work, these people come from all places, but our ancestors realized in the Bill of Rights that slavery was wrong and abolished it in the 13th Amendment. However, every day we continue to fight slavery that still exists around the Nation.

Then we put in place the 14th Amendment of equal protection of the law, and you could look at that and say, well, isn't it equal protection to let someone trump over someone else if

they indicate that they have reasons to do so? No, it is not.

Affirmative action has come about through the death of many people, and it wasn't the death of the Civil War, which was the dastardly war where brother was against brother which caused the greatest loss of life and one that we remember in pain, but we also remember the heroes.

I say to you that the affirmative action decision did not affirm anyone. It took away that affirmation from the LGBTQ community. It will take it away from race, away from religion and ethnicity. Realize that equal protection of the law is a vital point. It is lost by the Supreme Court's decision on affirmative action.

□ 1145

EXPAND SAFE TRUCK PARKING

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I grew up in a family trucking business, a company that I worked with for years, and I spent my years driving over the road. I knew the challenges our truck drivers faced: Time pressures, lack of sleep, and nowhere to stop for the night.

When I came to Congress, I joined the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and made it a top priority to expand access for safe truck parking.

Now, I knew we had a threat to public safety when exhausted truck drivers pushed that extra mile just to end up sleeping on the highway shoulder on an off-ramp because there is not enough space in our rest areas. Critics who didn't understand the issue said it wasn't a priority, and they asked why they should care.

Well, early yesterday morning, a Greyhound bus traveling from Indianapolis to St. Louis veered into the shoulder of an off-ramp in Madison County, Illinois. Parked on the off-ramp were three tractor trailers and the drivers resting inside.

Three passengers on the bus were killed. Over a dozen were injured. It is a tragedy that didn't have to happen.

I have introduced legislation to direct existing Federal funding to build more truck parking spaces. I am hopeful that we get the Truck Parking Safety Improvement Act signed into law. Let's act before we have another tragedy.

My prayers are with the families and the victims of this accident.

RECOGNIZING THE COURAGEOUS ACTIONS OF FLUVANNA COUNTY LIFEGUARDS

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

Mr. GOOD of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the courageous actions of three young lifeguards in

Fluvanna County at Lake Monticello in the Fifth Congressional District of Virginia.

On July 6, a woman lost control of her vehicle following a medical episode, leading her to drive through a gated pool area, hit a picnic table, and then on to the beach and into Lake Monticello, where her car began to sink.

Witnessing these events, lifeguards Paige Tomaras, Zachary Butler, and Savannah Peterson sprang into action to save the driver from her sinking vehicle. Thankfully, the driver was pulled from her car and brought to the shore, where eventually EMS would arrive to transfer her to receive medical attention.

Paige, Zachary, and Savannah ultimately saved the driver's life and displayed a type of heroism that each of us would hope to resemble.

The Lake Monticello community is blessed to have such an outstanding group of brave, young lifeguards who are willing to step into action without hesitation, and it is an honor for me to recognize and represent these selfless individuals.

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 11 o'clock and 48 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:

Guide us, O great Jehovah, as we make our pilgrimage through these days. Order our steps when at any point the path is obscure of certainty or our vision is impeded by doubt.

Strong deliverer, lead us through this day as we continue doggedly our pursuit of right answers and reasoned legislation. Direct us in this our daily quest for noble ends and sound decisions.

Grant Your servants an understanding mind to govern Your people, a mind of both compassion and reasonableness, a mind of both fairness and moral authority.

Enable us amid well-researched debate and passionate argument to have the insight to determine what is of You and how we are to align ourselves to Your gracious plan. And if any of us is lacking in such wisdom, may we be wise enough to ask it of You.

Bestow knowledge and discernment upon us generously and mercifully.

May any test of our faith and our faithfulness this day produce endurance, and may our endurance serve to accomplish Your work in our lives that we may, at the end of the day, be found mature in our faith and closer in our walk with You.

In the strength we find in You and in the power of Your name, we offer our prayers.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. TOKUDA) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. TOKUDA 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.

HONORING SPORTS ICON DAVE BROWN

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

Ms. DE LA CRUZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a valley sports icon we recently lost, Dave Brown.

For over 40 years, Dave worked at KRGV, where he brought the excitement of sports to our homes, covering everything from local high school football and soccer games to the World Series.

Despite health challenges, Dave never stopped working and continued to share his passion through segments like "Dave's Dozen" and "Football Fridays."

His impact went far beyond sports. Dave's tireless advocacy for diabetes and organ donation awareness made a lasting impact on our community.

His legacy will live on through the lives he touched, the colleagues he mentored, and the families he loved.

My heart goes out to his wife, Drue; his son, Jeff; his grandson, Nicholas; and his sister, Marlene.

May Dave's legacy as the "Valley's King of Sports" endure for generations to come.

RECOGNIZING NORTH CANTON MEALS ON WHEELS AS CHAMPION OF THE WEEK

(Mrs. SYKES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SYKES. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize the hardworking volunteers of the North Canton Meals on Wheels as the Ohio 13th Congressional District's Champion of the Week.

For the past 50 years, North Canton Meals on Wheels volunteers have served seniors and families in northeast Ohio, consistently providing hundreds of cold and hot cooked meals to those in need.

Currently led by the program director, Lucy Keenan, and the board director, Trudy Jones, this crucial organization goes beyond just providing seniors and families with healthy and nutritious meals. The approximately 60 volunteers serve our community by becoming friendly faces to older Ohioans who may feel isolated and lonely.

Combating the harmful effects of food insecurity is a priority near and dear to my heart, so I am grateful for the North Canton Meals on Wheels and what they do to ensure vulnerable seniors and families in Ohio's 13th District never have to worry about going hungry.

As inflation and rising costs continue to make food more expensive for those on fixed incomes, the service of the North Canton Meals on Wheels is more important than ever.

Once again, congratulations to North Canton Meals on Wheels on their 50th anniversary, and I thank them for all that they do to ensure our seniors and families in Ohio's 13th District can live with dignity.

OVERSIGHT OF HUNTER BIDEN

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

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Speaker, "What did the President know and when did he know it?"

That famous question was from former Tennessee Senator Howard Baker, and it is as important today as it was during the Watergate investigation. This time, the question is: What did the former Vice President and now-President know and when did he know it?

As House Republicans continue to dig into Hunter Biden's foreign business dealings, it is becoming more apparent that President Biden not only likely knew about these corrupt exchanges but he may have even been in the room for some of them.

Republicans have proven tens of millions of dollars were funneled to the Biden family from foreign nationals. Republicans have also uncovered an effort by his administration to cover up Hunter Biden's Federal crimes and his father's involvement while they continued targeting his top political opponent.

The American people deserve answers, and we are committed to finding them.