

adults remain in their “desired homes in the community.” The OAA is specifically identified in that document as a “major vehicle for the organization and delivery of social and nutrition services.” As states move to develop and implement their own OAA and multi-sector aging plans, policymakers and stakeholders will benefit from engaging with the OAA and its experienced staff, to maximize the health and well-being of older Americans.

CONCLUSIONS

The OAA is holistic in scope and national in scale and is experienced in providing FIM-aligned interventions to older adults in the community. Building on its proficiency in collaborating and linking with community-level programs/providers and its existing framework for standards, monitoring, and enforcement, local providers can help ensure an accountable and scalable community services infrastructure for broader and widely impactful FIM initiatives. The OAA also has data, evaluation, and research expertise that could benefit FIM studies with older adults. Finally, policymakers can look to the OAA as a valuable partner for helping develop and implement federal and state plans and legislation that support older adults in aging well and for helping communities employ successful nutrition and health initiatives now and into the future.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, the Older Americans Act Nutrition Programs play an integral role in our efforts to end hunger now.

REFLECTING ON TRAJECTORY OF OUR DEMOCRACY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURLISON). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. STEVENS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you here this evening, a stormy evening in Washington, D.C., in our Nation’s Capital, to make an address on behalf of my constituents in my district in Michigan, Michigan’s 11th District, representing and covering the bulk of Oakland County.

I make such an address this evening to reflect on the trajectory of our democracy, to reflect on events that have occurred since I booked this Special Order hour address back in July, and also to make some pronouncements around reforms, revisions, and efforts to come together for the health of our Union.

□ 1900

Make no mistake about it, Mr. Speaker, I absolutely recognize the profound and humbling reality that it is to be a duly elected Member of the House of Representatives speaking and maintaining the privilege to speak in this Chamber to anyone who seeks to be watching back at home and on behalf of this profound nature of the discourse of our democracy.

I booked this Special Order hour because so much happens in the days of Congress, the session days of committee markups, of meetings with stakeholders and constituents, and

conversations with colleagues who hail from every ZIP Code around this great Nation. Something that I would like to tell the people back at home is that I have friends, such as the woman from Oakland County, Michigan, who is a champion for advanced manufacturing. Somehow now I have friends from Alaska to Tennessee to Maine to the coasts of California and inland into Nevada and the like, and the experiment of America and the experiment of American democracy really truly manifests in this very Chamber.

Of course, we recognize that all too often it is not celebrated, and it is not covered in the media outlets from the national news to the print journalism to the ongoing nature of social media when and how we come together on behalf of this Nation.

Something that we just witnessed is a failure to vote on passing our budget, and the clock is clearly ticking. The Democrats and Republicans couldn’t come together. In fact, Republicans joined Democrats to tank Republican legislation to fund the government. So we are again faced with the scenario that we have seen ourselves in time and time again in the 118th Congress where the minority party comes forward to act to save the worst from happening.

Proudly, President Biden in the last year of his Presidency can now just about claim that the government hasn’t shut down once under his watch. We have not defaulted on our debt, and, of course, just last term in the Congress, we rescued this Nation from the worst effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, investing in communities, investing in the incredible county I am so privileged to represent in Oakland County.

We gave Oakland County \$300 million, so we didn’t have to go back to our taxpayers and ask for more.

We are a donor-rich area. We all know that. We pay more than our fair share of taxpayer dollars, and then when we want to do more in the communities we have to go back and excise new tax. We have got to do millages.

Oakland County is under the great leadership of Dave Coulter. He is someone whom I am so proud to call a dear friend and collaborator. He is someone I work with really closely on behalf of the constituents of the 11th District because we believe in the table setting of government. We believe that government works best when Federal, State, local, and municipal come together to utilize taxpayer dollars effectively.

So what Coulter and his team were able to do with the moneys that came down from the great American Rescue Plan Act, the tiebreaking vote that Vice President HARRIS placed to pass it, is that they have invested in dozens of senior centers. Senior centers like the one in Waterford that was going back time and time again for a millage and couldn’t achieve that millage, and now they have their funding. Birmingham next has their funding. Med-

ical debt for the people of the 11th district and Oakland County is wiped out. Money is available to invest in 3-D printing, a program designed by Automation Alley, which is now being replicated in several other counties and has received funding from the State.

So that was just one bill that was passed at the beginning of the 117th session of Congress when President Biden rightfully took his oath and was sworn in as the 46th President of the United States.

We didn’t stop there, and we did become bipartisan when we passed an infrastructure bill.

Who knew that infrastructure would become so partisan?

It was somewhat partisan for some who were adamantly against the bill and now they go home and take the credit when the bridge is being repaired and the road is being paved. It is absolutely enormous that, for once, instead of just authorizing, we appropriated money to say we are going to do the maintenance and repair, and we are going to put the contractors to work. We are going to make sure we have got a prevailing wage and good wages and a seat at the table for our unions.

I talk to my building trades. They tell me they are all very busy and that they couldn’t be busier. Of course, when matched with the incredible infrastructure bill, which has done a lot for our water systems and our lead pipes and public transportation as well, of course, Oakland County passed a major transportation millage as well. Here in the Motor City, we now have busing that works very well and goes east to west. It was quite the triumph last term.

What we also have noticed, though, here is that when we did the clean energy investments, when we looked global competition in the face and said: In the last administration in a bipartisan way, we renegotiated NAFTA, we halted USMCA, we plussed up buy American content, we said we are going to have the rules of the road for our auto industry to succeed, a platform for us to go into markets. Yes, this happened under President Trump with Speaker NANCY PELOSI. We renegotiated USMCA.

Then in the next term we said: We are going to make investments in clean energy, not subsidies, not ownership structures, but large capital-intensive investments in industries of scale.

Mr. Speaker, that is so we are not overly reliant on our adversaries on the global stage, the Chinese Communist Party for one. Gosh knows what is going to totally happen over there.

We want to have domestic technologies in innovations. We want to have an ownership structure so that we are not forced to go and buy from overseas markets. We have learned this lesson over and over and over again. We have, frankly, learned this lesson with semiconductors, the microchips that go into anything from our general electronics devices, our cell phones, our

computers, our music players, if we are still listening to those, too, of course, the automobile.

The pandemic hit, and all of a sudden, we couldn't get the shipments in, and we were making all these beautiful cars. We really do salute our auto-workers for their great efforts during a very trying time, certainly protecting and maintaining their safety but staying dedicated to the production and the production efforts of their enterprise as well as their innovation ecosystem.

So you see, Mr. Speaker, Michigan did something enormous. We responded to the industrial call to action during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was, of course, our manufacturers, large and small, that were addressing the supply chain disruptions, from the personal protective equipment to the ventilators that we were running low on, and all that.

Then they continued to innovate, and here we stand at the precipice of this incredible, new mobility moment that is being led by the auto industry. I think some want to say: Oh, my gosh, this is the government dictating the terms.

Of course, I just received an incredible briefing today from the MIT Sloan School of Management. They work across the aisle. They have this unbelievable dataset that shows what we need to do to stave off the 5-degree warming of the planet, and it is a whole host of things. Of course, to my capitalist focused friends and my capitalist focused countrymen and -women, those are all profit-making endeavors.

We are here, Mr. Speaker, to talk about the future, and we should be celebrating it and not cowering and clinging to the past. We should absolutely be saluting and recognizing the freedom of our fellow countrymen and -women who are going to buy the automobile they want to buy.

Of course, we have 1 million new electric vehicles that were sold in the United States of America, 75,000 from GM, 75,000 roughly from Ford. They are being honest and transparent about what they want to do.

Every week I go and I visit a manufacturer, and I meet them where they are at, and I sit in their conference rooms. I walk their floors. I am in my sixth year of doing this.

Really tremendous things are happening all across southeast Michigan with our automotive supply chain. They have been very dedicated to some of the transition that their customers, the OEMs, the original equipment manufacturers, are professing to make if they want to be zero emissions maybe in total.

We want to win the future, and we want to be innovators and technology leaders. Of course, I mentioned chips and microchips were running short during the global pandemic, and Michigan really responded to it in a tremendous way.

We also, frankly, Mr. Speaker, learned a big lesson which is that the

United States, Gordon Lawrence and the brainiacs out West, innovated the chip. They innovated the microchip.

We were at one time producing 40 percent of these chips in the United States of America. It was our technology, and it was our innovation. Then it wasn't just low labor costs, which is a reality, but it was kind of an investment structure. It was kind of a wooing that took place, and the chips started going over to Taiwan and China and all this and that. The tide really rolls out.

I can speak to this as someone who was serving as a Presidential appointee in the administration of Barack Obama during the Great Recession when we were doing a rescue, not just of Wall Street, it wasn't just a Wall Street rescue that started under President Bush. These financiers in the capital markets and the derivative trading that had gone awry, it was derivative trading that had gone awry. It was the foreclosure crisis that was tied to that, it was the Main Street effort saying that we were not going to liquidate or see the liquidation of General Motors or Chrysler. We used the Troubled Asset Relief funds to invest in the companies, not to own them or control their day-to-day management.

Of course, we were sitting in these ornate government rooms, and we were rightfully saying that we have two other big problems. One is on semiconductors. We are not making enough chips. We are too overly reliant on foreign markets. That comes to roost in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Of course, I, a humble Member of Congress from southeastern Michigan and someone who evangelizes and champions our manufacturing economy, I decide to reach out to the Speaker of the House through the professional way in which we do so as Members of Congress, by letter. I sent the Speaker of the House a letter a week almost. Let's do something on chips.

Then, of course, the great Gina Raimondo, Commerce Secretary, partners up with the White House Office of Legislative Affairs and some of us lawmakers. The Senate was involved, and I love to tell the Homeric story about passing bills.

The short of the long is we passed a chips bill, CHIPS and Science. It was a really ringing moment here in this body because, again, it was bipartisan. Of course, I am sitting in the Science Committee as chair of the Subcommittee on Research and Technology authorizing the doubling of scientific research for the National Science Foundation. It all passed unanimously, and it all passed bipartisan. We passed CHIPS and Science with a tranche of money. I understand that my friends and colleagues on the other side of the aisle are more keen to austerity measures and maybe didn't take the vote accordingly, \$52 billion we said we would commit in the marketplace.

Of course, we are poking and prodding at the Commerce Department. They are working through some of the legal matters to get more of the money out. We don't want it to be too cumbersome, but \$52 billion signed into law and was committed. It was an August day in 2022, hot as all get out.

It is absolutely incredible because within one business quarter, \$200 billion of private-sector capital commitments were made here in the United States of America. That is a 21st century industrial policy approach.

So we are looking at this also because there was a number two, we had two problems, chips, which we sought to solve. Then Secretary Raimondo will tell us that we have a plan to be the only country by 2030 who will design, produce, and ship these chips. We will be the ones to do it. I am very excited to see where these investments are going.

We had a second problem that we had recognized 1½ decades ago, and that was around critical minerals. We, again, are overly reliant on foreign markets, and particularly the Chinese Communist Party, on critical minerals. The challenge here is that 98 percent of these minerals that go into the cell phone and that go into manufactured goods that are so absolutely tied, the critical minerals are so tied to our manufacturing enterprise, and it is a weakness, a supply chain weakness of the United States of America.

□ 1915

We are now starting to form a legislative agenda around how we could do similar to what we did with CHIPS, although it is more complicated. Of course I can see my colleagues on the other side of the aisle eyeing on some of the permitting challenges and some of the reforms that we want to do to accelerate this clean energy revolution, so you have got the environmentalists and the regulating insecure people coming together for once.

We want to do the same thing on critical minerals, right? We want to work with our allies. We want to pass trade deals. We know we are going to be renegotiating USMCA. The year 2025 is just around the corner. So many of us remember the energy, the enthusiasm, the almost revolutionary moment that it felt like to arrive in the 21st century. Everything was 21st century. Everything was the next 21st century plan and the agenda and all of this.

Well, now we are squarely in the 21st century, and we have got opportunities galore, and we have some challenges that we want to address. We want to bring together our allies, similar to how we did in other types of arrangements. The AUKUS arrangement that is now Australia, U.K., U.S., allowed us to invest in nuclear submarine development and technology development.

We have the Quad initiative, and we really do salute and recognize the current administration's approaches to

foreign policy as a way forward and a way to lead by bringing people along, and not saying that we are going to pay for everything, but bringing people along through the rules-based, open, free-market, capitalist, democratic society principles.

In April of this year, believe it or not, we passed a foreign aid package for democracy here in the Chamber, and of course in the other Chamber, the upper Chamber, and it was signed into law by the President.

Well, it was, to a tee, the exact package he asked for in October. You know, support for our democratic allies, support for democracy, and obviously some efforts which have fallen off the rails this term around securing our own borders, and we can only hope to see the day in which such important things are not so political that they remain stalemated.

I certainly seek to be a part of the bipartisan solutions to say that, if you are trained in the United States of America, if you are getting that Ph.D., we want to find a way to keep that talent here. This is something that we heard over and over again from our stakeholders on the Select Committee on Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party: Don't let the talent leave our shores. That is a way in which we innovate. At the same time, too, let's truly invest in border security.

I come from a northern border State, and we take really seriously our relationship with Canada and the security of both of our borders and trade, and certainly looking at the rail and the bridges and we are working on building a new bridge.

Well, it is almost built in southeast Michigan, a large export destination. It is economics, it is livelihoods, and it is also people's lives. It is what draws people together in many respects, the ability to connect.

That was something that was somewhat taken from us during the pandemic period, and we are not forgetting of it, and we certainly want to continue to support people to be the best and the most achieving that they can be.

That is all around us in southeast Michigan, people innovating in their garages and creating new businesses and being entrepreneurial. We always want to support people to succeed in small businesses and listen to them. I always say: Listen, if I can be of help, that is great. If not, I am happy to step and get out of the way.

Of course, some other matters of bipartisan congressional coming together at this moment are worth reflecting on, and a new subject. That is with regard to a role that I have had in this Congress since the year 2022, as the co-chair of the Task Force on American Hostages and Americans Wrongfully Detained Abroad.

This is a task force that is bipartisan. It is co-chaired by the gentleman

from Arkansas (Mr. HILL). It brings together Members from all over Congress to shine a light on these wrongful detentions, on these American hostage scenarios.

We have certainly had a term around hostages here in the Chamber, and some really great work has been done in addressing the hostage crisis, the hostage crises, and the ways in which we can operate most effectively as a legislative body.

I fell into this role on the request of a former Congressman from Florida, who now runs the American Jewish Committee, the president of the American Jewish Committee, former Congressman Ted Deutch, a dear friend of mine. He was the co-chair. Upon his retirement, he asked me to fill his shoes.

In part, it is because I was showing up at all the task force meetings on behalf of Paul Whelan—Paul Whelan, resident of Novi, Michigan, employee of BorgWarner, a very large, billion-dollar-plus American automotive supplier, in which he was in charge of global security.

Of course, it is quite memorable because, just as I was preparing to be sworn in for my first term in Congress representing Michigan's 11th District, right as the year 2019 was being rung in, we had gotten word December 28, 2018, that Paul was taken captive by the KGB and the Russian Federation. They ultimately charged him on false grounds, a total sham, of espionage.

It was 5 years, 7 months, and 5 days that Paul was unlawfully and illegally and unjustly imprisoned.

In this term of the 116th Congress, I had the privilege and the rightful duty in coordination with Paul's incredible family of writing a resolution, H.R. 552, calling on the Russian Federation to free Paul Whelan. I worked with my colleagues across the Michigan delegation.

Mr. TIM WALBERG was, at the time, representing Manchester, Michigan. That is where Paul's family lived, and I was in regular communication with them.

We were staring down the face of Putin because it was Putin's game to take Paul Whelan, a former marine, a hometown son of Michigan, and attempt to disappear his life and attempt to play games of politics and embarrassment to the United States and, of course, with the ultimate goal of getting a swap.

Now, H.R. 552, the resolution calling on the Russian Federation to free Paul Whelan, produce the evidence or free Paul Whelan, they had no evidence. There was nothing he had done wrong. He was a citizen on his own time, an American citizen on his own time visiting Russia. That resolution was voted on unanimously. Everyone who voted that day, they voted "yes." They voted to support the resolution, and the same thing happened in the Senate. We had three terms, and we voted on the same resolution each time.

On August 1—it was a Thursday into, actually, almost the following day—it

was nearing midnight by the time the plane landed—Paul Whelan returned home to American soil. The ultimate and largest hostage-freeing effort since really the Cold War took place: Paul Whelan, Evan Gershkovich, involving some of our other European counterparts.

Of course, I was watching as the plane, the bright light in the sky descending from the heavens, it felt like, landing at Andrews Air Force Base, greeted by President Biden, greeted by Vice President HARRIS, among the political events that were going on as well, but of course the governing, as President Biden always reminds us, still goes on. There is still so much work to do. Paul Whelan—the door opens, he appears, and he steps off the plane. He walks down the stairs.

The President placed the very American flag pin that he was wearing on Paul, and we know that Paul cherishes that and wears that pin often. It was so momentous. It was so surreal. We had so many starts and stops and missed opportunities and trials and tribulations and lack of familiarity of what it was like to see an American—he was the first one out of the crew who was taken—be put into a prison, not wanting to at all prevent what needed to happen from happening.

That was such a cause for celebration in Michigan. Billboards: Welcome home, Paul, with a yellow ribbon adorned on the billboard that people could see as they drove along our highways.

There is so much to share about this journey and the legislative body of work that surrounds hostage affairs and negotiations and the return of wrongfully detained Americans. It was 5½ years. Paul lost his job. He lost his place of residence. His dog passed away. We have mentioned Flora on this House floor before.

Now it is an effort to rebuild.

As we know, we are passing an NDAA soon. We got the Robert Levinson bill passed in 2020, and a really phenomenal package of legislation that has passed, but there is more to do.

We remain dedicated to that effort, but, of course, later that month, that very same month of August, just last month, another tragedy struck our hostage community.

Six hostages who were taken from Israel on October 7, 2023, were murdered, murdered by Hamas terrorists in a tunnel. It takes your breath away. It puts sand in your mouth. What is there to say beyond the overwhelming expression of condolences to the families and the people impacted by this?

We don't even have the exact date. We have a sense of the exact date. The bodies were recovered on August 31. Hersh Goldberg-Polin, whose name I know has been spoken in this Chamber and who has absolutely remarkable parents, Jon and Rachel. Rachel, who received a TIME 100 designation. It is a TIME 100 "Person of the Year" for her advocacy.

Hersh is American. Hersh was born in America. Hersh was born on U.S. soil, and he was taken by terrorists on October 7, 2023, because he was at a concert celebrating peace, love, and freedom.

As someone who has been doing the task force work and working so closely with so many advocacy partners, over and over again, we kept expressing that the hostages in Gaza, the Americans—32 Americans killed that day, 9 Americans taken—that they are the heartbeat of negotiation. Hersh wasn't the only person killed, murdered, in August, 23 years old—Eden at 24, Ori at 25, Alex at 32, Carmel at 40, and Almog at 27.

These are shots heard around the world, and they are attacks on all of our humanity. They are a reminder to those of us who are stewards of democracy and freedom and the efforts of this Chamber that we must do more; that we must continue to say the names; we must continue to push for a just ceasefire, an end to the war, which means that we are going to see a return of the hostages and Hamas surrendering; that these individuals should have never been murdered.

□ 1930

In August, we weren't in session. There was no way to verbally address this Chamber. As I had booked this Special Order hour address before the last session had concluded, it weighed on me, recognizing that we had a pretty enormous month in terms of these affairs and the work and the support alongside the Levinson family, alongside Paul Whelan and his family, the family of Hersh, the remaining hostages in Gaza, who have suffered through torturous conditions in tunnels and with starvation. One of the young women who was murdered was just 79 pounds.

This is why we stand united around a foreign aid package for democracy here in the United States of America as we seek to continue to do the work on behalf of the people who sent us here, to continue to do the work on behalf of justice and fairness, and to remind ourselves that there are many who, unfortunately, do not share our view of freedom and who want to disrupt it, who want to override it. Is the target Israel, or is the target America?

Israel is at war now on so many different fronts with pressures in the north. Mr. Speaker, 80,000 people removed from their homes and the like.

I am proud to be a supporter of the U.S.-Israel relationship. I am certainly not a voting member of that country, but I am a supporting Member of this body who recognizes the essential nature of the U.S.-Israel relationship and what that means, not just for our national security, which, in this moment, is quite paramount, but also what that means for our trade, economy, innovation, and the like.

We continue to extend our support, encouragement, and love to the people of Israel, to the people suffering, to the

people who are scared because of the sirens. Are you going to have to hide? Are the children going to be able to go to school?

The reality of what Hamas has done in Gaza, caring nothing for the nearly trillion dollars of assets for the people, the innocent people who live in Gaza, proclaiming that civilian deaths are a good thing.

Of course, that is one element of what is going on now in the Middle East. As I look toward the next 25 years in terms of the first quarter of the 21st century to the mid-21st century, and what is going to be determinative of our outcomes, we certainly recognize that history, the brief history of this incredible Nation of ours, is so incumbent upon us. It is heavy, and it is incumbent upon us, in part, because of a great World War that Michigan played a critical and central role in, the Arsenal of Democracy, as we responded to the attacks on our country, the attacks on civil liberties, and playing a role in ending it, and then using our industrial might to change the world's economy yet again, almost 80 years since the end of World War II.

A living memory it is barely, and it is a history worth teaching. It is a history worth knowing as an American. As part of the horrors of the Holocaust, we say Never Forget, and we ask ourselves what our challenges are for these next 25 years.

I don't want to see it be the drumbeat of war. My responsibility here is not to shepherd America into war, but certainly, it is recognizing that autocracy and democracy are competing and there is an undergird of jihad taking place, a jihad that seeks to disrupt and to dismantle, to bring us back to an ancient time that we don't want to see arrive again that terrorizes people.

The jihad is hitting in Russia, and it is a threat and a reality here in the United States of America and across Europe. Yet, as we look at ways in which our Nation exemplifies its leadership on the global stage with allies, trade partners, and the like, we have to seek ways in which we bring people along to succeed.

It can't just be America on an island alone. We have to advance and continue to push forward a foreign policy agenda that allows for and provides the conduit for our success, not just as a nation but as the harbinger of freedom.

Last century, we tried a lot of different ways to place freedom on people and to encourage democracy. In some ways and countries, it worked, and in some countries, it didn't. Exploited free markets on behalf of the Chinese Communist Party remain a problem.

As a member of the Select Committee on Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party, as I have mentioned, we really seek to compromise and work in a bipartisan way because that sends a bigger message.

Some of this also comes back now to another important topic, which is the

reform of our democracy, not in full, but as lawmakers. Anytime we are passing a law, we are making a contribution to our democracy. When I, as a Member of Congress from Michigan, introduce a bill, Mr. Speaker, it is not just for my constituents. It is the Nation's laws.

We here this evening couldn't pass a Federal budget. We are passing the Nation's budget, so I find it worth our efforts as lawmakers and as stewards of the Constitution to ask ourselves of worthy improvements. You have seen this term "seven bills" introduced by colleagues on the other side of the aisle specific to the District of Columbia and its unique status, non-State status of seeking to govern ways in which the District of Columbia works.

I don't know if those are messaging bills. Sometimes that is what they call them, messaging bills, or points that folks are trying to get across. It puzzles me. Why would you come here from Texas to legislate specifically to the District of Columbia?

I have participated in the majority in the debate to add the District of Columbia as a State to the Union, and this is not about politics. Of course, there is the Puerto Rico consideration, and that comes with its complexities and its own points about self-determination, but the people of Washington, D.C., over 700,000 people, larger than a handful of States, have said they want to become a State.

This is the grand conversation of the historic nature of the body we serve in. It is every debate that was had in the first 100 years of this Chamber. How did States get added? Well, of course, it was controversial, based on the horrors of slavery and something that this country had to shed itself of through Civil War, and I am not saying that is what is weighing down on District of Columbia, but we added States to this Union.

It was a Constitution with 13 Colonies. It was a Constitution that was written over periods of time. We have these constitutional scholars and these points of history, and allow me to just share as an aside that it is really quite humbling to talk about the Constitution on the floor of this House.

Debates that we can go back to that were written up and points that were made and doctrines that were written surrounding it, of course, starting with the Declaration of Independence, that is an origin story. Our Declaration of Independence is an origin story. It is just like meeting someone for the first time. Where were you born? Who were your parents? What is your origin story?

Origin stories become not things of myth but really cause for celebration. We should be proud of America's origin story. I certainly am. I revel in celebrating July Fourth safely and freely here in the United States of America every year, and I am grateful for it.

It is not to be blasphemous to our Constitution. It is not to be disregarding of its strong governance and

the ways in which our laws and our systems have moved us forward over and over again, much to the envy of many.

We have a strong economy, the strongest economy in the world, great innovation, great communities, great schools, good elections, but we have to look this time in the face.

In July 2020, I didn't speak these words, but I wrote these words and submitted them to the Chamber. I think that they are worth sharing in part because we are in an election year. I am not politicking, and I am not abusing this lectern or my time or my space here.

These elections seem to drive us further from each other than they do drive us together. It is like we can't see each other. I am from a politically popular State, Michigan. People are campaigning and competing for Michigan, so I see it all. I see what is going on with these national campaigns.

On July 9, 2020, I submitted words to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Madam Speaker, I rise today with respect to our democracy. We boast a steady history, no matter the circumstance, of maintaining a peaceful and efficient process upon the conclusion of our Presidential elections. Whether a President continues in office for another term, experiences defeat, or concludes holding office due to the constitutional term limit, our democracy has flourished to the benefit of the American people for centuries.

Now, I am going to guess that we are going to have a passionate, heated November 5 and a result is going to happen. I am going to make this extension, similar to how I did in written form 4 years ago, of committing to that peaceful process.

This is not to shame, scold, or admonish. We are in a new time. We are not struggling with the pandemic. We are not struggling with people not being able to work and dealing with some other matters that kept them pent up, but we are here to flourish as the 21st century hits its quarter mark.

When I think about what happened, and I was here as the 2020 election happened and then debates pursued and fights and claims of malfeasance, which were really never proven, but I stand here because, from 2000 to 2020, we had a lot of frustrations with our Federal elections. 2000 was one. It was major.

Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to the time remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Michigan has 15 minutes remaining.

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, 15 minutes, a good 45 minutes of going strong here, and not a sip of water. Mr. Speaker, I will use my 15 minutes.

I am going to say this because we had the 2000 election, which was really determined by the Supreme Court. People who were in the political process and people who surround the lawmaking of this Nation, instead of saying, gosh, what are the American people telling us over and over again? We are closer together than we are further apart.

□ 1945

We have a four-seat effort to have a new majority in the Congress. We have a 50-50 Senate.

We have an electoral college, which was somewhat designed to placate and recognize legal and important matters in the United States of America.

We have an electoral college that has determined a handful of these elections, particularly in this century. We want to say your vote matters.

Well, the popular vote is recognized, but it is not determinative, and we really haven't reformed or adjusted a thing. We have just continued on.

We haven't made amendments. We haven't added States to the Union. We have just said, this is the way it is going to be.

We are experiencing a somewhat frustrating and tragic uptick in the disappointment of our fellow countrymen and women. They don't trust the system.

It astonishes me. This is the time in the process of elections where, of course, I am in rigorous conversation with voters, but I am also in rigorous conversation with people who aren't voting the way I am. Why is that?

I know that the world changes really quickly after an election, and we have to find a way to keep going. We have to find a way to make sure that this institution hits its pitch level of perfection. It will never be perfect, but in terms of outcomes and results.

Frankly, if you don't understand why people are voting a certain way, if you are just quick to write them off or to make a judgment or an insult, and maybe this is a lecture to everyone, but it is really just a point of personal privilege, you are not on the path to succeeding, and we know that.

I take pride as a liberal, as a Democrat who came in and won because people who voted for the 45th President voted for me, and I recognize that. I took that seriously. I always kept it up.

We have had a couple of impeachments last term and this term and the term before it. Every term I have been here, impeachment comes up. It is not clear to me that impeachment is even working for its intended purposes.

Now, the last time we impeached a President, I thought, well, that is very impeachable because of the dereliction of duty and the total abandonment of the roles and the responsibilities of the Commander in Chief. The government was being attacked. There is no excuse about it. Well, that impeachment failed. The impeachments are failing.

We do have elections, and elections have to be fair, we can say that, but they have to be trusted. They have to be trusted.

Whether it is me or another elected official always deems someone as political it is because they are falling in a party, well, you are on that side and I am on this side. The trust can only extend so far, and that becomes painful to our democracy.

While I haven't proposed every answer on every reform, de Tocqueville, certainly when he was evaluating our Nation and exploring it and writing about it, said "Nothing is more wonderful than the art of being free, but nothing is harder to learn how to use than freedom." The freedom of our fellow citizens, our fellow residents, and the freedom as lawmakers who have been bestowed a trust on behalf of the citizens of our district, the voting residents of our districts, to continue to help to form a more perfect Union.

We must reclaim trust. We must utilize every facet of this body, not in perfunctory terms, not for show, which is why I have carved out an hour of my evening to make this extension and to make this reflection and to dare to proclaim that a reformed and strengthened American democracy will best serve us to the future generations and those before us today.

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

FAILED BORDER POLICIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Montana (Mr. ROSENDALE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROSENDALE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Montana?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROSENDALE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, tonight we are going to speak about the border, the failed policies, and the false security that has been created under the Biden-Harris administration.

It is a target-rich environment, I will tell you. We have many examples of the problems that have been created and the policies that created those problems before us.

Keep in mind we have examples of what is also to do right, not theories, but we have hard examples of what to do to secure our border that were implemented under the Trump administration.

Yes, now we have examples of what not to do as we look at the current wide-open border and the massive problems that were created under the Biden-Harris administration.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROSE) my distinguished colleague, to kick this off.

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding tonight.

Mr. Speaker, Vice President KAMALA HARRIS' tenure as border czar has been a complete and absolute failure. For