

passed to finally provide a regulatory structure for digital assets. I organized 71 Democrats to vote with my Republican colleagues. That was one example of working across the aisle to get something done, but there have been so few examples of that in this Congress. There have been so few real accomplishments because of partisan gerrymandering and because of a Republican majority that is unable to get their act together, to do the work that they need to do.

Again, we have seen chaos and confusion in this body, and it has been fueled by partisan gerrymandering. It is contributing directly to the dysfunction by creating these safe seats where politicians are only focused on their primary elections and not the general election.

It is increasingly filled with Members here who are more beholden to party leaders than to the diverse needs of their constituents and their communities. Congress is failing to deliver because it is no longer designed to reflect the will of the people; it is designed to protect incumbents and perpetuate partisanship.

If we want Congress to actually get things done, we need to fix this broken system. The FAIR MAPS Act is one way to start. By implementing independent, nonpartisan redistricting commissions, we can bring fairness and competition back to our elections so that the best ideas win at the ballot box, the best people serve in the U.S. Congress as we will send more responsive Members to Congress to do what they are supposed to do to work for the American people.

Madam Speaker, we are doing our best to understand how partisan gerrymandering has affected this election, but one statistic that I think is incredibly important is the number of split districts in the U.S. Congress.

What is a split district? A split district is a district that elects a Member of Congress of one party and a President of the other party. Let's look over the course of our history here in the United States. Split districts used to be very common. We would have voters picking Democrats and Republicans for different offices up and down the ballot, but those folks in the center have continued to decline, in part, because of partisan gerrymandering and the extremism it has brought to the U.S. Congress.

In 1984, there were 190 Members of this body who came to Washington in districts that elected a President of one party and a Member of Congress of the other. In this election, it is districts that voted for KAMALA HARRIS for President and a Republican for the House, or districts that voted for a Democrat for Congress and Donald Trump for President.

In 1984, 190 split ticket districts. In 2004, 20 years later, we are down to just 58 split ticket districts in the U.S. House of Representatives. My election, 2022, just 23 Members of Congress from

split ticket districts, 17 Republicans, 6 Democrats, that is what we have in the 118th Congress.

With this last election, we are down to what looks to be—again, votes are still being counted—just 13 Members of the U.S. House of Representatives from split ticket districts. I know for sure that is DON BACON and BRIAN FITZPATRICK. Those are two districts where voters sent a Republican to Congress, but KAMALA HARRIS as their choice for the White House and then Democratic districts where the rest, including Members like JARED GOLDEN, MARIE GLUESENKAMP PEREZ, TOM SUOZZI, DON DAVIS, and others, but just 13.

We had 190 40 years ago down to 13 now. If you draw a congressional district that KAMALA HARRIS won or that Donald Trump won, you can be almost certain that they are going to send a Democrat or a Republican to the U.S. House of Representatives. That is why gerrymandering is wrong. That is why we have to fix it. The time for action is now. This is the most pressing need of this Congress.

Madam Speaker, as I close out my time, I will leave this body with this incredibly important thought. You heard it from leader HAKEEM JEFFRIES. We are very likely to see a Congress decided by North Carolina partisan gerrymandering, a mid-decade redraw of our maps.

This wasn't a 10-year draw. This is something that partisan Republicans in our legislature did sending 10 Republicans, 4 Democrats, a net gain of 3 for Republicans, and those 3 seats were not even close.

Gerrymandering will very likely decide control of the next U.S. House of Representatives, 220–215. That is what it looks like, and those three seats in North Carolina are very likely the difference.

Madam Speaker, thanks, again, for letting me take the time to be here on this incredibly important discussion. While my name won't be on the ballot and wasn't on the ballot this year, I am not giving up or going out quietly in the fight for fair maps and to end partisan gerrymandering.

I firmly believe that voters should choose their politicians; politicians should not choose their voters. Right now, democracy is on the line and North Carolina and all the other States in this country are worth fighting for to get this right, to end partisan gerrymandering.

We have got a bill to do that, the FAIR MAPS Act, which I have talked about at length. It just takes a majority of the House, majority of the Senate, and we would have districts that allow folks to have a real choice at the ballot box in November.

I continue to fight with every ounce of my energy for fair maps and to end partisan gerrymandering and to protect the right to vote for every single North Carolinian.

This is the biggest issue for this Congress. It is one that we need to address

and it would bring balance to the House. It would allow for more bipartisan legislation. It would require folks to know that if you don't work across the aisle, if you don't reach your hand across that aisle to the opposing party, the voters are going to send you home because it is a district that could go either way.

That is what we need more of, that is what my bill would do, and that is why I am going to continue pushing to end partisan gerrymandering, so we don't have States that look like North Carolina.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would ask Members to observe proper decorum in the use of exhibits in debate.

#### CONCEPTS THAT ARE INCONVENIENT TO THE COUNTRY

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

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS), my good friend.

□ 1215

HONORING NEIL MIDDLETON FOR HIS DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Neil Middleton for his distinguished and award-winning career in journalism, as a longtime trusted news broadcaster and vice president of WYMT-TV, a CBS affiliate in Hazard, Kentucky.

Broadcasting from the heart of Kentucky's Appalachian region, the station's call letters, WYMT, stand for We're Your Mountain Television. It is much more than an acronym. It is the station's mission.

WYMT-TV has become synonymous with the very region it serves, thanks in large part to the leadership and journalistic integrity of Neil Middleton and those who blazed a trail for news coverage and weather alerts in one of the most rural areas of the United States.

In an expansive region separated by mountainous terrain, national media outlets have only made their way to Appalachia after major disasters, while others have blistered our communities by dredging up negative stereotypes that have misrepresented our beloved hometowns that are filled with hardworking, innovative, and extremely talented people.

As both well-known and unknown reporters from around the country have breezed in and out of our region for 15 seconds of fame, it is WYMT that has earned the trust of southern and eastern Kentuckians since the station first signed onto the air in 1985.

They have not only provided lifesaving weather alerts during catastrophic floods and tornadoes but they

have also followed their news coverage with fundraising telethons, using the power of the airwaves to collect vital donations to help our communities recover in the wake of disaster.

WYMT has also built a reputation for holding local State and Federal leaders accountable in the public eye, while not only providing critical news to the region in every newscast but also celebrating our victories in regional development and success.

Thanks to their central location in the region, mountain student athletes have had an exclusive highlight reel on the station's "Sports Overtime" program, swelling up pride through every rural county for student athletes who get little notoriety elsewhere.

In fact, that is where Neil Middleton started his broadcast television news career in 1987. He drove across the mountains from Harlan County every day to cover news and sports in southeastern Kentucky for WYMT and WKYT-TV in Lexington.

Starting out as a radio DJ in high school, Neil worked his way up the ranks as a broadcaster, eventually taking over the helm of WYMT as vice president and general manager. Under his leadership, WYMT achieved a record-breaking growth in advertising sales. He expanded newscasts, sports, and weather. Neil developed new digital media assets and earned countless accolades including regional Emmy awards.

The Associated Press has also recognized Neil's personal excellence in journalism with numerous awards throughout his career. His same passion and work for the region has also been recognized by the Kentucky National Guard, local chambers of commerce, and many others.

Over the last four decades, Neil's passion to serve Kentucky's Appalachian region has reached far beyond the news desk. He has served as a board member for several organizations in the region, including The Center for Rural Development, One East Kentucky, Alice Lloyd College, Eastern Kentucky PRIDE, East Kentucky Leadership Foundation, the Challenger Learning Center of Kentucky, and the Kentucky Associated Press, among others.

As Neil closes this chapter of his career at WYMT, I want to express my deepest gratitude for his unwavering commitment and loyalty to Kentucky's Appalachian region. With every breath, he has advocated for growth and development in the mountains, understanding the value of every investment here and, likewise, the pain of every opportunity sent away from central Appalachia.

Madam Speaker, it has been an honor to work in tandem with Neil on many projects, including a hard-fought battle to add WYMT to satellite broadcast in select areas to ensure local people have access to news and weather alerts close to home. Neil should take great pride in his efforts to make southern and eastern Kentucky a better place to live.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, it has been almost 2 months since Congress has reconvened. Certainly, a lot of things have taken place back home, things in the news that are a little bit shocking and ought to be commented on.

The first thing I would like to point out—and we saw this again in the first week back—a prominent Member of this Congress spoke about the need to protect democracy. Again and again, people from both sides of the aisle, but disproportionately from the Democrat side of the aisle, talk about the necessity of protecting democracy and refer to our country's democracy.

I remember hearing this for the first time when I was at Marquette University, one of the largest universities in the State of Wisconsin. A professor of government or history or something like that referred to our country as a democracy.

When we recite the Pledge of Allegiance every day, they might want to ponder that we talk about the Republic, the Republic for which it stands. We don't talk about the democracy for which it stands. People might wonder why politicians like to refer to our form of government as a democracy but in the Pledge of Allegiance we refer it to as a Republic.

At the time our Constitution was drafted, Ben Franklin talked about giving us a Republic if we can keep it. In other words, he didn't say a democracy if we can keep it. He said a Republic if we can keep it.

You might wonder whether our forefathers ever mentioned democracy. Of course, they did. In Federalist No. 10, James Madison wrote: "Democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contention; have ever been found incompatible with personal security or the rights of property; and have in general been as short in their lives as they have been violent in their deaths."

In other words, James Madison did talk about democracy, and he talked about it negatively.

Why don't politicians like to talk about our country being a Republic and prefer to talk about it as a democracy or a representative democracy?

It is because in democracy the government is determined by the people collectively or the majority of the people. In a Republic, we turn to our Constitution.

There may, at any given time, be a majority of people in this body or a majority of people in this country who don't like a given religion, or they feel like we can confiscate people's property, or because there has been a shooting on the news the night before, they want to ignore the Second Amendment. Therefore, they might not like certain religions and want to suppress that religion. They might not like certain ideas, and they want to say that they were elected here, so they can suppress those ideas.

There are two examples I would like to share with this body. There was a

bill called the McCain-Feingold Act that was passed by two popular Congressmen around the year 2000. They wanted to restrict what people could say or how much time people could buy in an election. In other words, they wanted to restrict the freedom of speech. I am sure both politicians at that time felt we are very popular. We have been elected several times. We have the right to trample on somebody's free speech.

Certainly, in an election season, I would like there to be less or would prefer there to be less advertisements, less mailing going on.

The McCain-Feingold Act passed. The Supreme Court at the time had to lecture, in essence, Senator Feingold and Senator McCain that we do not live in a democracy. We don't care if you receive 60 or 65 percent of the vote in your district. You do not have the right to say certain people cannot buy time on television or send out mailings.

Another example, there was a very popular Governor in the State of Wisconsin. I think very highly of the man. He wanted to say if you have property along a State highway, we can restrict what you can do on that property because someday we might want to buy that property when this highway goes from a two-lane to a four-lane highway. Therefore, we will make your front 50 feet or 60 feet along the highway less valuable because, after all, we represent the government. We have been elected overwhelmingly. The implication is this is a democracy, and we can take your property from you.

Again, the State Supreme Court had to say that, hey, wait a minute. We don't have a democracy here. We have a Republic. We don't care how popular you are. You cannot interfere with what people can do with their land along a highway.

It is another example in which politicians wished we had a democracy or a representative democracy so they can tell you what you can do with your property. In fact, our Constitution stood tall and said that we don't care how you were elected or how many people voted for you, we will not allow you to take people's property.

I believe that is why politicians like to talk about democracy. Because they received 70 percent or 51 percent around here, they like to believe they can determine what you can and cannot say.

As we continue throughout this biennium, let us try not to refer to our form of government as a democracy. Let's refer to it as James Madison or Ben Franklin would have liked to have us refer to it. What they gave us was a republic under our wonderful, great Constitution.

Even though our Constitution allows people to say things we might disagree with, even though our Constitution allows us to quote our wonderful Holy Bible, even though our Constitution prevents the government from taking

people's property without the Constitution, even though our Constitution allows the carrying or owning of firearms, when a lot of people around here don't think we should have the right to carry those firearms, let us stand with our Republic and, bravely, just like when we say the Pledge of Allegiance, bravely describe our country as a Republic, not a democracy.

Again, James Madison said, democracies are spectacles of turbulence and contention; have been found incompatible with personal security or the rights of property; and have in general been short in their lives.

Now, I think during the past month or whatever it was we were not in Washington, a couple of prominent Americans took aim at our Constitution. In particular, they didn't like the First Amendment. They didn't like that people were out there, saying things that they disagreed with.

These former politicians both almost became the President of the United States, which shows how precarious our hold on our great Republic is.

I am talking, in part, about Hillary Clinton, the former First Lady but, even worse, former Secretary of State, who almost became President of the United States. She talked about social media companies and said they must moderate content on their platforms or we will lose total control.

In other words, Hillary Clinton felt that the government should control our lives and they didn't like social media companies allowing things to seep out into the zeitgeist. Maybe those things were hostile to what Hillary felt. It is kind of hard to believe she almost became President. She should always be remembered as someone who believed the First Amendment caused the government to lose control.

□ 1230

While we were out on recess, John Kerry, another man who almost became President of the United States, called the First Amendment a major block in combating misinformation and fighting climate control.

Of course, there is a disagreement with regard to climate change, where it comes from, if it is happening, but John Kerry felt the way to deal with this issue was apparently to deal with the First Amendment.

What he was doing here was talking to the World Economic Forum in a panel on green energy. John Kerry was not only trying to trample on the First Amendment rights of Americans; he wanted this idea to spread throughout the world.

Can you imagine if he had ever become President of the United States, a man who called the First Amendment a major block? My goodness. This is what is going on, and the American public has to wake up.

During this time, there was also a letter made public by Mark Zuckerberg, one of the wealthiest men in America. You would think the

wealthiest people in America above all would have the freedom to exercise their First Amendment rights. Apparently not.

The Biden administration weighed in with Mark Zuckerberg. They didn't like it that people out there had different opinions about COVID, how to address it, and what was appropriate. The Biden administration apparently contacted Mark Zuckerberg and his group, saying that maybe there were things that the American public should know. In other words, rather than having a free exchange of ideas on the value of the vaccine or the value of social distancing or whatever, we shouldn't have an open exchange of ideas. It would be better if we didn't have that pesky First Amendment. It would be better if the people who know best—Anthony Fauci or Pfizer, say—that we should just defer to them because we all know how important Pfizer is. They certainly give a lot of campaign contributions, which we politicians like. Therefore, we should weigh in on the social media platforms and say there are some things that are inconvenient to the country.

I hope when we return we do something to put a little more energy in that First Amendment and, above all, educate the American public that there are politicians out there—like Hillary Clinton, John Kerry, or, apparently, Joe Biden—who view the First Amendment as an obstacle in their expansion of government.

I think this has, to a certain extent, been commented on, but not commented on enough because too many important people—and here we are talking about one President and two almost Presidents—wanted to end people's First Amendment rights.

The First Amendment is only one of the things that make America so great. Others are, I think, things referred to by Nikita Khrushchev and other Communists who, at the time, wanted governments the exact opposite of what we have.

We have a free country based on a republic and our Constitution and anticipated to be a country for moral and religious people. Under communism, we had a country aiming for atheism and totalitarianism in which a government elite decides who we can work for, what goods are to be produced, and the degree to which we penalize people who say things that are not appropriately in line with what the government wants.

In any event, Nikita Khrushchev—in the 1950s and early 1960s, the Soviet Union was kind of the center of communism—promised to someday take over the United States. They would take over the United States without firing a shot.

We spend a great deal around here on munitions, submarines, tanks, and airplanes, but it was interesting that at one time the Communists—and I think Nikita Khrushchev was speaking for the Communists—felt they would take over this country without firing a shot.

What evidence is there that they are trying to weaken our country? I think in addition to the fact that they want to chip away at the First Amendment, I think there is hostility to families, old-fashioned nuclear families, going on in this country. How are we trying to chip away at the families? After all, people like Karl Marx did not like the family.

One way to look at it is that there are currently over 90 programs in the United States in which the benefits of those programs depend on something referred to as percent of poverty. A percent of poverty calculation penalizes two-parent families, or at least it penalizes two-parent families if at least one of them is working a full-time job. In other words, it encourages one-parent families.

I, and probably most of the people in this institution, were around in 1965. Back at that time, only 5 percent of the children born in this country were born into families who did not have both a mother and father at home.

Over time, we have built up over 90 programs in which it was difficult for this family to form. In other words, you get more money right away if you have a family in which only one parent was there. We have worked our way up to a situation where the child is born without both parents at home in over 40 percent of families. Normally, this means it is a fatherless family.

In other words, the government, which is supposed to treat everybody equally, if you have a scale out there, it is overwhelmingly trying to create an America in which the old-fashioned family is becoming more obsolete.

I should point out that this has gone, like I said, from 5 percent to 40 percent. Programs that these families are eligible for are things like SNAP or the Food Stamp program, the low-income housing program, the earned income tax program, the Medicaid healthcare program, things like the Pell Grant Program, TANF program cash assistance, SSI disability program for the children all are inducements not to form an old-fashioned family.

Every biennium—last time, Joe Biden's final budget request—the government usually puts new programs on the heap or adds money to old programs to make the gap between somebody who decides to have both parents in the house compared to somebody who has only one parent in the house.

One person who has written very eloquently on this hasn't been listened to as much as he should—Robert Rector is one—is George Gilder, who wrote a bestseller in 1980. I know there was anticipation that Ronald Reagan would act on this book. He was not able to act on it—my guess is primarily because the Republican House was always in the minority at that time.

George Gilder used to look at what normally I refer to as slums or low-income areas of the city. He focused on Albany, New York, and he followed around a young couple where the young lady was pregnant.

To his surprise, it was not cause for concern like it has been throughout all of history when a young girl gets pregnant and isn't married. Rather, it was a cause for celebration, as the gleeful new couple went around from the low-income housing people to the food stamp people, to the Medicaid people, and signed up for all sorts of benefits. At the time, they had something called AFDC cash payments. It was a cause for celebration because now the young lady would not have to live with her parents anymore. She was getting her own place.

I am sure the people who devised these programs were primarily a money-oriented group, and they felt that this new program would be more likely to have the young lady live on her own without having to live with her mother or with her parents, so they felt they were doing something good.

I think, over time, given the hostility of Karl Marx, given the hostility to the radicals even in the 1960s and 1970s, there were people who knew exactly what they were doing as they destroyed the nuclear family in parts of America.

In any event, this is something we have to look at. When you combine Federal programs with State programs, which frequently team up with Federal programs, you can have situations in which there are \$20,000, \$30,000, \$35,000 penalties for people who decide to get married rather than have people live with a single mother.

It is not like single mothers cannot be very good parents. It is not hard to find people who have been raised in single-parent families who are wonderful children. On the other hand, it is tougher. Statistics would show that it is tougher.

In America, where we try to keep everybody equal, we should not continue to have programs which kind of push more and more people into that single-family situation.

I saw George Gilder weighing in on a topic just the other day. Like I said, he wrote a great bestseller called "Wealth and Poverty" in 1980, and he is still around. He made the case that not only is this bad for the children, but it is bad for the men because you create swaths of society in which men have no purpose because, traditionally, the purpose in an old-fashioned nuclear family is to be the breadwinner.

Here, we have a situation in which he is not going to be able to make enough money, in many cases, to match the government. As a result, we have a situation in which the mother marries the government rather than the husband, and in the long run, it hurts the husband as well.

I hope that this Congress, with such high hopes, works to take away this marriage penalty. Regardless of what Karl Marx would have said, regardless of what certain radical groups would say, we do not want to penalize the father for becoming part of that household.

We know these people are still around. I mentioned, again, Black Lives Matter, a group which many people in this institution were not afraid to stand with, coming out against the traditional nuclear family. It didn't cause people to run away from that group.

There are other quotes of radicals, Angela Davis, that crowd, over the last 50 years, which, again, are hostile to the nuclear family, making fun of the nuclear family, a preference for single parenthood.

I hope this Congress begins to chip away at that ideal. We do not want to any longer have people penalized for getting married and trying to form a traditional family. Indeed, we ought to be encouraging that.

It didn't work out as well as people wanted, but the next attack on freedoms that I think our forefathers would not have seen is congressional programs or programs created by Congress or the executive branch trying to treat people differently by sex or race. These are sometimes referred to as affirmative action programs, but there are many other ways to refer to the programs.

The idea is that the government ought to aim programs at certain subgroups of society, that we have to weigh in to have a disproportionate number of women in a program compared to the women who want to be in the program, a disproportionate number by ancestry. Be it Asian American, African American, so-called Hispanic American, Pacific Islander, or North African, the government should be favoring people by the group that they are from.

This is another thing our forefathers would have been opposed to. They wanted to treat all Americans equally. They did not want the government to have our elections become a contest between ethnic groups. They did not want our government programs to be a contest between men and women as the government weighs in, as they do today, on who owns companies that get government contracts.

If you get a government contract, the government wants to know which ethnic group you are. Of course, you self-identify, so because you are one-quarter Hispanic or one-quarter Native American, you should get preferences to a program. Of course, they don't care here on amount of wealth, so you are going to have a situation in which, say, an Asian American worth tens of millions of dollars gets preference on a government contract compared to a poor person of European descent, a poor guy.

□ 1245

The problem is not just the preferences, which are unfair in its own right, it does result—soon, we are going to have a bill around here—a lot more the government-at-large has to take care of with the problems caused by the hurricanes. That just results in

additional cost, maybe quality, but certainly cost, depending upon who gets the project, but it creates animosity.

It creates an America in which people do not say: I want to have the best person for this program. Every government program, every government hiring decision becomes a contest between men and women, or a contest between Hispanic or Asian or what have you. It is a kind of ridiculous contest because America is so nonracist in the first place, but that is what we have going on in the program.

We have got to save some money by getting rid of these bureaucrats. We ought to realize that the purpose of these programs is to divide America.

There is a book out—I don't know if it is okay to use a picture of a book here—but it is called, "America's Cultural Revolution," by Christopher Rufo. In this book, he points out that this idea of breaking apart America by racial groups would be a way to destroy America.

There was a Communist by the name of Marcuse, Herbert Marcuse, who was very powerful in the late sixties and early seventies.

At that time, the Communist element, the Progressive element, has always wanted to fundamentally change America. They were hoping to change America by dividing America by wealth, and they wanted Americans to be bitter and angry because some people lived in a nice house or had a big bank account. They felt they could rile people up and make them mad and bring out their worst emotions and create a revolution in America.

They failed. In the late sixties and early seventies, there were a lot of bombings, there were a lot of riots, but America was still a country at heart that was proud to be American. They realized anybody in America could realize the American Dream if they were willing to work hard.

The Progressives failed in the late sixties and early seventies to divide America by bitterness, by economic divide. As a fallback position, they felt that maybe we can divide America by race, maybe we can create bitterness and anger if we persuade people America is a horrible racist country.

That is what they talk about in "America's Cultural Revolution," the desire to destroy America because we want most Americans bitter and angry and thinking that we have a racist country.

We have to get rid of the people who are pushing this division, whether they are an American business, in academia, in government, a lot of times they are referred to as DEI specialists.

The purpose of these people is to divide America and tell people America is a horrible, racist country. It is on its face, by the way, absurd.

I mean, the wealthiest subgroup in America today is Indian Americans. They do not look European in nature. Many of them come here not knowing

how to speak English. Most of them who come here are not Christian. If the people are right that America is a horrible, racist country, that they discriminate against people, these people would not be able to rise to the level they have.

If you look at the other wealthiest Americans, almost none of them are White and of European descent: Chinese Americans, Filipino Americans, Japanese Americans, Cuban Americans, second-generation African Americans all outperform native persons.

Nevertheless, this evil group of DEI people who administer these programs use their positions to try to create resentment in America. It should be a goal to cause Herbert Marcuse's successors to fail. We have got to do all we can to get rid of these DEI specialists who encourage hate, encourage racism, encourage resentment, spread a myth that we have a big white supremacist problem.

There is no way, when we get down with the next level of appropriation bills that this government—which is broke out of its mind—ought to still have any bureaucrats who make this pitch throughout America.

Of course, during the campaign, you will notice—some Republicans fall guilty of this as well—there are campaign promises aimed at individual ethnic groups rather than treating all Americans as one. This is not something we had to do 20 or 30 years ago. It is obvious that Herbert Marcuse Communists or radical socialists have achieved his goal in that at least one political party plans to maintain power by putting programs out there that benefit one ethnic group over another ethnic group or promises financial benefits if you belong to one group over another group.

Fortunately, so far, they haven't had a huge amount of success, but if you talk around, they have made some progress in persuading some people that we have a huge problem in society.

In any event, certainly an immediate goal for this institution is to get rid of anybody preaching that DEI nonsense, certainly anybody whose position in our government is to encourage their horrible philosophy.

In any event, there are some comments on what is going on in America. Just to summarize again, I think we have to provide a little bit more oomph behind our First Amendment so that people like Hillary Clinton or John Kerry or Joseph Biden are pushed to the dustbin of history if they decide to attack it or feel that is part of our problem.

I think we have to be very careful to not discourage the formation of two-parent families like we have in the last 60 years.

I think we have to get rid of the bureaucracy, which is growing up, which tries to divide America by ethnic background, is something else that I think has to be done.

We have to educate our young people that we do not have a democracy. James Madison and our forefathers would be shocked and stunned and disappointed if this land, which they had founded, had twisted itself all around, abandoned our respect for our Constitution, the Republic, and instead was teaching our young ones that we had a democracy, including some of the people with the greatest positions up here.

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

#### RIGHTS FOR ALL PEOPLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, and still I rise. I rise proud to be a Member of this august body, always honored to have the preeminent privilege of standing here or in the well and making statements, hopefully, that can have an impact on society in a very positive way.

I rise today, Madam Speaker, because I am concerned about the rights of others. I stand for the rights of others notwithstanding who I am. I am not Asian, but I stand for the rights of Asians. I am not Palestinian, but I will stand up for Palestinians. I am not a Muslim, nor am I a person who is from some country that I may not be aware of. I will still stand up for their rights.

I believe that the rights of persons who are Jewish have to be focused on. We have to stand up for them, especially given what is happening with anti-Semitism today.

I am not a member of the LGBTQ+ community, but I stand up for their rights. Today, I am going to take a stand for those persons who are among the trans community, the transgender community.

I am not a member of the LGBTQ+ community, as I have indicated, but I still stand up for the rights of people, doesn't matter what community you are in. If you are being wronged, someone should stand up to make that wrong right.

Today, I want to talk about the bathroom issue, but before going there, let me just share this: I am a son of the segregated South. I know what invidious discrimination looks like, what it smells like, what it sounds like, what it hurts like. I know because I suffered invidious discrimination.

In the segregated South, I was not allowed to go into certain places because of the complexion of my skin. In the segregated South, even if I went into certain places, there were areas that I could not go into because of the color of my skin.

In the segregated South, there were signs on the doors of the necessary facilities, the toilets, that would indicate that they were for Whites or they were for colored. I understood, because my

parents made it very clear to me, that you should never go into the area for Whites because people would harm me. It was their belief that I would be harmed, in fact, that I might even lose my life for simply going into the wrong toilet.

So I learned early in life what invidious discrimination was like. I had no differences with the people who were going into the Whites-only facility. I didn't dislike them. I didn't say bad things about them. I didn't try to hurt them in any way, but they chose to keep me out of a certain facility because of who I was, the color of my skin.

Now, this is an interesting phenomenon: But for the color of my skin, we had the same characteristics. We had the same number of arms and legs and eyes, same characteristics generally speaking.

Our physicality was quite similar, but the color of my skin was something that would not allow me to go into a Whites-only necessary facility, a Whites-only toilet.

That color of my skin made all the difference in the world. When I was within the facility, I used it the same way they would. There was no difference in the way I approached the use of it as it relates to the facility. We did it the same way. We went in the same door. We would come out the same door. While there, we would use the facilities in the same way. Nothing different other than the color of my skin that kept me out of a Whites-only restroom.

This is a remarkable circumstance. If you haven't lived it, you don't have the same understanding of how it impacts a person to know that you are now somehow a second-class citizen given that you cannot go into the first-class restroom.

By the way, it was a first-class facility because it was always clean. I know. I worked in a restaurant where my job was to clean facilities. It was always clean. It always had the fine fixtures. It always had the most room for persons to negotiate their way through the facility.

The other restroom for the coloreds was usually one that might have a broken fixture that wouldn't be repaired. It had floors that were not always the same in terms of how they were structured and how they were covered with various types of flooring. They were just different.

□ 1300

That was intentional. There was no desire to improve and have both of them the same. It was separate but equal then, but separate but equal simply meant there is a place for you and there was a place for Whites.

I mention this, Madam Speaker, because of this circumstance and the way I had been treated in life. Having celebrated my 25th birthday for the third time and now 2 years into my fourth 25th, I cannot in good conscience support the segregation of people based