

Tomorrow, they plan to revoke TPS, despite Haiti's collapse. Legal status today, illegal status tomorrow. This is the Project 2025 playbook for a morally corrupt mass deportation machine.

For those of us with Black skin, the demonization of Haitian people is something that we see, we hear, and we feel deeply.

This country must do better, and this President must extend TPS status and call off the ICE surge now.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President and Vice President.

ICE

(Ms. BALINT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BALINT. Mr. Speaker, tonight, as I stand here, people across this country are being terrorized by ICE with our tax dollars. Americans do not support this, and I will be their voice tonight on the floor.

They don't want to live in a country in which you can be randomly stopped by a masked man and have him demand from you your papers. They don't want to live in a country where your First, your Second, and your Fourth Amendment rights are being violated. They don't want Americans gunned down because they are standing up for their immigrant neighbors.

Mr. Speaker, we warned Republicans. We told them. We said: If you give a \$170 billion blank check to Kristi Noem, you will create a paramilitary force, a lawless force that will brutalize Americans. We warned them, and I am sorry to say that we were right. Our predictions were right, and our worst fears have been realized.

Americans are being traumatized. Immigrants are being brutalized. We have to impeach Kristi Noem. We must dump Stephen Miller, and we have to end this ICE terror and lawlessness.

□ 1930

RECOGNIZING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

(Mr. MRVAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MRVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Black History Month and its 2016 theme, "A Century of Black History Commemorations." I would like to honor retired Army Sergeant 1st Class Oscar Primm, Jr., a 104-year-old veteran from northwest Indiana whose service is an inspiration to us all.

In 1941, Oscar enlisted in the United States Army. Over the course of his heroic military career, he served in World War I, the Korean war, and the Vietnam war.

Today, Oscar is a proud member of the Greater Gary AMVETS Squadron

Post 6 where he can frequently be found supporting veterans throughout northwest Indiana as they return home from service.

It is because of the sacrifices of veterans just like Oscar that we are able to live in a free, democratic country.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in celebrating Black History Month and a century of national Black history commemorations by recognizing the selfless service, bravery, and patriotism of retired Army Sergeant 1st Class Oscar Primm, Jr.

CHILDREN ARE NOT POLITICAL PAWNS

(Ms. STANSBURY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Speaker, what country is this?

Children are not political pawns or political props. Tonight, 5-year-old Liam Conejo Ramos and his father are back in their home in Minnesota after being abducted and taken to detention in Texas, but this never should have happened.

A 5-year-old taken from his home and detained in violation of his basic human and constitutional rights is part of an ill-conceived and incompetently implemented policy of daily deportation quotas that is not just incompetent but inhumane.

This year, 3,800 children have been abducted across the country and detained. It is shameful and an embarrassment to our country. That is why we must act. It is why I will vote "no" and not give a single other penny to DHS. It is why we must impeach Kristi Noem. It is time to act. We will not be complicit.

WE WILL NOT BACK DOWN

(Ms. HOYLE of Oregon asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. HOYLE of Oregon. This weekend, President Trump put out a social media post conflating the actions of a small group of people who broke a window, broke a couple of windows, at the Federal building, with the thousands of peaceful protesters that were exercising their constitutional right to fight against fascism, their constitutionally protected right to assemble, to free speech, and stated that he would send in his Federal goons to Eugene.

Let me tell you: Eugene, Oregon, has a long tradition of speaking out, speaking out and showing up for peace. We will continue to do so.

I would ask President Trump, Kristi Noem, and the DOJ to follow their own rules and not use the excuses of a couple of people who did wrong to tear gas and attack peaceful protesters, not in Eugene. We will not back down.

Thank you, President Trump. We don't need Federal help. We have got

it. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

A PLEA FOR SMALL, FAMILY-OWNED FARMS

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise with an urgent plea for small, family-owned farms, especially across the American heartland and communities I represent. Seven of the eight counties I represent in northwest Ohio are predominantly rural and home to hard-working farmers who produce the nutritious food that feeds and fuels our Nation. They deserve our unwavering support because what America makes and grows makes and grows America.

Yet their work has never been harder. Over the past year, they have endured setback after setback—including during the driest spells we have witnessed in more than a decade—due to tariffs, losing markets all across the world, and we think permanently. The severity of this physical, as well as tariff, drought runs straight through our district.

Our farmers need certainty. We need to pass a farm bill. We don't need recklessly imposed tariffs that break their backs due to lost export markets and then paying Argentina \$40 billion for their beef when our cattlemen are going out of business.

Something's wrong here. Farmers are hurting. They need leadership that invests in their success, Mr. Speaker. Don't cut their rural water infrastructure or weaken the science that our farmers depend upon.

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Ms. McCLELLAN of Virginia was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.)

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HURD of Colorado). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise today on the first weekday of Black History Month to anchor the Congressional Black Caucus' commemoration of Black History Month.

Mr. Speaker, 2026 marks a century of public commemorations of Black history, which began in 1926, founded by historian Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of African American Life and History.

It was originally conceived as a weeklong celebration called Negro History Week, expanded to the full month of February by President Ford in 1976. Why February? To coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass.

In his book, "The Mis-Education of the Negro," Woodson wrote: "Those who have no record of what their forebearers have accomplished lose the inspiration which comes from teaching of biography and history."

Said another way: If you don't know where you come from and you don't know where you have been, you don't fully understand who and where you are, and you don't know where you are going.

I grew up a student of history. My father would be 101 years old this year. He grew up under the tyranny of Jim Crow in Tennessee and in Alabama. My mother grew up under the tyranny of Jim Crow in Mississippi.

I grew up listening to the stories of what their life was like, when they saw the best of government through the New Deal in the midst of the depression and they saw the worst of government in Jim Crow.

□ 1940

They told stories, particularly on my father's side, of his father and his grandfather. We didn't know who his great-grandfather was because whatever plantation he was born on in Montevallo, Alabama, didn't think him worthy enough to record his name or his birthday.

We were fortunate enough to know who the first James Finnemore McClellan was, also born in Montevallo, but because he died when my grandfather was 10 years old, we know very little about him.

What we do know about him we got from family lore. My step-great-grandfather wrote a book called "Inching Along." It is through that book that I fully came to understand my family's history, which was Black history, which was American history.

It told how my great-grandfather had to take a literacy test and find three White men to vouch for his character to be able to register to vote after Reconstruction ended. It told how my father and my grandfather had to pay poll taxes, despite the 15th Amendment saying all of them could vote, just to be able to register to vote. It told how my mother, my grandmothers, and my great-grandmothers didn't get to vote until after the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The horror that I felt watching the murder of George Floyd on the internet in 2020 was the same horror that my parents felt watching the aftermath of the murder of Emmett Till. That is because history may not repeat itself, but it rhymes. Through my family's history and through the study of American history, I recognized the pattern.

I was born and raised in Virginia, the birthplace of American democracy in

July 1619, when the first representative legislature in the Western Hemisphere met in Jamestown. A month later, Virginia became the birthplace of American slavery when a ship of men and women who were stolen from their home in Angola were then stolen again by pirates, brought to the shores at Point Comfort, and sold and traded for supplies.

A few short years later, maybe a little over 100, a Virginian penned the words that we will celebrate this July: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men"—and he meant men—"are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights" of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

He didn't mean all men. He didn't mean the men who were enslaved at his plantation.

The idea of the founding of this country has been one that African Americans have strove to make true for everyone. Every time we have made progress in making those ideals a reality, there has been a backlash. That backlash involves three things: violence, propaganda, and voter suppression.

My great-grandparents saw the first backlash. My grandparents and my parents saw the second backlash. My generation is living through the third. Yet, we have a President who doesn't want us to talk about the bad parts of our history, but they inspire me.

This past spring, I took my children to the National Museum of African American History and Culture, not for the first time. I stood in the exhibit on the Middle Passage, which I had been in many times before. It is a heavy exhibit. It is an ugly part of our history, but I felt hope because that time I realized that somebody survived that hell so that I could be here in this body in this fight. It is a fight they never could have imagined.

While I fight the same fights as my parents, my grandparents, my great-grandparents, and whoever survived that voyage, I do so from a position of strength and power they never imagined. I fight those fights so that my children and my grandchildren don't have to.

I am proud to be in this fight as a member of the Congressional Black Caucus. We will fight the erasure of our history, and we will celebrate it every single day.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. CLARKE), our chair.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I am Representative YVETTE D. CLARKE, chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, proudly representing New York's Ninth Congressional District.

I thank my colleague, Congresswoman JENNIFER MCCLELLAN, for anchoring this Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues of the Congressional Black

Caucus to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Black History Month and to reflect on the innumerable contributions to our country that Black Americans have made throughout our Nation's history.

During Black History Month, we celebrate the generations of Black Americans whose courage, advocacy, sacrifice, and patriotism have moved our Nation and the world forward.

From the American Revolutionary War to Reconstruction, the Great Migration, the success of Black Wall Street, the jazz age and the Harlem Renaissance, and the civil rights movement and beyond, there is no time in history that Black people have not contributed to the vitality and success of our country.

As chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, I am proud that as our caucus has grown from 13 visionary members in 1971 to a historic 62 members in 2026, we have continued fighting to dismantle barriers, create opportunities, and protect the rights of our communities.

Throughout our Nation's history, the CBC has been called to confront countless threats to our communities. Time and again, we have answered that call and stood in the breach on behalf of our communities and the values that make our Nation strong.

Today, under the shadow of the Trump administration, we are being called to yet another unprecedented and consequential time in the history of our country that we must address head-on.

The past year of President Trump's path of destruction has targeted our communities relentlessly. From purging the Federal Government of Black leaders and Black workers to removing the presence of Black stories and accomplishments from education and historical landmarks across the country, to launching volatile and violent campaigns against Black immigrants, the message from the administration to Black Americans has never been more clearer.

At any moment, the Supreme Court could strike down section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, putting our most basic and fundamental rights on the chopping block.

These threats have put Black America, once again, in a perilous position, but we are not powerless and will fight back. On the shoulders of our Founders, we will continue to push back against efforts to impede our progress, erase our history, and cut off access to opportunities in our communities.

We understand that the anti-DEI movement means anti-Black. This month and every month, we will continue to make clear that the contributions of Black Americans will not ever be erased, undermined, or undone. We will continue fighting for access to the ballot, fair representation, and our fundamental freedoms, which are under threat each and every day.

Our history, Black history, is American history.

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairwoman for her remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from the Fourth District of Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank Madam McClellan from the great State of Virginia.

In 1619, the first settlers came to America in the same place where, in that same year, the first slave ship arrived on this continent.

I was privileged to be among those in Congress who traveled to Ghana in 2019 to commemorate the 400-year anniversary of the slave trade. It was a great visit.

History is so important, and Carter G. Woodson knew the importance of history. He knew that if a culture does not tell its own story, then that story won't get told. If you don't have a story, if you don't know what your parents did, your grandparents, and your forefathers did, if you don't know the accomplishments—of course, there are many accomplishments of Black people. If you don't know them, then you suffer a psychological disability, a collective psychological disability as a people.

So, it is very important that we know our history because when we do, we understand the great accomplishments of our forefathers and our foremothers.

□ 1750

We can be proud that despite the conditions under which they lived for 250 years in this country, slavery, and then another 90 years of Jim Crow, when we consider all of our accomplishments during that time, we can be proud.

Now, many people don't know what our accomplishments are or have been, and that is their ignorance. You should read up on it. That is what Black History Week was originally proposed to do. That is why it was instituted, to take a week for people to understand what our history was. Our history was not just slavery. Our history, as I said before, was accomplishments and struggle and overcoming and achievements.

When Carter G. Woodson established Negro History Week back on February 7th, 1926, he established that week to also commemorate the births of two important individuals in Black history, Frederick Douglass, who was born on February the 14th, 1818; and Abraham Lincoln, who was born on February 12th, 1809. During those times, Black people were held as slaves, but we have made so much progress since then. That is why we are so proud of Barack Obama, who was elected not once but twice to be President of this United States of America. It wasn't easy for him, and it was not easy for Carter G. Woodson, who was the second Black man to attain a doctorate degree from Harvard University; the first being W.E.B. Du Bois. Mr. Du Bois was a man of great accomplishment, a historian, an author, and a journalist.

It was in 1970 when folks at Kent State University in Ohio declared that, instead of celebrating Negro history for one week in February, we would do it for the entire month of February. It was President Gerald Ford who, during the Nation's centennial in 1976, issued a White House proclamation acknowledging the month of February as Black History Month, and we have been celebrating during this month.

It is ironic that at Kent State University there was a lady protesting the Vietnam war who was killed by National Guardsmen. Let's go to today where, instead of having Ku Klux Klansmen riding around the cities, towns, and countryside wearing hoods, we now have people wearing masks, shooting people in our streets. They are known as ICE. We have to get rid of them because we have a guy in office who is trying to turn the clock back on history.

If you don't know history, you are bound to repeat it. We know history. That is why we are not going back.

Mr. Speaker, with those words, I will take my seat and I thank Representative McCLELLAN for anchoring this hour for the Congressional Black Caucus under the leadership of the great Congresswoman from New York, YVETTE CLARKE.

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from the Seventh District of Maryland (Mr. MFUME).

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Virginia for yielding but for also helping to sponsor this very, very important Special Order on the fact that this is Black History Month technically.

However, Black history ought to be something of what we do and a part of our lives every day because, as much as there is American history, you can't have that without the history of African Americans in this country.

I want to also—at least to the Members who have come before this body this evening, who have talked about the great contributors to that history, have talked about why it is so very, very important, have talked about what it means not only to Black people, but what it should mean to the world when you look at a race of people who have suffered, endured, and survived two centuries of slavery, oppression, deprivation, degradation, denial, and disprivilege—in 1848, a speech was delivered in Edwardsville, Illinois, and Abraham Lincoln addressed these words to his countrymen, and he said:

When you have succeeded in dehumanizing the Negro; when you have put him down and made it impossible for him to be but as the beasts of the field; when you have extinguished his soul in this world and placed him where the ray of hope is blown out as in the darkness of the damned, are you quite sure that the demon you have roused will not turn and rend you?

What constitutes the bulwark of our freedom and our independence as a

young nation? He said: It is not our frowning battlements, our bristling seacoasts, our Army and our Navy. These are not our reliance against tyranny. All of those may be turned against us without having made us weaker for the struggle. Our reliance is in the love of liberty which God has planted deep within the hearts of all of us.

Our reliance, he said, is in the spirit of freedom which prides itself as a heritage of all men in all lands everywhere.

Then he admonished: Destroy that spirit and you would have planted the seeds of despotism at your own doorstep. Ignore the chains of bondage, like so many of the Black and Brown members of our Nation, and you one day will prepare your own limbs to wear them. Accustomed, he said, to trample on the rights of others, you would have lost the creative genius of your own independence and, as such, would become the fit subjects of the first cunning tyrant who rises among you.

Lincoln's words uttered almost 180 years ago have gone unheeded, and such a cunning tyrant has, in fact, risen among us. The efforts of this administration to turn back the hands of time, to deny equal justice and equal treatment, to pretend that we are living in a world that sees nothing, knows nothing, hears nothing, and does nothing, is to pretend that we are all asleep.

So we desperately need, in this era of smaller visions, those of us who are Black, Brown, White, Yellow, and any other color or race, an ability to come together in coalitions the way we have always done to make a real and lasting difference.

□ 2000

We use this occasion on Black History Month to remind us that we so desperately need those who will stand up for that which is right and to speak out for that which is wrong.

It is for me, at least, a daunting task to find people in this country who are prepared to do the right thing day in and day out because we are increasingly seeing the ranks of others who want to do something different and follow this administration go in the wrong direction day in and day out.

I hope that we use as many days as possible during this month that we can to commemorate, to celebrate, to highlight, and to hold forth the history and the struggle of African Americans in this country.

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN).

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding the time. I apologize for not getting here at the time I told her I would, but a few other things came into play.

Mr. Speaker, I also thank Congressman MFUME for restating the Lincoln speech, a speech that I think bodes well for us to reflect on today in much the

same way as I reflected last week on some history as I watched things unfold.

I thought about that often stated mantra that Black history is really America's history, and it is. It came very forcefully to me the last 2 weeks as I watched things happening in St. Paul and Minneapolis: I thought about Selma and Montgomery. When I saw what I consider to be the murder of Alex Pretti, I thought about Jimmie Lee Jackson.

I may be the only one on this floor old enough to remember Jimmie Lee Jackson and what led to his death and what his death precipitated. The fact of the matter is, the reason I thought about him was because Jimmie Lee Jackson was shot and murdered by law enforcement when he was trying to protect his mother, and I saw Alex Pretti trying to protect a woman and being murdered.

It told me why I was thinking about Selma and Montgomery as I watched things happen in St. Paul and Minneapolis. We ought to learn lessons from history. As George Santayana, that great Spanish philosopher, said to us that if we fail to learn the lessons of history, we are bound to repeat them.

The question we have to ask ourselves as we celebrate Black History Month is: Have we learned any lessons from Selma and Montgomery, or are we comfortable allowing ourselves to repeat them?

I have been listening to a lot coming from this administration about Black history. I don't understand why we don't see where this country would be today if we did not have the contributions of people like Ernest Everett Just, who was recognized around the world as the Black Apollo of science. Yet this administration seems to think that there is something wrong with celebrating this genius' contributions to not just this country but the world.

I don't know why it is considered a problem to focus on where modern medicine would be were it not for Charles Drew—whose genius gave this country the ability to safely refrigerate, store, and use blood when it is needed.

Do we realize how many souls and lives were saved in World War II because of this man's genius? It is supposed to be an insult to little children to learn about his contributions. Why is it okay for my grandchildren to learn about the genius of Thomas Edison and his principal invention, the lightbulb, but it would be insulting for a little White child to learn about Lewis Latimer and that filament that Mr. Edison used to put in his lightbulb. The filament that keeps the lightbulb burning was invented by a guy named Lewis Latimer, the son of former slaves, a genius.

The reason we are able to do that today is because Thomas Edison had enough maturity to step outside of his comfort zone and sit down with Lewis Latimer and get his filament and put it

into the lightbulb. Thomas Edison had that much maturity to know that as smart as he was, a greater genius as he was, he did not know everything and he didn't have a problem leaning on the genius of this Black guy to allow his invention to work.

We live a much better life today in this country because two guys, one Black and one White, have lit the world. What is wrong with that? How is that insulting for us to have in our textbooks? Yet this administration seems to believe that.

Why is it okay for Jackie Robinson to be an outstanding baseball player, but when we put in the archives of the Army his contributions as a military man, we take it out. This administration ordered the Jackie Robinson stuff be taken out of the archives. What is that about? That seems to me to show the ultimate in immaturity if you are so threatened by your own existence that you don't want anybody else to be recognized for theirs. That is what Black History Month is all about.

This is one of the anniversaries—Carter G. Woodson had the genius back in 1915, 1916—he finally got around to it—of Black history week. I am old enough to remember Black history week. I am not being partisan here because I want to say it tonight, I thank President Gerald Ford, who celebrated the 200th anniversary of this country by calling upon the Nation to give due respect, moving Black history week to an entire month. That was Gerald Ford who did that.

□ 2010

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing partisan about this. I thank Gerald Ford for having the maturity to do that.

I want us to think about this month because we are getting ready to celebrate the 250th anniversary of this country's existence. Are we going to have a 250th birthday of this great country while not giving due honor and respect to the people who helped make this country great?

This country is greater because of Charles Drew. When I saw the tear gas there in Minneapolis, I thought about Garrett Morgan. It was Garrett Morgan who invented the gas mask, as well as the traffic light that all of us use. Where would this country be today but for the order that this man's invention gave to us?

I can go through a whole lot of this, but I know my colleagues are waiting to speak. I apologize for going so long. I hope that we will meet like this for the rest of this month, so I can continue to give due honor and respect to a great American, Gerald Ford, for giving us a month to celebrate the contributions of people of color.

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL), the Congresswoman from Alabama's Seventh District.

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise with my Congressional Black Caucus

colleagues in celebration of Black History Month 2026, a time to recognize the extraordinary contributions that African Americans have made to the history and culture of America.

Black History Month is an opportunity to acknowledge the inventors, artists, changemakers, and everyday citizens who built this Nation and who continue to shape our shared destiny.

As the Representative of Alabama's Civil Rights District, I stand on the shoulders of visionary leaders who risked everything for a vision and a dream bigger than themselves. These are leaders like Rosa Parks; our former colleague, the Honorable John Lewis; Dr. King; Amelia Boynton Robinson; and so many others.

As a daughter of Selma, I know that their sacrifices brought us the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, daring this Nation to live up to its highest ideals of equality and justice for all.

Sadly, we live in a time when Black history and Black Americans are under attack. Old battles have indeed become new again.

Throughout the past year, our communities have been at the center of the chaos and destruction that this President and his administration have visited upon the American people.

President Trump has tried to white-wash our history. He has cut our healthcare, while giving tax breaks to billionaires. He has canceled Black History Month celebrations at the White House and targeted Black immigrants with racist smears. He has waged an all-out assault on the right to vote.

Just this week, the Trump administration arrested two Black journalists who were simply doing their jobs.

Right now, President Trump's cronies are fighting in the Supreme Court to undo what remains of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Their actions threaten to take us back to a time before the civil rights movement, a time when Black Americans were second-class citizens and discrimination was the law of the land.

In my home State of Alabama, Trump's attacks on Black Americans are on full display. Last year, his executive order led to the removal of the brave Tuskegee Airmen from the Air Force training manual. Just 2 months later, his administration tried to sell off the site of the Freedom Rides Museum in Montgomery, Alabama.

While both of these decisions were eventually reversed, it was only because our community, the African-American community, spoke up and refused to be silent.

Mr. Speaker, these tactics are not new. They are borrowed from the same tired playbook that has been used for centuries to silence our voices and dilute our power. In these troubling times, we should take a lesson from the foot soldiers of the civil rights movement.

Shortly before his passing, Congressman John Lewis gave us a marching

order. He was frail and riddled with cancer. He went back on that bridge one last time. He told us to never give up, to never give in, to keep the faith, and to keep our eyes on the prize.

My friends, my fellow Congressional Black Caucus colleagues, we can be tired. We can be frustrated. We can be downright mad. What we cannot do is give up. We need to use our voices and call out injustice wherever it hides. We need to demand better from our elected officials. We must vote like we have never voted before.

I thank my colleagues on the Congressional Black Caucus for hosting this Special Order hour. I thank my colleague from Virginia (Ms. MCCLELLAN) for her tireless leadership in this effort.

This Black History Month must be more than just a celebration. It must be a call to action. Generations of Americans—past, present, and future—are counting on us to meet this moment with the urgency it demands.

Mr. Speaker, we must do so in the name of our foremothers and our forefathers. We must do so in the name of the future leaders of this Nation. We must do so because it is always right to do what is right.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY), the Congresswoman from Illinois' Second District.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker and our two hosts, I rise today to join the Congressional Black Caucus in celebrating Black History Month and honoring the Divine Nine, the historically Black fraternities and sororities that have fostered generations of bold leaders.

For more than 100 years, the brothers and sisters of the Divine Nine have played a vital role in driving forward American history. The Divine Nine has produced hundreds and hundreds of Black leaders who have shaped our country, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jesse Owens, Vice President Kamala Harris, Langston Hughes, Shirley Chisholm, John Lewis, BARBARA LEE, and many, many of my colleagues in the CBC, including Leader HAKEEM JEFFRIES.

I would like to take a moment to recognize the Divine Nine organizations. They are Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, and my very own Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority.

Alpha Phi Alpha, Kappa Alpha Psi, and Sigma Gamma Rho were founded at majority White colleges to create community for Black women and men.

All of our organizations give us the tools to advocate for ourselves and our communities. The Divine Nine as a whole has helped and is helping to make our Nation a better place for all Americans. At every turning point in our country's history, the Divine Nine was there.

We fought for women's suffrage, an end to Jim Crow, voting rights, and civil rights. We continue to be at the forefront of medical advancements and digital innovation. Our music, art, literature, and sports are woven throughout this country's culture.

We are still here, fighting against this Trump administration's attack against us. This President is trying to erase our history, rescind our rights, and reverse the clock to a time when Black people were not seen as equals. He is blatantly racist, and his administration is against DEI.

□ 2020

You cannot erase our history because Black history is American history. Black leaders are American leaders, and Black rights are human rights. The Divine Nine will be here, as we always are, fighting against oppression and for the advancement of Black people.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to our former chair, the gentleman from the Fourth District of Nevada (Mr. HORSFORD).

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from the Commonwealth of Virginia for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the beginning of Black History Month and to honor more than 100 years of Black history in America.

I speak today with urgency about American history; specifically, to highlight the fact that American history is Black history. From the march from Selma to Montgomery, where Americans demanded the right to vote; to the student sit-ins at lunch counters, where young people risked their safety to challenge segregation; and to the courtrooms and classrooms, where Black Americans pushed this Nation closer to its promise of equality, every major expansion of democracy in this country has been shaped by Black courage, Black leadership, and Black sacrifice.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, we must ask ourselves a simple but urgent question: Why are there forces trying to erase this past? Erasing history does not solve the problems that we face today. It does not create equality. It does not put us on a level playing field, and it does not move this country forward.

Black History Month exists for a reason. In 1926, historian Carter G. Woodson created Negro History Week to ensure that Black history was taught seriously in our schools and fully recognized as American history. His goal was never limitation. It was expansion, to broaden the Nation's consciousness, and to deepen our understanding of who we are. What began as 1 week grew into Black History Month—not to isolate Black history, but to correct centuries of exclusion.

Black history is not a sidenote. It is a foundation. It belongs in our schools, in our books, and our public institutions, including the National Museum of African American History and Culture right here in D.C.

In my home State of Nevada, Black communities have helped to build our labor movement, our neighborhoods, and our culture from the historic west side of Las Vegas, where I grew up, to communities all across our State.

History is not something to erase. It is something to face so that we do not repeat the same mistakes again and again, and, instead, we continue to work toward a better future that includes all of us.

That is why we celebrate Black History Month. That is why I am honored to join my colleagues of the Congressional Black Caucus, who, as the conscience of the Congress, will always hold this institution accountable to living out the full promise of our Nation.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. BROWN).

Ms. BROWN. Mr. Speaker, I wish everyone a happy Black History Month.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative MCCLELLAN for the recognition and the Congressional Black Caucus for organizing this Special Order hour to recognize Black History Month.

Mr. Speaker, Black History Month will always matter, but it is especially important during a time when our ancestors' contributions to this country are being erased and denied. Yet, Black History Month has never been just about the past. It is about the present and the future.

So I must ask: What has Trump done for Black Americans besides put a target on our backs? What has Trump done besides moving the goalpost for success? This White House has erased our history, undermined our opportunities, and taken direct steps to make Black families poorer than those Black families were a year ago.

In this speech, I won't focus on the reckless rhetoric we have heard from the President, because his actions speak even louder than his words—actions such as executive orders, actions such as budget cuts, and actions such as the passage of bad bills like Trump's big, ugly law.

It begs the question: What can Black Americans expect from this White House because under this Trump administration, millions of Black Americans are unable to afford healthcare. Millions of Black families are going hungry because of cuts to nutrition benefits. Opportunities for wealth building, be it homeownership to entrepreneurship, have been cut off. Black and Brown neighborhoods are terrorized by lawless ICE agents, all while our rights—our right to vote, our right to assemble, our right to go to school and work free from discrimination are being trampled on brazenly and blatantly with no apologies or regrets.

Trump took those resources and protections away under the guise that the plight that Black Americans face no longer exists, claiming that the playing field has been fully and completely leveled and our opportunities across

the board for Americans—Black, White, men and women—are now equal. There is no more discrimination. There are no more disparities. There are no inequities to address.

As a Black woman, dare I say he is wrong because what this administration does not understand is that we have been here before, and we persevered. Where discrimination created pitfalls, we worked alongside our neighbors to close the gap, and we kept fighting for justice.

We didn't just hold the line. We pushed back and created civil rights protections that made sure the law favored the people and not the powerful.

Mr. Speaker, that is Black history. So despite the cuts, the chaos, the cruelty, and the corruption of this administration, like every past challenge, this too, we shall overcome because Americans everywhere are aware of the harm that this administration is causing. We know that our freedoms are shackled and chained to the rights of others. An attack on the freedoms of one American is an attack on all of us.

So we will not be deterred from this fight for our rights. We will not go quietly into the night. We will stand our ground. We will make our voices heard, and Black Americans will emerge from these dark days stronger than before, just as we always have.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JACKSON).

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honorable Congresswoman for yielding.

In the interest of time for my colleagues, I give a very special thanks for holding this Special Order hour.

I am Congressman JONATHAN JACKSON from Illinois' First Congressional District, where African-American History Month was first created by then Dr. Carter G. Woodson.

Dr. Carter G. Woodson comes from West Virginia. He was a coal miner's son by way of Ohio. He went to the first integrated college in United States of America in Berea, Kentucky. There were great abolitionists fighting for a noble cause. They saw African Americans as full human beings.

He had the idea once he saw that there were no African Americans written in his curriculum that something was missing. He went on to ask a professor, a teacher, one time: Why are there no African Americans written about and our history is not chronicled?

The person is quoted as saying: Your history of your people is not important.

That echoes to this very day as we see so much of what is going on in this administration.

Dr. Carter G. Woodson left from Berea College, the first integrated college in the United States of America, in Berea, Kentucky. Berea College was founded by an abolitionist Caucasian, a White man, who also had in his history, Henry Clay, the great Congress-

man from Kentucky, who served in this United States body—which has the family ancestry of Muhammad Ali and Cassius Clay—and you can see his statue just outside of this wall, as well, as part of the Clay family that is immortalized in this institution.

(2030)

From there, he went on to the University of Chicago, where he took that challenge and made it into a thesis. He wanted to show Blacks and Whites making progress together, so he put it in February strategically to honor both Abraham Lincoln's work and Frederick Douglass, showing Blacks and Whites making progress together. He did not want to isolate African Americans in history. He made it deliberate to show people of goodwill making it work together.

I ask you, if we do not demonstrate and show this, how will people know that there were great abolitionists that always recognized that people were human beings? We only show one side of history. To erase African Americans out of history makes Caucasians less heroic in history as well, so I applaud the work of Dr. Carter G. Woodson.

From there, after leaving the University of Chicago, he went to Harvard, where he became the second African American to get a Ph.D. in history. It went from Negro History Week, as Mr. CLYBURN had said, to Black History Month, by Gerald Ford. It was Black and Whites making progress together.

What are we seeing right now? Under the disastrous leadership of the Secretary of Defense, Mr. Pete Hegseth, he is trying to remove the history of then Mr. Jackie Robinson. You just can't talk about his phenomenal work in baseball. He challenged the color line. He broke the color barrier.

When you take Harriet Tubman off the \$20 bill, you are talking about a military strategist that broke the backbone of the Confederacy by being able to navigate people under the underground railroad. When you remove good people from history, this is a problem for all of our children.

In the interest of time, I will be back this month repeatedly, and I hope my other colleagues will open their eyes so they can learn, so their children can see the happier and the better side of American history. They can see racial progress.

Right now we are living in a time where people are trying to erase history. You cannot erase history. You must confront it and learn the truth about yourself. It will keep America strong. It will make America better. That is our goal. That is our desire.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I now, as one Black history maker, yield to another, the first Black Member of Congress from Oregon, Ms. JANELLE BYNUM.

Ms. BYNUM. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative MCCLELLAN for hosting us this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here as the first, but not the last, Black Member of Con-

gress in Oregon's history, and I rise today to celebrate Black History Month.

It is not lost on me that I am just one generation removed from segregation. It is not lost on me how recently this moment standing before you as a Congresswoman would have seemed impossible.

My mother was valedictorian of a segregated high school in Conway, South Carolina. She had the brilliance and drive to do anything she dreamed, but America didn't believe in her future. She made sure that I had the opportunity to write a different story.

As a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, I am reminded that I am not in this fight alone. We are a community of leaders, united in our goal to shape a more just, a more inclusive, and a brighter future for this Nation.

Our country needs it now more than ever. We are seeing attacks on our communities and on our values by this administration.

Mr. Speaker, humbly, I ask that we must continue to rise together, not only during Black History Month but every day.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the Congressman from Maryland, GLENN IVEY.

Mr. IVEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Virginia, and I thank the Congressional Black Caucus for putting this together and coming forth with this information and giving me a chance to speak. As well.

I will be brief. I know we are running out of time. I did want to comment briefly about Minnesota. I just got back a little while ago from Minnesota. We went out to do a special hearing out there, in large part due to the killings that have gone on, to the ICE protests, to the arrests, the roving patrols, and the like. I wanted to see it firsthand. I have got to say, I was shocked by what I saw, but that is not the first time I have seen it.

African-American history had a lot of parallels to what is going on in Minnesota right now. I think it is deeply disturbing, deeply troubling. The deaths that have been caused, in my view, by police excessive force, ICE agents using excessive force, the roving patrols, and the like, the racial profiling that is taking place, all of those kinds of things we have seen before.

I think we also have to be sure we understand a couple of things moving forward. One is that the agents who work for ICE are not warriors; they are guardians. Whether they put on the camouflage, whether they are wearing masks, no matter, they work for the American people. They are guided by the Constitution, or should be guided by the Constitution. We have to make sure that they understand that fully, just as the protesters in Selma and Birmingham had to make sure that lesson got across to the law enforcement in Alabama and in those cities at that time.

I think it is critical for us, as Congressman JACKSON pointed out, to make sure we recall that the advances that have been made during the African-American movements and efforts have been not just African Americans, they have been Americans across the spectrum working together, fighting for justice, striving together to make a difference.

I want to make sure we continue to do that. I will come back, and we can discuss this more at length in the future. It is critical for us to find a way to move forward together because we can't do it alone.

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I close with the words of Maya Angelou:

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I rise.

A lot of our history wasn't written down, was erased, our files burned, our bodies burned, our bodies twisted, hung, shot, trod in the dirt, and still we rose.

The Congressional Black Caucus founded by 13 members, now 62 strong, we will continue to ensure that our stories, that Black history is told. Still we rise because Black history is American history.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back.

ILLEGAL BIO LAB IN LAS VEGAS

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mr. KILEY of California was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.)

Mr. KILEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address a serious national security issue that requires the immediate attention and immediate action from the United States Congress.

An illegal bio lab was just raided in Las Vegas, and it is directly linked to the secret Chinese bio lab found in Reedley, California, in late 2022. That lab was oozing with E. coli, HIV, malaria, and other dangerous pathogens.

The lab just raided in Vegas was operated by the same LLC and same Chinese nationals as the one discovered in Reedley. We know a lot about the one discovered in Reedley because I requested a report from the House of Representatives, an investigation which resulted in a report by the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party.

I want to share some of the details of that report, but I will start with its conclusion: That no one knows whether there are other unknown bio labs because there is no monitoring system in place.

□ 2040

Those were the words of the Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party in 2023. We know there was at least one other such lab, but we still don't know how many others because the legislation, the bipartisan legisla-

tion, that I have proposed with Representatives COSTA and VALADAO has not yet been passed.

Here is what we learned about this lab that was discovered in Reedley and that has now had a counterpart discovered in Las Vegas.

It was run by an international fugitive from China named Jesse Zhu. After running various state-connected companies in China, Zhu moved to Canada where he set up dozens of corporations to steal valuable American intellectual property and unlawfully transfer it to China. The Supreme Court of British Columbia found that he committed fraud on an epic scale, resulting in a \$330 million judgment.

He then fled to America, assumed an alias, David He, and set up several more companies, including the one behind the Reedley biolab and now the Vegas biolab.

He was indicted in 2023 and has been in Federal custody ever since, but his partner and other associates have not been.

The Reedley lab was discovered in December of 2022 when a code inspector came upon a suspicious warehouse. Inside, she found many Chinese nationals wearing white lab coats, glasses, masks, and latex gloves, along with thousands of vials of biological substances and a thousand mice. It was later learned that these were transgenic mice genetically engineered to catch and carry the COVID-19 virus. A further inspection found blood, tissue, and other bodily fluid samples and serums, along with thousands of vials of suspected biological material.

Some of the vials were labeled in the names of infectious agents while others were labeled in a code that was never deciphered.

At first the CDC—this was during the Biden administration—refused to investigate and even hung up on local officials who asked for help. After Representative COSTA got involved, the CDC did an inspection and found at least 20 potentially infectious agents, including HIV, tuberculosis, and the deadliest known form of malaria. Yet, the CDC did not bother to test any samples, even those with unknown contents, making it impossible for the select committee to fully assess the potential risks that this specific facility posed to the community. The select committee report calls this baffling.

Later, local officials discovered a refrigerator in the lab labeled "Ebola."

While the supposed purpose of the lab was to sell test kits, in fact, all the company did was buy counterfeit kits from China and resell them in the United States. Thus, the committee found there was a lack of apparent legitimate or even profit-motivated criminal motive in the operation of the facility.

Meanwhile, Jesse Zhu, its operator, was receiving unexplained payments via wire transfer from Chinese banks.

As I mentioned, the report concluded that we don't know if there are any

other unknown biolabs because there is no such monitoring system. That is why I am calling upon the House to act quickly to pass the bill that I have introduced, along with Representatives COSTA and VALADAO, to find any other such labs that exist across the country and assure that they are shut down.

The Preventing Illegal Laboratories and Protecting Public Health Act would address gaps in Federal law outlined in this Congressional report.

Specifically, it would require distributors of highly pathogenic agents to maintain federally reviewable logbooks of all transfers, including purchaser identity and intended use for at least 3 years. It would strengthen oversight by mandating Federal review of the number, location, and risks of high-containment labs with updated national standards for design, construction, and operation.

It would protect against foreign threats by ensuring adversaries cannot exploit weak U.S. oversight to establish these secret labs. It would create a public health biosafety and biosecurity team as a single point of contact for State, local, Tribal, and territorial governments when suspicious labs are identified. It would require a feasibility study on creating a centralized national database of high-containment labs accessible to State and local officials for biosecurity purposes.

As the city manager of Reedley, Nicole Zieba, said—who was centrally involved in trying to get the Federal and State authorities to take action here—she said: The Reedley incident highlighted a gap in the Nation's biosecurity. Any city around this country could have dozens of deadly pathogens stored next to sensitive locations and be completely unaware of it. She said that this proposed legislation puts us on a path to closing that critical gap that will help keep every American safe from the hazards like those that were discovered in the Reedley lab. Now, of course, we have seen alarmingly similar hazards discovered in the Vegas lab.

I will be calling for a thorough investigation of what was discovered in Las Vegas, and I am calling upon the House of Representatives to move quickly to get this bipartisan bill passed so that it can then pass the Senate and be signed into law.

EXTENT OF FRAUD IN CALIFORNIA

Mr. KILEY of California. Mr. Speaker, people across the country are rightly outraged by the fraud that has been discovered in the State of Minnesota. However, for those of us in California, we have almost become desensitized to it. Every time there has been an independent audit, it seems, of any program in California, what is discovered is fraud on a scale that dwarfs anything that was discovered in Minnesota.

We have already taken some action here in Congress to rein in the fraud that exists in California and to provide oversight and accountability that has