

the Kennedy Space Center, went into the real estate business and found tremendous success. But he was willing to put aside that incredible economic success for his own family because he wanted to serve this country. That is why he entered public life and left a lot of, candidly, resources on the sideline because he chose to serve in public life.

He was known as Mr. Fix-It. I will be talking about this at his celebration of life on Saturday in Melbourne. But one of the issues that really separated him, as Congresswoman WASSERMAN SCHULTZ talked about on some fronts, was everybody remembers the election of 2000. That was the year where we had the hanging chads and, of course, that incredibly razor-thin election where Florida would decide the election.

Candidly, we were embarrassed of what happened in the election of 2000. So when people looked around the room in the Florida House and Florida Senate and when Jeb Bush was Governor, they said: Who are we going to bring in to fix the election laws in the State of Florida? They brought on Bill Posey.

If you haven't noticed, guess who is running the best elections right now in the entire country: The State of Florida.

I remember when I was elected last November, in 2024, within 7 minutes we knew not only who won the election, but almost all the results were in after the polls closed at 7 p.m. in Florida. That is how remarkable and that is how efficient we want it to be. We were counting those early votes, counting those absentee ballots, and once those ballots were tabulated, within minutes you knew the verdict, which is very different than what we are seeing right now in some States.

That is who Bill Posey was. He saw a problem, he wanted to fix it, and he never talked about it again. That was the ironic part about it.

Here is a person who should be known around the country for fixing elections in a positive way and getting the tabulations done quickly and correctly. That is what we need more of in America is a problem-solver like him.

Also mentioned was Bill being on the Financial Services Committee. When I was thinking about what committees to serve on as I enter Congress, I went to him and said: Where was your passion? He said: MIKE, I held out for one job, and that was to be on Financial Services.

He really felt like some of the banking laws in our country needed commonsense reforms, and he worked all 16 years on the Financial Services Committee. So many people saw his work with NASA, but as FRENCH HILL, our current chairman, talks about, Bill Posey was always diligently there pushing for the idea of transparency.

Through the years, we have seen horrible situations, whether it be Enron or the housing market crash. He was making sure that when people put those dollars in banks or in invest-

ments, there was more transparency, that the investor actually had the information in front of them. That was the kind of person he was.

I am just so grateful that his colleagues who served with him so long showed up tonight because it was that work behind the scenes that really made a difference.

What I saw firsthand in our 25-year-plus relationship was that it was always remarkable watching Bill, a tried-and-true fiscal conservative, be willing to listen to whoever came before him. He was a person who said you can disagree without being disagreeable. That is what I loved about him. He could be a little cantankerous at times, but he always took the time to listen.

As I mentioned and I will mention again over and over, he never left Brevard County. Whenever he could get out of Washington, he got out of Washington. He and Katie loved to get back home and be around the people they loved most, especially their daughters Pamela and Cathi.

After he left Congress in 2024, after those elections, he spent really the last 18 months being involved in those passion projects. One of those is he was actually involved in a car rally across the country as he and Katie went around the country. I am still amazed they actually did it because it was a challenging race, but he had such a passion for cars.

I remember he even went to New Smyrna racetrack for the Governor's Cup for many years because he just loved stock car racing. That was his passion and it was in his blood.

Most recently, he spent so much time with his grandkids, whether it was out West in California or in Alabama, and spending a ton of time with his daughters, especially those who lived in Brevard County.

He was a guy who put family first. It wasn't a cliché. He was a person who, again, was passionate about things when other people took passion in those same ideas.

I am just so grateful that I had the opportunity to know him for so long as he served our country so ably, and he gave back so much and took on so many financial challenges because he loved this country so much.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAMADEH of Arizona.) Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, as I close, before I yield to our friends on the other side of the aisle: Bill Posey will not be forgotten because he never forgot those folks who gave him the opportunity to be here.

I am looking forward to seeing so many friends back home on Saturday as we celebrate his life.

I was with him sadly that Thursday before he passed on that Saturday. To see the love that his family expressed in those days as they knew they were going to leave him for a period of time, it just shows the commitment that his family had for him because he loved his family and he loved this country.

I will try to leave it on a lighter note. I remember he said to me when I got elected to the legislature: MIKE, I remember when I first was elected to the legislature, and I couldn't believe I was in the Florida Legislature. Here was a guy from Rockledge, Florida, who grew up loving cars and space and had a beautiful family and a young wife.

Then he said: After about a month or so, I couldn't believe how these other people got here.

That was the thing about Bill Posey. He had that wry sense of humor, as Congresswoman WASSERMAN SCHULTZ spoke of.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity for us to speak about our good friend Bill Posey. He will be dearly missed. He was a true patriot and friend to our community, and I know I have very big shoes to fill here in the United States Congress.

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

#### COMMEMORATING JUNETEENTH

(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 extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise today to anchor this Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour commemorating Juneteenth.

Next week, the Nation will pause to celebrate Juneteenth. Juneteenth commemorates June 19, 1865, when Union Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, and issued General Order No. 3, which finally freed more than 250,000 enslaved people in that State.

For while the Emancipation Proclamation officially went into effect on July 1, 1863, emancipating those enslaved in the rebelling States of the Confederacy, it took over 2½ years for the news to reach the western-most Confederate State of Texas.

Broadly, Juneteenth marks Freedom Day, Jubilee Day, or Black Independence Day. Juneteenth is considered the

longest-running African-American holiday. While communities have celebrated the date since 1866, it was not officially signed into United States law as a Federal holiday until June of 2021.

Juneteenth symbolizes that, unlike what we were taught in our schoolbooks, emancipation was not a moment. It was a movement. It was a movement that included acts of resistance, rebellion, and self-liberation since Africans first arrived on American soil in bondage.

As the first Black woman serving in this body from the Commonwealth of Virginia, I am all too familiar with this story, for the Commonwealth is both the birthplace of American democracy and the birthplace of the American slave trail.

In July of 1619, the House of Burgesses met at Jamestown, bringing the concept of a representative democracy modeled after the English Parliament that evolved into the modern-day bicameral legislature. The House of Burgesses continues to operate today as the Virginia House of Delegates.

A month later, in August of 1619, a Dutch privateer arrived at Point Comfort, Virginia, containing, “20 and odd” Africans that John Rolfe recorded were traded for provisions. They were originally captured by Portuguese slavers in West Central Africa, known today as Angola.

While slavery was not officially acknowledged in the laws of Virginia until 1661, there is no doubt that the first Africans aboard the White Lion were treated as slaves, assigned heavy labor, and treated as property by the colonial elite.

□ 2010

I am quite cognizant that 250 years ago when Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence and said that all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, he did not include the nearly half a million enslaved men, women, and children or, indeed, any women at all in the Thirteen Colonies. He did not include those enslaved at his beloved Monticello, including his own children.

I am quite clear that when James Madison wrote the Virginia Plan that formed the foundation for a government by, of, and for we the people in order to form a more perfect Union, he did not include the over 300 enslaved people who lived and labored at his Montpelier estate under three generations of his family.

The U.S. Constitution, adopted in 1789, considered enslaved individuals only three-fifths of a person for the purpose of how many people would serve in this body and for taxation. The States that came together to create that more perfect Union treated those people as property.

Since 1789, the story of America has been one of each generation trying to reconcile the ideals upon which we

were founded with the reality and making the ideals true for us all.

Despite what some would have you believe, slavery literally tore this country apart, for as then Abraham Lincoln predicted in 1858, a house divided against itself cannot stand. He said this government could not endure permanently, half slave and half free. While he did not expect the Union to be dissolved, and he did not expect the house to fall, he expected it would cease to be divided. It took a war to do that.

Once Abraham Lincoln was elected President, and South Carolina became the first State to secede from the Union, its 1860 Declaration of the Immediate Causes Which Induce and Justify the Secession of South Carolina explicitly and repeatedly states that the preservation and expansion of slavery was the primary reason for leaving the Union.

Mississippi, Georgia, and Texas likewise formally published Declarations of Causes that explicitly cited the preservation and expansion of slavery as their primary reason for seceding. States like Alabama and Virginia passed shorter ordinances of secession directly citing the hostile attitudes of the Federal Government toward their “domestic institutions” and the election of a sectional party based on anti-slavery platforms. It was clear they were seceding because of slavery, so that they could keep it.

After the war, Reconstruction sought to bind the country’s wounds and expand the promise of its founding to the formerly enslaved, and Congress expanded suffrage to Black citizens, used Federal troops to vigorously defend it in response to a violent backlash across the South.

Congress passed three Reconstruction amendments designed to guarantee equal, civil, and legal rights to formerly enslaved Americans. All three granted Congress the power to enforce their provisions through legislation: the 13th Amendment finally abolishing slavery in the United States; the 14th Amendment guaranteeing citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the United States and prohibited any State from abridging the privileges or immunities of citizenship, applied due process of laws to the States, and provided equal protection under the law. It also provided for the reduction of representation in the House of Representatives of any State that disenfranchised any male citizens—and they meant male—over 21 years of age in Federal elections, except for participation in a rebellion or other crime; and the 15th Amendment prohibited the denial or abridgement of the right to vote on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Yet, even with these amendments, Southern States resisted, resorting to paramilitary organizations like the Ku Klux Klan to terrorize Black citizens for daring to seek to vote, run for office, serve on juries, own property,

open businesses, live in the wrong neighborhood, go to the wrong school, eventually drink from the wrong water fountain.

In 1870 and 1871, Congress passed the Enforcement Acts to allow the Federal Government to intervene when States or individuals infringed upon the rights provided in the 14th and 15th Amendments, and as a result Black men gained political power across the South.

In 1870, Senator Hiram Rhodes Revels of Mississippi and Representative Joseph H. Rainey of South Carolina became the first Black Members of Congress. A total of 22 Black men served in Congress between 1870 and 1901, including my predecessor, John Mercer Langston of Virginia’s Fourth District, in 1890.

The political, social, and economic power gained by Blacks across the South during Reconstruction then faced a violent backlash, as the KKK and other groups began a reign of terror that relied extensively on lynchings.

To resolve the deadlocked Presidential election of 1876, the Compromise of 1877 brought Reconstruction to an end, the Federal Government removed its troops from the South, and widespread violence, propaganda, and voter suppression began.

In the final year of Reconstruction, the unraveling of Federal protection and voting rights began when the Supreme Court issued two opinions that gutted the Enforcement Act—United States v. Cruikshank and the United States v. Reese. Once Democrats regained control and Reconstruction ended in the South, Congress lost interest in Federal intervention and State disenfranchisement efforts.

Then the long arc toward moral justice began again. When President Harry Truman integrated the Army and when the civil rights movement began to gain ground, those Southern Democrats fled the Democratic Party and became Republicans.

Today, we see a very similar backlash to the backlash to progress that came after Reconstruction. With the first Court case gutting the Voting Rights Act, the Shelby decision, and now the Callais decision, we see a rollback of the Federal Government protecting voting rights. We see a weaponization of the very tools used to ensure that life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness was open to all roll back the progress made in civil rights and equal protection under the law. We see an administration that wants to tell one side of the story that I just told that doesn’t want anything uncomfortable to be taught in our schools, that doesn’t want anything about slavery mentioned in our public spaces, in our museums, or in our curriculum, that doesn’t want that backlash taught.

Juneteenth gives us two opportunities: One, to celebrate the extraordinary resilience of Black Americans

who came here through the Middle Passage and bondage, and today are at historic high numbers in political leadership and representation. However, it also gives us an opportunity to acknowledge how we got here—the good, the bad, and the ugly; to recognize the pattern, to recognize the backlash to progress that always includes propaganda, whether it is the lie of white supremacy or the lie of stolen elections; violence, whether it is racial terror, lynchings, or insurrectionists showing up trying to stop for the second time in American history the results of an election they didn't like, or voter suppression, like a modern-day poll tax that we see in the SAVE Act.

We see the same backlash now, but we as the Congressional Black Caucus are here to say: We are not going back, we will fight the backlash, and we will continue the progress until when we say in our Pledge of Allegiance “liberty and justice for all,” it means all.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Georgia (Mrs. MCBATH).

Mrs. MCBATH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Virginia, our esteemed colleague and our good friend, Representative MCCLELLAN, for her historical context, for telling the truth, and for always, always standing up to defend the democracy and the rights of African Americans.

□ 2020

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Juneteenth and reflect on this enduring significance for Black Americans and, in particular, for this Nation.

On June 19, 1865, more than 2 years after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued, enslaved people in Galveston, Texas, finally learned that they were free.

Juneteenth stands as a powerful reminder that freedom, justice, and equality have never ever been guaranteed in the United States. They have been hard-fought and hard-won.

As we prepare to celebrate our Nation's 250th anniversary, Juneteenth calls on us not only to honor the resilience and sacrifices of those who came before us, but also to confront the work that remains unfinished.

While we celebrate progress, we cannot ignore the challenges facing Black communities today. Recent developments, including the Supreme Court's decision in *Louisiana v. Callais* and the rollback of programs and resources that have helped expand opportunity and representation, remind us that progress is not inevitable. It requires vigilance.

We cannot ignore the urgency of this moment. Many programs that expanded educational access, strengthened healthcare, and supported affordability for working families are being rolled back under this administration's policies. These setbacks deepen inequities and threaten hard-won gains.

That is why we must continue pouring into the programs and community-led efforts that uplift Black families.

By uplifting Black families, we are uplifting all families in America.

At every step, we have a responsibility to speak out against policies that undermine opportunity. The pursuit of equal justice demands our continued commitment.

Yet, Juneteenth is ultimately a story of hope. It is a testament to the strength, perseverance, and determination of generations who refused to give up on the promise of America.

As Members of Congress, we have a responsibility to continue to do this work, whether you want to do it or not. I remain committed to working alongside my colleagues of the Congressional Black Caucus and across this Nation to advance policies that promote equity, expand opportunity, and strengthen our democracy for future generations.

I hope that everyone in Congress would be willing to honor the legacy of Juneteenth, not only through remembrance but through action.

I grew up in the civil rights movement. At the tender age of 3, I was in the stroller at the March on Washington, so fighting for civil rights is not just talk because I understand that faith without works is dead.

What I do understand is that, in this body, we profess to be Christians. We profess to be people of faith. Yet, at the same time, on one hand we profess to be Christian, and on the other hand, we want to break down the barriers, break down all the hard-earned work, break down the legislation, and break down the policies, the safety nets, and all the work that has been done through the civil rights movement. We want to break it down. Individuals who have worked and toiled in this country to be free yet again, in 2026, are fighting for their freedom.

In this country, we are under a great assault on our ability to be able to vote. Democracy stands right now in a place where I never ever thought that I would ever see again in my lifetime.

All the civil rights leaders and people who gave their lives, volunteers and foot soldiers, for the ability for African Americans and all people of color in this country to be able to exercise their right to vote is completely under assault. I truly believe that our civil rights leaders would roll over in their graves if they knew the assault on democracy and what we are dealing with in today's Congress.

It is unconscionable what is happening here. It is despicable what is happening here. It is deplorable what is happening here.

The Constitution affords every man and woman the ability to be able to exercise their right to vote, to exercise what is important to them. It gives them the ability to be able to live the American Dream and work for the American Dream to be educated, to be given affordable, quality healthcare, and to live in affordable housing. This Congress and the United States continue to strip away the voting rights of

African Americans. That is truly at stake.

Where is the promise? What promise is being kept by this Constitution and by the Declaration of Independence?

The words of the Congressional Black Caucus continue to fall on deaf ears here in these Chambers. Shame on America. Shame on the body.

I pray every single day. I pray over every Member in this body. I pray for wisdom for our colleagues. I pray for the strength to stand and defend democracy and do the right thing. That is because democracy is for everyone in the United States, and we don't get to pick and choose who has access and who doesn't.

They don't get to pick and choose who gets to have a vote and who doesn't. We don't get to pick and choose who has healthcare and who doesn't. We don't get to pick and choose who has access to a good public education and who doesn't.

I, along with the Congressional Black Caucus, will stand and defend our ability to be able to hold dear and hold fast to what was promised to us by the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

As the great woman from Virginia just mentioned, we are not backing down.

Ms. MCCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. IVEY).

Mr. IVEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Virginia for hosting this Congressional Black Caucus special hour. I also thank my colleague from Georgia, who just finished speaking. I appreciated the powerful statement that she made and the insightful comments that she shared with us tonight.

Juneteenth is just around the corner. Juneteenth was a special day for me. It is one that we celebrated my mother's birthday on frequently, and certainly, as a child of North Carolina and Virginia, had special meaning, as well. I have had a chance to enjoy those days, but the meaning of them has evolved over time for me.

□ 2030

I was a child in North Carolina, Rocky Mount, North Carolina in the late 1960s. It was still segregated. Across the street was Booker T. Washington High School, and I lived on the side of the tracks that the African-American community lived in back then.

The schools were segregated. Stores, many of them, you couldn't try on clothes if you wanted to go get fit. There were a lot of restaurants you couldn't go into and if you did want to go in, they tried to make you go in through the backdoor. That is where we stood as a nation when I was a child.

Then, as you heard from my colleague from Virginia, the movement that came along that grew into the civil rights movement changed all of

that for the United States of America. We had gone from a real dark time after the North withdrew from the South, the return of Jim Crow, the growth of the Ku Klux Klan, the return of almost a version of enslavement return to the South in the late 1870s and it got worse over the next decades.

We had lynchings. It was a regular tool of terrorism in the South during those days. It was used to keep people in line if they did something radical or dramatic, like trying to vote or even register to vote. That is what we were in. That is what my grandfather was born into in North Carolina in 1895.

Things changed over time, thank God. We grew as a community, the African-American community. We started schools, historically Black colleges like Howard University and others that gave us a chance to gain an education, even in a segregated environment. We started groups, fraternities, sororities, especially for kids going to college.

The Divine Nine we call them now. I belonged to Kappa Alpha Psi. It was one of those sources of strength for our community. We had to develop our own newspapers since White newspapers wouldn't cover what was going on in the Black community.

We developed alternative structures that allowed us to train people to become doctors and the like. The NAACP grew and became a force for change, fighting against segregation in America and especially against lynching.

All of that grew over the years. We didn't have a lot to work with. Segregation was hard, and the further South you went, the harder it was. But ultimately in the late 1950s in Montgomery, Alabama, there was something called the Montgomery bus boycott that took off.

The Montgomery bus boycott was led by the faith community there, the African-American faith community, because the buses in Montgomery if you were African American, you were supposed to sit in the back. If the front of it filled up and new White people got on to the bus, if you were African American, you were expected to get up and give your seat. That was the nature of the way things were in those days. A woman named Rosa Parks decided she had had enough and she refused to get up and give her seat up.

Now, actually, that wasn't just a coincidence. This is something that people had been preparing for for years. The churches, the NAACP, and the like, and something called the SCLC, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, all were working together to try and figure out how can we push back and fight back against this. How can we try and change this?

The boycott began and just coincidentally, a young pastor almost fresh out of divinity school came down from Boston. His father had been a pastor in Atlanta and he wanted to become a pastor like his father, but he didn't want to try and start in Atlanta, so they sent him to Montgomery. And

just at the time that this young man got there, this man named Martin Luther King, Jr., they were looking for new leadership to lead the bus boycott and lead the faith community forward.

This is a man who was still writing his Ph.D. dissertation while he was leading the bus boycott. He was married and beginning a family while he was leading the bus boycott. If that wasn't enough, the hate, the anger, the opposition rolled up against him and his house, for example, was bombed while he was at church one day preparing for the Sunday service.

The house was blown up. He knew that his wife and his child were there and he didn't know if they were dead or not until he was able to run back home and see for himself.

When he got there, he saw a group of people who were angry and they wanted revenge. They wanted to go strike back and retaliate against the people who had bombed his house.

Dr. King said that is not how we do things. That is not the Christian way. That is not the way we are going to lead this movement. We are going to fight hate with love. We are going to fight violence with nonviolence, and we are going to win the hearts of these people and change the course of this Nation.

Now, it took a long time to get there. The bus boycott took a year. People were walking to work day in and day out in the snow and the rain and the cold, but they kept walking. They tried to create ways to ferry each other to and from where they had to go. Many of them were working as domestics, for example. They had tried giving each other rides and they put this whole structure in place to permit that.

The bus boycott was successful. The bus company thought they could hold out, that they could outlast them, but as it turned out, they were wrong. One woman said, "My feet is tired, but my soul is rested."

They came together and won that bus boycott, and it was the first giant step with respect to the civil rights movement. There were other forces that had gathered prior to that, there was the desegregation of the Army.

My father-in-law fought in World War II. There were colored units back then, and he rose up to the level of captain. He left the service, re-enlisted for ground combat during the Korean war and went to fight again. There were many others like him who put their lives on the line. Many of them gave their lives in the fight to protect our country.

One of the things my father-in-law told me was that when they had come back from Europe, he was stationed in Italy—they put a lot of what they called Negro troops then in Italy to fight there—and when they were bringing them back, many of the German soldiers had turned themselves into them because they didn't want to have to turn themselves into the Russians. One of the ironies was that when they

got back to the United States, the Black troops who had fought to protect and defend the United States of America, had saved Europe from totalitarianism and in many instances had given their lives and lost their friends and colleagues in this fight still had to ride in the back of the train behind these German soldiers. That is where America was.

Mr. Speaker, when the civil rights movement moved forward and gained momentum and culminated, as you heard from my colleague from Virginia, in the crown jewel of the civil rights movement was the Voting Rights Act. Other pieces came along. The Civil Rights Act was there, too. The Fair Housing Act, all those things came together. But the Voting Rights Act was the key tool to the transformation of the South in this country.

John Lewis was one of the key players in that movement. I saw a play about him. It is called "Young John Lewis." They ran it here in D.C. a couple weeks ago, and I went to see it. The culmination of the "Young John Lewis" play is the passage of the Voting Rights Act.

It was supposed to be a cause for celebration. It is supposed to be the climax, the high-water moment of this play, but a strange thing had happened just a few days before.

The United States Supreme Court, the Trump majority in the United States Supreme Court, had essentially eviscerated the Voting Rights Act that they were supposed to be celebrating.

Instead of there being a big cheer in the audience, there was this sad kind of pall that came over the crowd, including me. The voting rights piece, that first Supreme Court opinion that I mentioned just a few days ago, Callais, Justice Alito said he is not totally gutting it. He is just changing the standard of review, the legal ways to analyze those cases.

□ 2040

So we thought, let's hope and see how it plays out. It just turns out that there was another case in Alabama 3 years before where the Supreme Court had basically supported the Voting Rights Act and affirmed it. A three-judge panel had been appointed, because there were more challenges coming from the State. That three-judge panel consisted of one Clinton appointee, but two Trump appointees. That three-judge panel had said, after weeks of hearings—I think it was like 80 witnesses, 800 exhibits, extensive, detailed, thorough hearings—and that three-judge panel, which including two Trump appointees, concluded that the lines that had been drawn by the Republicans in Alabama constituted intentional racial discrimination. There was an intentional effort to dilute Black Alabamians' voting strength.

They said that the map that the Republicans were trying to put in place—and, remember, this was triggered by President Trump's call to Texas a few

months earlier saying: I need five seats. I will come back to that in a minute.

The three-judge panel said: Nope, you still can't put that map in place. There were two seats, one is held by our current colleagues TERRI SEWELL and SHOMARI FIGURES. It is the SHOMARI FIGURES' seat they were going after. They were trying to draw it out. The three-judge panel said that seat should stay. Then the United States Supreme Court, in an expedited manner, overturned the decision of that three-judge panel, even though they had just said a few weeks ago that intentional discrimination will not be tolerated in drawing these lines.

Even though there is something called the Purcell Rule, which the Supreme Court had honored for decades, the Purcell Rule is: You know what? We are not going to be doing these election decisions when we get too close to an election, because it can cause problems in how you implement the election. So we won't do that.

They violated that even though the three-judge panel said one of the reasons they didn't want to overturn the lines at that point was because it would cause chaos in the election. The Supreme Court did it anyway.

The Trump majority on the Supreme Court threw it out. Justice Sotomayor wrote a dissent. In that dissent she says: "Now the Court is squarely faced with a record of the turmoil it has caused and the harm it has wrought. Yet just as Alabama doubled down on racial discrimination, the Court today doubles down on chaos."

So that is where we have come from Juneteenth: The gutting of the Voting Rights Act.

It is not just in Alabama, unfortunately. I was down in North Carolina, back in my home State. I have got a colleague named DON DAVIS who is running for reelection. North Carolina is playing the exact same game as Alabama is. In fact, they did it a few years ago. This will be the third election that Congressman DAVIS has to run where they have tried to change the lines to make it harder for him to win.

When they did it in 2024, they knocked off three other Democrats who had been my colleagues when I first served here. The Republican legislature drew out those three Democrats and put them in districts that were predominantly Republican so that they couldn't win. We lost those three seats, but that is not enough. They want to take more. They went after DON DAVIS' district and cut the African American voting bloc in half there.

Now, I went down because I want to try and help him win anyway. I know that area a little bit. I know that those voters were angry that there is an attempt to disenfranchise them in that way, but I think they see past the moment and understand the importance of what we need to do right now.

There are challenges coming up this November. One of the main challenges

is to show that these, I think, illegal efforts to disenfranchise voters in this way, African American voters who were explicitly protected by the Voting Rights Act—which was explicitly based on the 14th Amendment, which was explicitly written to address all of the challenges and dangers and awful history that we created with slavery and segregation—all of that we have to fight back.

Now, the Trump administration is not going to make it easy. In addition to appointing a Supreme Court that would strike down the Voting Rights Act, they have gutted the part of the Department of Justice that is supposed to be protecting voting rights enforcement.

When Mr. Trump came into office, one of the first things he did was force out all but two of the attorneys in the voting rights section. Only two were left. In addition to that, they threw out all of the voting rights cases under section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. He did that immediately. He did that before the Supreme Court had even ruled. He was telegraphing exactly what he wanted to have happen with this.

He is not done there. Let's keep in mind a couple of things. In addition to gutting the unit at the Department of Justice that is supposed to protect voting rights, he is making aggressive moves on it. Remember, he did that speech where he talked about nationalizing elections? Well, we all know that Federal elections are run by the States. The Constitution says that. He still announced that anyway.

He also sent the FBI to do a raid on the Fulton County Department of Elections to seize the ballots. Now, I have never seen anything like that.

At first he started out, he sent requests—demands, actually, to 47 States saying: Hey, we want all your voting files. The States resisted, and you can imagine why, especially States where Democrats are at risk of the type of gerrymandering that we have seen in Alabama and North Carolina.

He said he needed to do it based on the theft of the 2020 election. Now, he is still acting like he actually won the 2020 election. This would be kind of like if the team that lost the Super Bowl last year was still running around acting like they actually won it. That is what Donald Trump is doing. Six years later, even though all of the statements they have made about this have been discredited, they have lost in over 60 courts all across the country, including courts with Republican appointees, including courts that are managed by the Republicans with Trump appointees on them. Over and over and over again they say: Nope, you actually lost that election. He won't give it up.

I don't think it is really about the 2020 election anymore. I think in his mind it is really about 2026 and what they might do in November.

We need to keep in mind a couple of things, based on the history that you

heard from my colleague from Virginia—and we know history can repeat itself—there is a saying that the arc of the universe is long, but it bends toward justice. The thing to remember is it does not bend on its own. It only bends in the right direction when we make it bend in the right direction.

On Juneteenth this year, the Obama library is going to open in Chicago, a long time coming, an exciting moment. I think it was in some ways a crowning achievement for the United States of America. At least it was viewed that way not just around the world but by many here in the United States. I am going to be excited to see what they have done and what they have built.

The legacy is the most important part of what that is about. The legacy of that Obama election, of what we can do and where we can go is something I think we need to focus on.

I watched a little bit of a special about it, and they played some of his speeches back from that era. The thing that is interesting is they are so different from the speeches we get from the White House now. They are not about division. They are not about anger. There is no hostile attacks on reporters, even when he disagreed with them. There is no threats to wipe out an entire civilization. There is no wars started, just because somebody woke up on the wrong side of the bed. There is none of that stuff.

As he said, there is no red States. There is no blue States. There is the United States of America.

□ 2050

There is a call to a certain type of America that he made that reminded me of John Kennedy's in the 1960s. It reminds me of Dr. King's in the civil rights movement in the late 1960s.

Many of our greatest leaders made the statements that pulled us together, that brought us together, despite the divisions we had in our history, realizing that, as they say, we might have come over here on different ships, but we are all on the same boat now. We need to find a way to start working together again, but we can't keep undermining the rights of other people. We can't keep disrespecting the rule of law. We can't keep undermining democracy if we are going to move in that direction again.

For this Juneteenth, my hope is that the America that we aspire to will get back in the front window and that we will start moving in that direction again and that we can start raising ourselves and our Nation up to those high standards again.

To my colleague from Virginia, I thank her for doing this. I appreciate the work that she has done for the Congressional Black Caucus. I thank my colleagues in the caucus for the work that they do day in and day out. Here in the House, I thank my colleagues. Even when I disagree with them, we can find a way to disagree without being disagreeable. We can find a way

to remember that we are all supposed to be fighting for the same things, that we can turn to each other and not on each other at this critical moment.

Ms. McCLELLAN. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MOORE of West Virginia). The gentlewoman from Virginia has 15 minutes left.

Ms. McCLELLAN. We the people, in order to form a more perfect union, as I mentioned, the history of our country is how we the people includes everyone. It is how to reconcile the ideals upon which this country was founded as articulated so beautifully by Thomas Jefferson, with the reality upon which this country was founded, as we grapple with the fact that Thomas Jefferson in writing that all men were created equal and endowed by their creator with the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness did not even include in that sentiment the human beings who labored, enslaved by him treated as property, including his own children.

I think of our country as a family, the American people as a family. Like any family, you cannot heal from family trauma if you don't talk about it, if you don't acknowledge it, if you don't acknowledge the pain of it, if you don't forgive and move forward.

Unfortunately, in our country, too often when we get close to that moment, when we get close to that healing moment, when we get close to that ideal becoming true for everyone, there is a backlash.

Every time in American history that we have begun to address the impact of over 300 years of slavery and Jim Crow on African Americans, there is a backlash.

The first one was the backlash to reconstruction. During reconstruction, when formerly enslaved men gained the right to vote after gaining citizenship, after being promised equal protection under the law, after electing members of their community to Congress—over 22—and after electing hundreds from their communities to State legislatures across the country, gaining social, political, and economic power, working together, in some cases, with White communities—like the Readjuster Party in Virginia, which worked together to create what was, at the time considered—with a small p—the most progressive Constitution that Virginia ever had, where it finally promised, for the first time, every child in Virginia the right to a free public education. And the old power structure said: We have got to break that up.

To break up that coalition, the backlash used three things: propaganda, the lie of White supremacy, the lie of the Lost Cause narrative, that began to ignore what was actually said in articles of succession and say: Well, no, the war was about something else. It wasn't about slavery.

It began to use the lie of the Lost Cause narrative in iconography that

said we need to put Black people back in their place by putting these gigantic monuments in front of the courthouse that says: Justice for all, except for you.

Then when they didn't get the message from the propaganda, they said: We are going to use violence through racial terror lynching, and 6,500 people, Black people, were murdered by White mobs through racial terror lynchings from 1865 through the 1960s—1968. Because if they don't get the message of the propaganda, we are going to use violence. We are going to use a mob that will start a race riot when people in Louisiana are trying to register to vote. We are going to use voter suppression because in a country—in a government of the people, of the people, for the people, the government will reflect the perspective and, therefore, meet the needs of the people who participate. If we can keep certain people from participating, we don't have to meet their needs.

So whether it was the literacy test that my great-grandfather had to take in Alabama in 1901, the character requirement he had to meet by finding three White men to vouch for his character to register to vote; whether it was the poll tax that my father and my grandfather had to pay in Tennessee; or voter intimidation and threats, the voter suppression is always part of the backlash.

We are in that backlash now, but the difference is the people who lived through Jim Crow are dying off. There is a concerted effort to keep their stories out of our schools, out of our public places, out of our museums through an executive order. Yet, history is a funny thing. Those stories, just like through all the traditions that were handed down generation to generation, we will continue to tell these stories, no matter how many executive orders are written. No matter how many orders the National Park Service is given to erase the names of people enslaved who worked at the President's house in Philadelphia, we will tell their story. We will work to continue to eliminate the impact of over 300 years of slavery and Jim Crow, even though we have an administration that wants to dismantle the progress we made in doing so, because that impact didn't go away with the wave of a magic wand with the Civil Rights Act or the Voting Rights Act. Now that we see efforts to unwind it, we are going to fight back.

I will close with this: I can't help but think of John Lewis. We are also going to come up on the anniversary of his passing. In his final words to us, John Lewis said: "Democracy is not a state. It is an act, and each generation must do its part to build what we call the Beloved Community, a nation and world society at peace with itself."

□ 2100

My parents, my grandparents, and my great-grandparents fought for that beloved community, and they used the

ballot to elect people who would help to build that beloved community.

Now, the Supreme Court has basically said that the medicine for the cancer of racism has worked, so let's get rid of the medicine, that we don't need it anymore, but the cancer is still there.

We are going to fight back as the Congressional Black Caucus. We will not let our voices be silenced. We will not let our history be erased. We will not let our votes be suppressed. We will continue to fight until every American has the right, unencumbered by this government, to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. When we say in the Pledge of Allegiance, "liberty and justice for all," it finally becomes true.

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

Ms. SEWELL. Mr. Speaker. I rise today with my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus at a moment of profound consequence for our democracy—a moment when Black representation in America is under attack.

What we are witnessing is about more than just a court case. It is about more than just a political disagreement. We are witnessing a coordinated effort to dismantle the hard-fought gains of the Civil Rights Movement and take us back to the Jim Crow era.

Mr. Speaker, this is a five-alarm-fire.

When the Supreme Court gutted the Voting Rights Act in the Callais decision, they told states that it is okay to dilute the voices of Black voters if it means helping Republicans cling to power.

Think about that. They gave states a license to discriminate in the name of partisanship.

Now, unless Congress acts, we could be on the verge of witnessing the largest reduction in Black representation since Reconstruction.

In my home state of Alabama, the consequences are already being felt.

For years, Alabama's congressional maps have been at the center of a legal battle over the rights of Black Alabamians. Federal courts repeatedly found that state leaders intentionally discriminated against Black voters and illegally diluted their political power. In fact, the congressional map Alabama is now seeking to implement was struck down not once, but twice, for intentionally discriminating against Black voters.

Despite those findings, the Supreme Court has now cleared the way for Alabama officials to put that very map back into place.

Let that sink in.

Alabama now has a congressional map that federal courts determined was drawn with discriminatory intent—a map with only one seat out of seven where Black voters can elect candidates of their choice.

In a state where Black voters make up nearly one-third of the electorate, that is unacceptable.

I want to be clear—This is not just an issue for Black voters. This is an attack on every American. They may be targeting Black voters today, but no one is safe when a handful of extremists can decide whose voices matter and whose do not.

This is about whether every American, regardless of race or zip code, will have an opportunity to make their voice heard. It is about whether we are willing to learn from our Nation's history or repeat our mistakes.

The struggle for voting rights has never been easy. From Selma to Montgomery, brave Americans shed blood, sweat, and tears to secure the right to vote. They marched, they organized, and some gave their lives so that future generations could participate fully in our democracy.

We owe it to them to continue that fight.

That is why I will never stop working to restore the full protections of the Voting Rights Act. It is why we must revise and pass the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act without delay.

Here is what those state legislators need to understand: They can draw unfair maps, but they cannot silence our voices.

Come November, we will send a message that cannot be ignored—that every voice deserves to be heard in our democracy.

We will not give up. And we will not go back.

#### HONORING MARY JANE FLORES

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Ms. KAPTUR of Ohio was recognized for 30 minutes.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to honor the beautiful, generous, faithful, and patriotic life of Mary Jane Flores.

A graduate of Newton-Wellesley Hospital School of Nursing, she commissioned in 1959 and served proudly as a nurse at Bethesda Naval Hospital here in Washington before her honorable discharge in 1961.

While there, she met and cared for her future husband, beloved Judge Joseph Flores, a veteran who rose to serve as lieutenant commander in the U.S. Naval Reserve. He was elected the first Hispanic judge in Ohio—I might say Toledo, Ohio—and first Hispanic elected to both municipal and juvenile courts. Their first date was over Mexican food on the evening of John F. Kennedy's inauguration.

Dedicated to advancing her education and career, Mary Jane attended Toledo's St. Vincent's Hospital School of Nurse Anesthesia, becoming certified in 1970.

Her passion for helping others extended far beyond her profession. She traveled annually to the Dominican Republic with Midwest Medical Mission. She was instrumental in establishing the first mobile migrant health clinic in northwestern Ohio and volunteered with the Farm Labor Organizing Committee's Summer Health Clinic.

Lovingly known as Memere, a name that began with her first grandchild, Memere quickly became what everyone called her.

She was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Judge Joseph Flores, and is survived by her son, Andre; daughters Maria and Judith; three grandchildren; her sisters, Nancy and Barbara; and many loving nieces, nephews, and dear, forever friends.

I saw her most recently quietly attending to many senior citizens in nursing homes across our region. She did it quietly with no public attention, but she was always there.

Mary Jane was a lifelong Catholic who not only practiced her faith, but she lived it. Her legacy lives on in all the thousands of lives she so nobly touched, certainly in her own family but far beyond that.

#### KENNEDY CENTER DECISION

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, President John Fitzgerald Kennedy was a World War II hero, the only U.S. President ever to be awarded the Purple Heart.

In 1943, his PT-109 patrol boat was sunk in the Pacific, struck by a Japanese destroyer. Though wounded in action, Kennedy's athletic prowess allowed him to swim miles in dangerous open seas to safety. The physical damage he sustained caused him to be hospitalized and endure severe back pain throughout the rest of his life.

A gifted orator with a precious sense of humor, he was elected U.S. President in 1960.

His sheer eloquence during his inaugural address called the people of our Nation to highest purpose. He inspired and challenged the American people and especially our youth to "ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country."

Globally, he successfully proposed the establishment of the United States Peace Corps and called upon Americans to voluntarily aspire to higher purpose and meet the real world beyond our shores.

A valorous war veteran, he envisioned a higher purpose for our Nation as liberty's champion, to serve humanity across the world by building peaceful global relationships and to carry out practical joint projects for community betterment.

Early on, President Kennedy was faced with a chilling nuclear confrontation with Soviet Russia. Russian naval vessels with nuclear warheads were dispatched by Russian dictator Nikita Khrushchev and entered the Gulf of Mexico, headed toward Cuba, which was ruled by a pro-Russian Communist dictator, Fidel Castro. Within 2 weeks, Kennedy was able to diffuse that real threat to U.S. security. That was the first standoff in the nuclear era.

He and his gifted wife, Jacqueline Kennedy, brought intelligence, artistry, beauty, history, poetry, music, and literary excellence to the White House for special occasions. Their partnership inspired a nation that sought excellence from our leaders at the dawn of a new American age.

His wife, Jacqueline Kennedy, planted a living, beautiful rose garden on the south side of the White House. Recently, that was destroyed by President Trump, who paved it over in concrete in favor of a country club-style patio.

JFK, a highly educated man of arts and letters, inspired and challenged our Nation to aspirational new horizons to land a man on the Moon by the end of the decade, but Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas, on November 22, 1963, by a formerly discharged U.S.

marine, Lee Harvey Oswald, who defected to the Soviet Union and returned to the United States shortly before this horrible, horrible incident.

President Kennedy did not live to see that feat on the Moon achieved as the Apollo 11 mission succeeded in July 1969.

Kennedy's Pulitzer Prize-winning book, "Profiles in Courage," records the stories of several U.S. Senators who lost their elections and their political careers for standing up for their principles. All of those he reported on lost their next elections because they actually stood for something worthy.

He proposed path-breaking civil rights legislation, founded the Peace Corps to embrace a struggling world, and inspired a new generation of public servants who were to follow.

A man who understood history, JFK was determined not to repeat it. His soaring rhetoric, coupled with that of his elegant, educated wife, Jacqueline, worked to restore the White House as a center for arts, culture, the environment, and history.

□ 2110

This past December 2025, it truly came as a shock that the current President of our country forced a hand-picked board at the John F. Kennedy Memorial Center for the Performing Arts to approve adding the Trump name to precede the Kennedy name at this cherished living memorial to our valorous, fallen, former President.

Understandably, the people of our Nation immediately called out this outrage and backlashed, as did the Kennedy family themselves.

Former Congressman Joe Kennedy, III, said: "The Kennedy Center is a living memorial to a fallen President and named for President Kennedy by Federal law. It can no sooner be renamed than can someone rename the Lincoln Memorial."

Kerry Kennedy, niece to President Kennedy and the daughter of Robert F. Kennedy who, too, was tragically assassinated in 1968 as a Presidential candidate said: "President Trump and his administration have spent the past year repressing free expression, targeting artists, journalists, and comedians, and erasing the history of Americans whose contributions made our Nation better and more just."

Maria Shriver, daughter of President Kennedy's sister Eunice Kennedy Shriver said: "Some things leave you speechless and enraged and in a state of disbelief."

Then, the Federal court properly ordered President Trump's name be removed. The rule of law really means something. That stopped closure and demolition of this living memorial to a great veteran and sacrificial, revered President.

This removal must be done by court order by close of business this Friday, June 12.

Erasing this stain on the sacrificial legacy that inspired this noble cultural