We have got to get back to having real debate. Some people think, when I get upset, it means I hate somebody. I don't. I come from a family where we fuss at each other tooth and nail. We still love each other and stand by each other. I heard that this was attributed to Johnson, as President, but we had a pastor in Mount Pleasant, Texas, in 1953, who said it to my parents: if two people agree on everything, one of them is unnecessary. The same is true here in Congress. If we all agree on everything, then all but one are unnecessary. We don't need a Congress. We don't need advisors. If one person knows everything, then just let him make all the decisions, but that is not the case in this fallen world. We need to hear from everybody. Debate is a good thing, and it used to be at universities and can be again if they will allow all voices to be heard.

I have one other story here from CNS News:

Afghanistan will resume being a terrorist haven when U.S. troops depart.

That is going to happen. I have been talking about that for a number of years, and it doesn't have to happen if we would simply grant the people of Afghanistan what the Founders originally gave us. We have messed it up, but they originally gave us a government where the States were the most powerful entity. As my moderate Muslim friends in Afghanistan have said, and as former Vice President Massoud has said, and others: if you will just help us push Karzai to let us have an amendment in our constitution that allows us to elect our governors, elect our mayors, get our own police chiefs, govern our own regions, our own state areas—if you will let us do that, we can keep the Taliban out.

I mentioned it before, but when I asked, ''What makes you think we could exert that kind of pressure?'' they informed me that out of about a $12.5 billion government budget in Afghanistan, the Afghans only provide about $1.5 billion. The rest is provided by foreign countries, and most of that is the United States. Today, if this President says you either let the states elect their own governors and mayors and pick their own police chiefs—that is today—or we will cut off every dime going to Afghanistan, I would bet that would be the day they would get started and that they would get an amendment to their constitution, and they would become more of a democratic republic like we started out as, perhaps even more than we are now.

We need to do that for them. We don't need to let more American lives be killed and be taken in Afghanistan. That doesn't have to happen. It didn't have to happen. Even though Secretary Gates said that he didn't believe the President was really convinced the surge was a good idea in Afghanistan, he still sent more troops, and what people haven't been talking about for a long time is that 75 percent of the people of the American soldiers who have been killed in Afghanistan—soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen—all of them—have been killed while President Obama has been Commander in Chief.

I did not think President Bush did the right thing by sending tens of thousands of American troops in after the Taliban was defeated with fewer than 500 Americans in supporting the Northern Alliance, but we became occupiers. It was a mistake by the Bush administration, I believe, and then a mistake that President Obama inherited, and it got worse. We don't have to leave and have the blood of our soldiers—of our military—cry out as we leave Afghanistan and as the Taliban takes back over. Let us, Madam Speaker, help Afghanistan to root out the evil in its own country. Let's help them get a constitution that let's them root it out for themselves. That is how we should be doing foreign policy.

May God awaken the universities that were once so diverse and so great to understanding that they should not, cannot—I hope and pray do not—continue to foster this anti-Semitism, this anti-Israeli sentiment, that is growing, that might someday cheer when Israelis are nuked.

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

AUTONOMY FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRIDENSTINE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) for 30 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, Congress has a lot on its plate, and it is trying its best to pursue it. I am pleased to hear that we may be close to an agreement on the budget, but with all we have to do with respect to the economy, the environment, income inequality, and unemployment insurance, I think the public would be concerned when the Congress goes off course and no longer involves itself only in the Nation's business but interferes with the business of local jurisdictions. One of the cardinal principles of our Nation is, of course, what is local is local and not for the Federal Government.

This afternoon, I want to speak about three issues where the Nation has been drawn into local affairs by the Congress, much against the bipartisan principles on both sides of this Chamber and of the Senate as well. One issue involved the shutdown of a local government. Another involved something, perhaps, even more sacred: the autonomy every local government demands over its local funds and, only yesterday, the near-sacred autonomy over the local laws of a local jurisdiction.

Yesterday, there was a hearing. I would not have objected to the hearing. It was about a very controversial subject, and I happened to be on the other side of the majority, but it is a subject that divides the Nation, and it deserves to be aired. It had to do with what looked to be re-codifying and, perhaps, also adding some provisions on reproductive choice by Members of the majority who oppose abortion in all of its forms, as do many of the American people.

□ 1230

Of course, we have a Supreme Court decision that has ruled on abortion. Nevertheless, there continues to be legislation and interest in this issue here.

Yesterday's hearing was a little curious because, for the most part, the issues have long been addressed by the Congress in appropriations bills. Nobody talks about the so-called Hyde amendment anymore because that has to do with Federal funds for access to abortion. That is no longer much contested.

There is a so-called Helms amendment, which denies access to safe abortion care with U.S.-paid funds in other parts of the world; codifying that. There were some add-ons that you typically might expect from the subcommittee for the Affordable Care Act; to make sure that federal civil servants and the military do not have access to abortion, etc.

I went to the hearing. Frankly, I found it very interesting, the press was interested in only—at least as I read this morning—largely interested in only one matter. That had to do with my request to testify on what was really a minor section of this bill. It was very important to us, but very minor in the bill.

It is a section that would codify something, again, that the appropriators already have done, that is, to keep D.C. from spending its own local funds on abortions for low-income women.

Remember, I just said the Hyde amendment keeps us from spending Federal funds. Note that I am talking only about local funds. In case you think we are an outlier here, 17 States provide local funds for abortions for their poor women because states and localities cannot spend Federal funds. We only want what they have. Those 17 States, by the way, include Alaska, Arizona, Montana—and I won't go on, but you can see that they may be States of various political views that simply don't want low-income women to be left out of the reproductive choice guaranteed by the Supreme Court's decision regarding abortion.

What the press was most interested in was not the major portions of the bill but the fact that Chairman TRENT FRANKS included a D.C. provision in his bill, a provision that says though these are D.C.'s local funds—$8 billion, we are proud to say—raised by local taxpayers, our businesses and our residents, 100 percent of it local funds—that we, and we alone, in the United States must accept the dictates from the Congress of the United States about where we may spend our own

local funds when some of its Members disagree, as I am sure they would disagree with the 17 States who spend their local funds in the very same way.

Since my own district was the only district mentioned in the bill, I did what any red-blooded Member of Congress would do. I wrote a respectful letter saying, as a courtesy from one Member to another, may I testify for a few minutes with respect to the D.C. provision?

I wrote that letter the moment I heard that this matter was to come forward for a hearing. It was hand-delivered to Chairman FRANKS' office. I heard no response. My counsel, Brad Truding, called repeatedly the next day. Frankly, I never heard a response until our office called.

We called the ranking member, JERRY NADLER, who did tell us that he heard a response, and that I was to be denied the right to testify on a provision involving my own district.

That is what has captured the press, not the many underlying issues, some of which I have just reiterated, of the bill itself, because one thing that captures the public imagination is discourtesy here in this Congress. I didn't receive a courtesy of a reply, and I didn't receive the courtesy of testifying with respect to a provision affecting my district.

Yet, Members are routinely offered the right to testify, usually before the named witnesses, just as a courtesy. In addition, even though you see us go at one another on this floor, if we are discourteous on the floor, they will take down our words and we will have to come to the well of the House and explain ourselves. That is how important courtesy is. You can't have 440 Members without that kind of courtesy.

I don't even know Chairman FRANKS. I don't think he meant any personal discourtesy to me. I am sure of that, as I sat in the hearing and he explained himself and welcomed me to the hearing, it was clear that he didn't mean any personal discourtesy. What he did, however, was to exercise discourtesy from one Member to another Member, and he did so on a matter of some importance.

There is no Member of this body who would sanction an attack on her local jurisdiction without getting up to protest it. I may not be able to vote on this bill when it comes to the floor, but should I not be able to speak on the matter?

D.C. matters come to this floor time and again, and all I can do is talk. If there is any decency in this body, surely nobody would shut me up. There is no Member of the Senate of the United States who represents the 640,000 residents of D.C., who pay taxes to the federal government and have gone to war each and every time since the Nation was created. There is only one Member. She is a delegate. She has no vote on this floor. She only can vote in committee. All she can do is speak.

In our democracy, who would want to say you cannot even speak? That is what happened yesterday. As a result, important issues—certainly, important to the committee regarding abortion—were not even the focus of the media attention. They just flew from their attention span because of the denial of a Member the right to speak on a provision that affected only her jurisdiction.

I am clear on where I stand on reproductive freedom, and I oppose that bill in its entirely. Every Member of the House knows that bill will never see the light of day on the other side of the Congress, in the Senate, and will never become law. It is a message bill. That is all right. Both sides, when they capture the Congress, participate in message bills. The problem with the majority in the House today is that it only does message bills. That is why this Congress has now gone down as the Congress that was the least productive in American history, because all it did was message bills.

Well, it is one thing to have a message bill on the United States of America. It is another to have a message bill that involves a message pertaining to a local jurisdiction where the local jurisdiction has no voice. No vote, no voice.

The bill managed to be an affront on two counts. It denies our low-income women the right to the reproductive choice that they would have if D.C. could pay for their reproductive choices, as 17 different States do, and it violated the very principle of local government, which was at the root of the American Revolution.

In one of the great contortions in legislation, the bill seems to have recognized that you cannot really legislate for a local jurisdiction. So it redefines the District of Columbia government as a part of the Federal Government for purposes of abortion.

Imagine having your city and your county redefined as now a part of the United States Government in order to pass a bill you do not want. That was a concession in itself against the bill, that they had to redefine us out of who we are into who this Nation is. That kind of contortion undercut any possible legitimacy for the bill.

This is the kind of thing that led to the war on women last Congress. You see what effect that had.

The Republicans want to start out again with the Member who cannot fight back in the way they do because she doesn't have a vote on this floor by denying her even the right to speak on a bill affecting her jurisdiction. Go at it. We will not let it rest.

We all witnesses this same local jurisdiction, the District of Columbia, now one of the most successful local jurisdictions in the United States, that raised $8 billion on our own. We are building everywhere. We added 50,000 people in the last census. Yet, this jurisdiction faced the shutdown in the just-past infamous shutdown of the Federal Government.

Well, the public will say, That can't be. They shut down the Federal Government. As a matter of fact, the Congress makes the District of Columbia bring its $8 billion local budget right here, to sign off on it, before we can spend our own local funds.

You are hearing the very definition of autocracy, not democracy. When money that the Congress has nothing to do with has to come before this Chamber in any form or fashion, that can lead to catastrophe—and it almost did, because the Congress had gotten to not one bit of the one business it has to do every single year, and that is pass bills for appropriations for its own government. They hadn't done one.

Among those, tucked into one of its bills was the independent jurisdiction of the District of Columbia. The mayor was put to using contingency funds to keep the city open during those 16 days. Normally, he has to do the same shutdown preparation that OPM, the Department of Education, or the Department of Transportation has to do. Instead, he used his contingency funds. The problem is he was running out of contingency funds.

There were Members of this body that helped me finally in negotiations with the administration, with our Republican colleagues, and of course, with the Democrats in the Senate. I thank Chairman DARRELL ISSA, who chairs the Oversight and Government Reform Committee with jurisdiction, among other things, over the District of Columbia.

□ 1245

I thank majority leader, ERIC CANTOR, a member of this regional delegation, for his efforts as well. There were just as many Republicans and Democrats in the Senate who were helpful, and others whom I have not named, who were helpful here.

But it took a three-way negotiation to get us out of that; and the reason that negotiation was important is that we are waiting, as I speak, to see whether or not there is going to be another government shutdown now. I am hopeful about that because we are told that we may have a delay for a few days.

The prospect is there won't be another shutdown; but we didn't know that, then, so I had to negotiate for something that the Federal agencies do not yet have. They are now being run on what is called a ''continuing resolution'' based on last year's appropriation, 2013 funds.

Imagine if we had had to do that, run a big city on funds from last year instead of your appropriated funds for this year. That could result in violation of contracts, all kinds of upheavals in your city.

Fortunately, I was able to negotiate a bill that would keep us open for the rest of the year, that is, the fiscal year. The Federal Government still has to do that for its own agencies.

Why in the world would anybody want any local jurisdiction to be caught up in that federal mess?

Fortunately, there is no disagreement on this. I don't want to leave the

impression that this is a matter of great contention. The Senate has what we call ''shutdown avoidance language'' for the Nation's Capital in its D.C. appropriations bill. The President's budget had such language too.

My own colleagues here, Mr. ISSA, for example, is for anti-shutdown language. The appropriators have indicated the very same.

I am hoping that as the appropriation bill passes—sorry—comes to the floor, it will have that shutdown avoidance language in it. Indeed, I am hoping it will have budget autonomy in it.

The President's budget had budget autonomy language. The Senate appropriations now has budget autonomy in it.

Hasn't the time come to say to the Nation's Capital, the residents who raise their own money here in the District of Columbia, that if you raise it, you can spend it, and the Congress does not have to be a pass-through for you?

Isn't it time to say that, at least, because Wall Street charges D.C. a penalty because, after it passes its balanced budget, the city has to come to the Congress, which passes no balanced budgets. Any time somebody else has to look at your budget, there is an additional layer. You pay for the extra layer because it should not be there and is not there for any other jurisdiction.

If all of this seems strange and against American traditions, imagine legislation coming here. That one, the last one I want to discuss is Kafkaesque in the extreme.

The District of Columbia passes a bill, it is supposed to lay over here before it can take effect for 30 legislative, not calendar, days, and 60 for criminal matters, except our legislative days are far and few between. So bills have to lay over here long past a 30-day period, usually for at least 3 calendar months.

Now, you are running a big city. Let me give you one of the more laughable examples that is not atypical, but I give it to you because you can see that this is the kind of subject matter that would never interest the Congress.

The congressional review, or layover, period for the change that the District made in its laws to exchange the word ''handicap'' for ''disability'' took 9 months. It took 9 months. In order to keep legislation from lapsing, the District has to pass temporary legislation and then another extension of legislation. And it has to keep passing various kinds of temporary bills of its final bills until it finally gets through these review days.

The council estimates that about 65 percent, up to 65 percent, of the bills it passes could be eliminated were it not for this make-work procedure.

Now, this isn't painless. The council says it takes 5,000 employee-hours and 160,000 sheets of paper per Council period; and you'd better be precise, because if you miss one of these periods, and there are usually three different periods during which these bills pass until you get to the 30 legislative days, the bill could lapse, and then you would have to start all over again.

That would be bad enough if Congress had a reason for requiring these bills to come here. Congress never looks at these bills. If there is something that the Council of the District of Columbia does that the Congress thinks it shouldn't do, it knows exactly what to do, at least in its own view.

Why bother with introducing a bill here, having it come to the floor, and doing the same thing in the Senate?

Why not simply try to attach your objection or amendment to something else?

So the Congress simply uses the appropriation bills and attaches whatever it wants to overturn. At the moment, there is only one such matter and that is the abortion rider; and it simply tucks that into another bill.

On only three occasions has the Congress ever used the review, or layover period, to overturn a D.C. law: 1979, 1981, and 1991. And two of those directly involved Federal interests, so Congress was within its rights.

In fact, if the truth be told, the District was not trying to defy the Federal Government.

In fact, I would have been with the Congress on this because Federal interests were involved on two of them. The District mistook, was mistaken in the extent to where there was a Federal interest involved.

So those were not even attempts to try to challenge the Federal Government. Those were mistakes. Had I been here at the time, I would have tried to correct them before they got very far by going to the District before they ever got here.

In any case, you have a Sisyphus-like process, keep rolling up the hill, keep spending all that money, keep exerting all those employee-hours, for a process that Congress has long abandoned and pays no attention to.

My bill says to a Congress which regularly passes paperwork-reduction bills, this is a classic example of where it is needed. I do not believe there is the slightest opposition here. It is a matter of inertia. I am trying to make it rise above the ground where it has laid since I have been introducing this bill.

I don't believe for a moment that there is a single Member that wishes the District, or any other jurisdiction, or any part of this government, to engage in such a labor-intensive, costly process, even if it had an outcome, but particularly one that the Congress itself abandoned and has abandoned into disuse.

So, Madam Speaker, I brought these matters of local concern to the floor today because they are, I think, every last one of them, matters about which most Members are unaware, and for good reason.

Members are dealing with their own districts and with the Nation's business. They really don't have any reason to care about whether or not the District spends its local money one way or the other, about what laws it has passed, and if it is shut down. In the case of D.C. bills only three out of 4,500 D.C. bills have been overturned. It has abandoned one of these processes altogether.

The District had a budget autonomy referendum that, technically, is law. It is in some danger, so I am trying still to get budget autonomy through the Congress and to the President.

I can not believe that, with many conservative Members of this House who believe in local matters for local folks, that I would not have support here. I recognize that abortion is a controversial issue, and I have the deepest respect for those who disagree with me on that issue; but I think most Members would agree that that is a matter for local jurisdictions to decide.

Wherever we stand on the Nation's business, we are as one on local principles. Local matters are for local jurisdictions. That cannot be your principle for every jurisdiction in the United States except the District of Columbia. The matter of democracy, which we have tried to spread throughout the world, cannot be a matter for every nation on the face of this Earth except the Nation's Capital.

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

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on January 9, 2014, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 667. To redesignate the Dryden Flight Research Center as the Neil A. Armstrong Flight Research Center and the Western Aeronautical Test Range as the Hugh L. Dryden Aeronautical Test Range.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 58 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, January 13, 2014, at noon for morning-hour debate.

OATH FOR ACCESS TO CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

Under clause 13 of rule XXIII, the following Members executed the oath for access to classified information:

Robert B. Aderholt, Rodney Alexander*, Justin Amash, Mark E. Amodei, Robert E. Andrews, Michele Bachmann, Spencer Bachus, Ron Barber, Lou Barletta, Garland ''Andy'' Barr, John Barrow, Joe Barton, Karen Bass, Joyce Beatty, Xavier Becerra, Dan Benishek, Kerry L. Bentivolio, Ami Bera, Gus M. Bilirakis, Rob Bishop, Sanford D. Bishop, Jr., Timothy H. Bishop, Diane Black, Marsha Blackburn, Earl Blumenauer, John A. Boehner, Suzanne Bonamici, Jo