wealthiest families in this country, the only people who have enough money in their estates to qualify for the estate tax, should get a $2.5 million tax break.

Every year, we let corporations deduct unlimited amounts of bonus pay for executives, regardless of whether or not the companies' workers get pay raises or not, unlike that one special CEO who sees life differently and believes that to whom much is given much is required.

Corporations have written off $66 billion between 2007 and 2010 while letting the low-wage workers who make up the rank and file of their companies struggle.

My colleague, CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, has a solution for this, requiring companies to raise wages for their workers if they want to keep qualifying for that tax break. It is a simple solution that wouldn't mean companies suddenly have to raise pay for their workers; they just need to stop expecting the government to cover the exorbitant salaries of their executives if they can't pay the rest of their employees a liveable wage.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I stand with the millions of workers fighting for 15. Lifting pay for low-wage workers will boost their purchasing power, pumping more money into our economy and giving businesses the revenue to create more jobs.

Lifting pay for low-wage workers will reduce government spending. Lifting pay for low-wage workers will open the doors to the American Dream for the millions who have already demonstrated that they are ready and willing to work and to work hard for it.

By standing together and fighting for the $15, these workers have already made their voices heard in the living rooms, the boardrooms, and the statehouses all across this country. It is time for D.C. to lend an ear as well.

It is my privilege and my honor to stand with those who are simply seeking a fair wage for the work that they do.

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

YUCCA MOUNTAIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honor for me to be here today with several colleagues to talk about and highlight a very serious environmental risk to our communities.

For the last 58 years, this Nation has embraced nuclear power as an inexpensive, clean, and nearly inexhaustible power source for our growing society; yet, in all that time, we have not yet addressed a key problem caused by nuclear power, and that is how to safely dispose of spent nuclear fuel.

We have gathered a good crew of folks here, Mr. Speaker, and it is an honor for me to yield to my good friend from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE).

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Illinois' indulgence in allowing me to speak on this important subject this evening.

Mr. Speaker, located in my central Washington district is the Hanford site, which has played a pivotal role in our Nation's security and defense for decades. As part of the Manhattan Project, the Hanford site produced plutonium for the bomb that eventually brought an end to World War II, and continued work at the site was critical during the cold war.

However, this work also resulted in massive amounts of nuclear defense waste. Today, Hanford is the world's largest and most complex nuclear cleanup site, with over 56 million gallons of radioactive and chemical waste in 177 temporary underground storage tanks.

The Federal Government has a legal and a moral obligation to clean up this waste. The importance of Yucca Mountain cannot be overstated. Hanford is scheduled to send more nuclear defense waste to Yucca Mountain than anywhere else in the Nation.

The high-level defense waste at Hanford will be treated at the waste treatment plant, which is currently being constructed, to turn this waste into glass that can then be sent to Yucca.

The waste treatment plant is over 70 percent complete, and the glass produced will meet the geological specifications of Yucca Mountain; yet the Obama administration has moved the goalpost by illegally shutting down Yucca, which will take us back to square one and harm the already challenging Hanford cleanup.

Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government has spent decades and billions of taxpayer dollars studying the right place for the repository. The conclusion was Yucca Mountain, the subject of one of the most thorough and extensive reviews of a major government project ever conducted.

It is the lawful repository for nuclear waste, and Congress has reaffirmed this fact many times over. There is no scientific reason why Yucca cannot and should not move forward.

Earlier this month, I visited Yucca Mountain and was impressed by the substantial work that has already been completed. The development of the site has taken decades and has come at great taxpayer expense, costing Americans over $15 billion.

Because DOE has failed to begin accepting used nuclear fuel, as required by contracts signed with the electric utilities that own the reactors, liability and settlement estimates now range from $13 billion to $50 billion—a blow to taxpayers and ratepayers—all due to the failure of the President to move forward with the legal repository.

Simply put, Mr. Speaker, we do not have the time or the resources to just start over. Doing so would change Yucca from being the Nation's most secure national repository into a monument of government waste and all in violation of the law. After getting a firsthand look at Yucca, I can see why it was selected as the best place for our Nation's defense waste and commercial spent nuclear fuel.

I am disappointed the administration has continued efforts to push ahead with its plan to circumvent Yucca, as well as the repeated affirmations by Congress that Yucca is the lawful repository. I look forward to working with my colleagues here in Congress—especially the members of the Nevada delegation—to ensure that the law is upheld and Yucca Mountain moves forward.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. DOLD. I thank the gentleman from Washington.

I just want to highlight, again, if I may, you mentioned a statistic just a moment ago that was talking about the fact that because the government hasn't moved forward with Yucca Mountain, the fact that we are actually paying to store this material all over the country to Exelon and other companies along those lines, it was anywhere between $15 and $50 billion.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Over the course of those contracts, that is correct.

Mr. DOLD. That is astounding. I thank the gentleman from Washington for your leadership.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS). He is the dean of the Illinois delegation and someone whose leadership, when it comes to Yucca Mountain, has been extensive.

He is certainly someone who understands what we need to be doing in terms of making sure this material gets off the shores of the Great Lakes and from our neighborhoods all around the country and put into a safe location about 150 miles from any inhabitant in Yucca Mountain.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for the time and just for having this national debate. The State of Illinois is a large State with a lot of nuclear power.

We are very fortunate to have that, not only to have the power generated, but to have the jobs, high-paying jobs, to be located around our State and paying a lot of taxes to our local communities, our local schools, and the like. It would even be better if the Federal Government would keep its promise.

Part of the movement to promote nuclear power was a promise by the Federal Government. In fact, they enforced a fee on those States that have nuclear power to go into a fund, the nuclear waste fund, to fund long-term geological storage.

□ 1845

Now, you might say: Why a long-term geological storage? Why a centralized location? Because the world

community, the best scientists have determined that one repository, one location, is better than 104, not counting defense sites—one geological repository—in other words, someplace in the ground—is better than above ground—or in the case that you are particularly concerned about, next to Lake Michigan.

That is not the only location that isn't what you would think would be some sensitive areas, whether it is large lakes, large rivers, flood plains, and the like. The world community, the scientists, have all said: let's get it all located in one place, and let's put it in long-term geological storage location.

The Federal Government passed a law in 1982 called the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. It had 10 locations. The top pick in that location was Yucca Mountain; then they narrowed the list down to three. The top pick of the three was Yucca Mountain. Then the 1987 amendments to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act said: that is where we are going to send it.

Now, after that, 30 years, $15 billion, the greatest scientific minds in the world, this is the most studied piece of ground on the planet, has concluded, based upon a report by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission—an independent science commission of our government—said that, once Yucca Mountain is closed, it will be safe for 1 million years. That is a long time.

That is really what has turned this debate again back into this country because it has always been a question of the science. Will the science prove it? We don't know. We have to do the studies; we have to do the research.

Well, fortunately, we were able to finally get the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to render the safety evaluation report which said, once closed, this site will be safe for 1 million years.

Now, as you mentioned, Yucca Mountain is 100 miles from Las Vegas. It is in the desert. It is a mountain in a desert. It is 1,000 feet below the crest of the mountain. It is 1,000 feet above the water table.

The other story that is not told very well, until you go out and visit, is it is surrounded by the nuclear test site, the place where our government used to test nuclear weapons. There is an Air Force base there, so the adjoining land around Yucca Mountain is all Federal land.

When people say, Well, you need to get local buy-in, local folks to decide, well, the Federal Government is the local folks in this case.

I appreciate you highlighting not just Yucca Mountain, but the need for communities around this Nation to start having this debate again because the Federal Government has already invested.

We have a site. It is time to move forward. It is time to get the spent nuclear fuel, in your case, or the defense waste, like Congressman NEWHOUSE, it is time to get that in a single repository.

Mr. DOLD. Can the gentleman shed a little light?

Many people might be watching this and not know who actually owns the nuclear fuel. Many people don't realize that private entities can't own this. This is actually all owned by the government. Private entities can use it for power, but the actual nuclear fuel rods, the spent nuclear fuel rods, are owned by the government.

Can you shed a little light on that? This is actually the government's problem here.

Mr. SHIMKUS. It is the government's fuel; it is the government's waste. You highlighted this earlier. When we don't have a long-term repository to take the spent nuclear fuel or the defense waste—mostly, the spent nuclear fuel—we have to pay the nuclear utilities to hold that spent fuel because we have an obligation by law to receive that.

Even from a fiscal conservative position, we should be moving forward. We should get a return on the investment of 30 years and $15 billion, especially since the NRC has said this location is safe; but then we should relieve ourselves from having to pay the additional cost to utilities for holding the waste that we should be holding.

I appreciate your leading this Special Order and, of course, again talking about the local issues that are very important in your district, but they are important in districts all around this country.

Someone has to lead the charge and make that statement for the Federal Government to start doing what it is legally obligated to do. I am just happy to join you, and I thank you.

Mr. DOLD. Well, I certainly appreciate your leadership, and it is great to have you speak on such an important topic.

This is an environmental issue; it is a safety issue; it is an economic issue—and one that we have to step up and solve.

I am pleased to yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WILLIAMS), my good friend, who understands these issues and understands them very well.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Thank you, Congressman DOLD.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to discuss an important matter that we have heard tonight and talk a little bit about it more, that impacts both my home State of Texas and, as we have heard already, the Nation.

Nuclear power is a clean, efficient, and virtually inexhaustible fuel source. Many people rely on it. In fact, in Somerville County, Texas, Comanche Peak is a nuclear power plant that generates enough power to supply about 1.15 million homes in normal conditions and 460,000 homes in periods of peak demand.

Nuclear waste, however, must be isolated for tens of thousands of years to safely degrade. Yucca Mountain—we have talked a lot about it tonight—is the official Federal nuclear waste repository and is the law of the land under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act.

The Department of Energy has concluded that the repository would have little to no adverse impact on future populations or the environment; yet President Obama and HARRY REID effectively have delayed the Yucca program in 2009 without proposing any kind of alternative energy or energy strategy.

Now, like many other nuclear power plants across the United States, Comanche Peak in my district has been paying dues for storing waste, which some think could be as much as $30 billion which, of course, is simply passed on to its customers. That is what always happens.

Nuclear waste in our communities poses an environmental risk, a terrorism risk, and prevents communities from redeveloping the property. The facility at Yucca Mountain represents our best option to dispose of spent nuclear fuel in a safe, environmentally friendly, and secure way for centuries to come.

Now, if we fail to act, we will continue to spend billions of dollars storing nuclear waste in a way that ultimately leaves our communities vulnerable to environmental disaster or terrorism.

We cannot punt this problem to future generations. We have a habit of doing that. We need to find a solution, and we need to find that solution today. I believe we need the Federal Government to quit breaking promises to the American people.

Mr. DOLD. I thank my good friend from Texas, and I certainly appreciate your leadership on this.

Again, highlighting the fact that this is also an economic issue is this land, all of a sudden, can't be redeveloped oftentimes; and, frankly, the property taxes for a lot of these communities can't be developed to its fullest extent.

As jobs in the economy continue to be that constant drumbeat around the country and certainly in our communities, you know better than many in terms of what we need to do to create jobs, and this is one of the things that I think the government is falling short on.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Well, there is no question about it. It is about jobs, and it is about growth. We need Yucca Mountain to come online, so we can begin to develop these properties and also protect the safety of America and Americans.

Mr. DOLD. I thank the gentleman for your leadership.

As we continue to talk about this, again, it just highlights, Mr. Speaker, how many communities, how many sites we have around our country that are impacted by spent nuclear fuel, whether it could be defense or whether it be for civilian purposes.

It is now my pleasure to yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON), my good friend.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Thank you for yielding; and, Congressman DOLD, thank you for your leadership on this issue.

I am very grateful. I represent the Savannah River Site in Aiken and Barnwell Counties of South Carolina. I had the privilege of working with Congressman JIM CLYBURN, very bipartisan. A portion of this site is located in Allendale County, South Carolina. We have worked together on the issues relative to the Savannah River Site, which should be noted is where the defense waste is currently being placed.

It is a consequence of the cold war, but it also is a consequence of victory in the cold war. I know that the persons who worked in the Savannah River Site are very, very grateful for the opportunities that they have had to provide for the protection of the American people, and it has been successful.

It is particularly meaningful to me because I am the only Member of Congress that actually worked at the Savannah River Site, so I know firsthand that it is really very professional, and it is also very environmentally sound.

We were talking about why are we here. For me, it is due to the environment and jobs. The environment we know is in danger if we have different sites around the country that could be addressed.

In the Department of Energy, I have another distinction. I was very grateful to be the deputy general counsel of the Department of Energy in 1981 and 1982. The defense waste bill came up through that time.

It was determined that there should be a geologic formation to place the waste of our country, whether it be defense waste or whether it be commercial. It was determined—and I know that you will be going through this to explain—that, indeed, Yucca Mountain is ideal.

None of us would ever want to put any community, any State at risk, but we know well that Yucca would not be of risk to the people of the West, but it would be very sound, and it would be very environmentally secure, and it would also, indeed, help create jobs.

Our State has been so fortunate to have the Savannah River Site, but we also have another distinction. We are one of the most nuclear-intensive States in the country. Nearly 60 percent of all the power that is produced in the State of South Carolina for almost 30 years has been nuclear.

We know what the consequence of this is, and that is that we have reliable energy, we have green, clean energy, and we have a level of inexpensive energy, which has a consequence of promoting jobs.

The jobs that have been created are quite self-evident in our State. We have a circumstance with the providing of low-cost energy. South Carolina now—particularly with the development of the BMW facility at Greer, South Carolina, of all things—is the leading exporter of cars in the United States, creating jobs in our State, our region, but then providing for extraordinary export around the world.

Additionally, South Carolina is the leading manufacturer of tires. Right next to the Savannah River Site is the Bridgestone facility, and this is a Japanese investment, over $1 billion.

Then right down I–20, not far in the district I represent, is the Michelin facility. There are two plants adjacent to each other. I was there recently with Ambassador Gerard Araud of France because we appreciate the French investment.

In fact, the Michelin facility is the largest Michelin facility in the world, nearly 2 million square feet with nearly 2,000 employees. Again, this is because of the success that we have with nuclear power.

Then further down I–20, we are very grateful of a German investment. Continental Tires has just announced that they just completed a half-billion-dollar facility in South Carolina. Then we also welcome from Singapore the Giti Tire company, which has announced a quarter-of-a-billion-dollar facility to be located in the upper part of South Carolina.

Over and over again, it is because we have safe, secure, clean energy. In fact, I want to commend the Obama administration. They actually have provided for the licensing of three new nuclear reactors in our country.

Two are located at the V.C. Summer facility at Jenkinsville, South Carolina, which is, again, adjacent to the district I represent in Fairfield County; and then directly across the Savannah River from the district that I represent is the Vogtle plant at Waynesboro, Georgia.

We are very supportive of these. All of them will be so helpful to achieve the environmentally very important determination of a geologic formation.

Then there is an economic side. Just as the people of Illinois, the people of South Carolina, and also the people of Pennsylvania have, through their rates, paid over $1 billion into the fund to build Yucca, so our people are invested.

We have done it in good faith, and we need to follow the law. The law is that, indeed, this be the geologic formation, which is safe for the American people and creating the opportunity for jobs.

□ 1900

A final point. South Carolina has taken this so seriously. I want to commend our Governor, Nikki Haley. I also want to commend our Attorney General, Alan Wilson. They have actually filed a suit—and it was inspired largely by U.S. Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM and U.S. Senator TIM SCOTT—to enforce the law. The law needs to be enforced. It would be beneficial to the people of our State, and it would be beneficial to our region of South Carolina and Georgia, but it would also be beneficial to the American people.

I want to thank you for your leadership on this issue so the American people understand how environmentally sound this is, how positive it is, the energy that is being produced because of this, and then the potential for jobs, not just in our region but across the United States.

Mr. DOLD. I thank the gentleman from South Carolina for his insight. Certainly, he knows, in living close to and representing an area that is very close to the water there on the Savannah River, that it is very close to what my particular issue is with spent nuclear fuel being just a few hundred feet away from the greatest fresh surface water we have in the world. Ninety-five percent of the world's fresh surface water is in the Great Lakes. Storing that nuclear fuel so close, I think, is not only an environmental risk and a terrorist risk, but it is jeopardizing where 30 million Americans actually get their drinking water. It is really just a jewel of a natural resource and one that we need to protect, so I certainly appreciate your leadership.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Thank you for your leadership.

Mr. DOLD. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard today from different people from around our country about the need for us to move forward with Yucca Mountain. Again, just highlighting some of the points: Yucca Mountain is 100 miles away from the Colorado River, further away from any inhabitants, sitting 1,000 feet above the water table, 1,000 feet below ground.

Mr. Speaker, I came today wanting to share with you a story about my district and, more specifically, about a portion of my district in Zion, Illinois.

Zion has 25,000 residents and sits on the shores of Lake Michigan. Yet, due to the obstruction of the administration, tons of spent nuclear fuel remain stored at Zion. It is stored on the shores of the Great Lakes, literally just a few hundred feet away from the shore where 30 million Americans receive their fresh drinking water.

We need to make sure we do everything we can to protect what, I believe, is the jewel of our ecosystem in the Great Lakes, but so long as the fuel remains there, the city of Zion cannot use this site to bring in new businesses or new jobs on that site, and it continues to suffer from lost revenue from lost property taxes. The uranium that has been used in the nuclear reactors stays radioactive for tens of thousands of years. It stays radioactive after it has been removed from the reactor, and it must be isolated from the environment in order to allow it to safely degrade.

Unfortunately, the Federal Government has not done its part to take charge. As we talked about earlier, Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government is the one that actually owns the fuel, so it is sitting now in our communities as opposed to going to a site we have spent nearly $15 billion researching and putting money into—Yucca Mountain.

For the past three decades, the policy of the Federal Government has been to push forward with a long-term, deep

geologic repository at Yucca Mountain in Nevada. Thirteen years ago, the Department of Energy determined that Yucca Mountain was the best and safest location in which to store America's nuclear waste. Indeed, it is the law of the land, as we have heard tonight, and we have spent billions of dollars to study the site and get it ready to be able to store our spent nuclear fuel.

Mr. Speaker, despite the billions of dollars spent, nothing has been done on Yucca Mountain since this administration has taken office. The administration cut off funding for Yucca Mountain and ensured that nothing would be done to get this site ready—this despite the three decades spent studying the site and the over $15 billion spent. If we do not proceed, that money will be completely wasted. Further, the administration has failed to bring forward any kind of alternative, meaning that spent nuclear waste continues to sit in our communities where, I would argue, it should not be.

America's nuclear power plants have produced over 71,000 metric tons of spent nuclear fuel over the past six decades, and while it has created jobs and clean energy, we do have an obligation to make sure that it is stored, and stored safely. We need to make sure that it is stored in a long-term facility. But, instead, spent nuclear fuel remains at plants at at least 75 nationwide sites, including at Zion.

There is a solution to this problem which affects not only Zion but the entire country. We can fund the Yucca Mountain project and ensure that we will solve the problem once and for all. If we don't, the only alternative right now is to leave the waste where it is, stored in places like Zion, leaving both Zion and the drinking water for 30 million Americans vulnerable to an environmental disaster or to a terrorist event, leaving the residents of Zion with a large plot of land in the heart of their community that, frankly, we can't use.

The only responsible course of action is to tackle this problem today. We have seen the statistics out there, and as we look at what the facts are, the Department of Energy has determined that the deep geological disposal is the safest method to store spent nuclear fuel.

If we just look at the difference here, in Zion, Illinois, on the shores of Lake Michigan, there are 65 casks containing 1,135 metric tons of nuclear waste—waste stored above the ground, about 5 feet above the water table and just a few hundred feet away from the shores of Lake Michigan.

Yet Yucca Mountain, on the other hand—a place where we have spent $15 billion, where our experts have said is the safest place for us—is where we actually tested a nuclear weapon. It is near an Air Force base. So, when people talk about the neighbors, as Congressman SHIMKUS talked about earlier, the neighbor is the Federal Government. The Federal Government owns the spent nuclear fuel. The Federal Government owns the land around it. The Federal Government owns the site at Yucca Mountain—Yucca Mountain, again, 100 miles away from the Colorado River.

The storage that we are talking about would be 1,000 feet above the water table, because it is important that we protect our water, and 1,000 feet below ground. This is the ideal spot. Yet we have come not on science; this hasn't been objected to by the scientific research. This has been objected to for political reasons. Frankly, I have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, the politics has to end because what it is doing is jeopardizing communities across our Nation. We should be transporting this spent nuclear fuel to the safest location possible to make sure that we are not putting our citizens at risk, that we are not damaging or potentially damaging the environment.

The Department of Energy has concluded that the repository would have little or no adverse impact on future populations or the environment. These are key. So we are going to take a look at what the Department of Energy has to say and at the studies that have been done. Literally, Yucca Mountain is probably the most studied piece of real estate that we have in our Nation today. All of the studies that have come back say this is the spot at which we should be storing this spent nuclear fuel. Instead, it is staying all across the country at the cost to the taxpayers.

The Federal Government owns the nuclear fuel, and when it refused, according to the law, to take that nuclear fuel back and deal with it, we had our companies out there that basically said, Well, what are we supposed to do with it? So they sued on breach of contract, literally costing the taxpayers billions of dollars. We heard my colleague from Washington say that it could be as much as $50 billion that the hard-working taxpayers are going to pay to keep the spent nuclear fuel where we don't want it to stay.

The government has an obligation, Mr. Speaker, to step up and do the right thing. I, for one, am delighted to be able to be here today to tell you about the story of Zion, Illinois, but we recognize that this is a situation that is impacting over 104 different sites. We cannot afford to wait any longer.

There are some on the other side of the building, Mr. Speaker, who are specifically holding this process up. We need to move forward. We need to make sure Yucca Mountain is approved, open, and, again, able to store this for up to a million years. It is the right thing to do, and I urge my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats—we have got those in the Illinois delegation to my south who rely on Lake Michigan. This is something that we should all be united behind.

I am honored to be able to come up and talk about this, but I am also saddened that it has taken so long and that, if we do nothing, it will be potentially decades longer. This is unacceptable. The citizens of our country demand that the United States Government abide by the law and by its obligations to store the spent fuel at Yucca Mountain.

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

D.C. EMANCIPATION DAY: INJUSTICE AND PROGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) for 30 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, in advance of D.C. Emancipation Day, and I know that it is not a national holiday, but it is, yes, a holiday in the District of Columbia. It commemorates the day when the slaves in the District of Columbia were liberated by the Congress and Abraham Lincoln 9 months before the national Emancipation Proclamation.

Astonishingly, 150 years later, full freedom and equal citizenship have not yet come to the residents of the District of Columbia.

You don't have to be the Holmes family in the District of Columbia, who have lived three generations here paying taxes without representation. Indeed, my great grandfather, Richard Holmes, was a runaway slave from Virginia. When Lincoln and Congress freed the slaves 150 years ago, Richard Holmes was not freed, because he was a runaway slave rather than a slave whose master lived in the District of Columbia. So he had to wait the 9 months for the Emancipation Proclamation, but he was working on the streets of Washington like a free man as they were building Washington. He became free, but his great granddaughter—grateful for all that my family has done—cannot say that we are free today.

The greater shock will not come from those of us who are longtime residents. It will come from those who moved to D.C. yesterday, from those who are not three generations here but who are one day here, when they find that their rights are gone, that the rights they had in every State of the Union have vanished except for a few.

They can vote for President, but they can't vote for whoever represents them on this House floor. They have Congress interfering with their local business. This will astonish the average American, and most Americans have no idea this is the case for the 650,000 residents who live in their Nation's Capital. People have taken for granted that the vote that is emblematic of statehood would follow them—I don't know—from Utah and California, from Alaska and Maine to the District of Columbia when they moved here. They had no idea that their local budget, for example, which is a budget raised exclusively in the District of Columbia,