an inspiring young woman in my dis-
trict. She suffers from a severe form of
epilepsy. Without CBD oil, she suffers
upwards of 200 seizures each and every
day. For Sophie and children suffering
like her, I helped introduce a bill to
stop the government from standing in
the way of this lifesaving relief. In
honor of Epilepsy Awareness Month, I
call on my colleagues to join me so
that we can pass the Charlotte’s Web
Medical Hemp Act of 2015 and ensure
no other family has to endure the loss
of a child as they wait for the approval
of this natural, lifesaving option.

SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS
(Mr. VEASEY asked and was given
permission to address the House for 1
minute.)
Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, since the
passage of the American SAFE Act, the
constituents that I serve have reached
out to me through phone calls, email,
and social media to voice their con-
cerns.
I want to be clear that I did not view
the SAFE Act as a vote against Syrian
or Iraqi refugees or the greater refugee
community. But it is my duty in serv-
ing my constituents in Congress to
share some of the views that they
called me about.
One resident who previously taught
Syrian refugees said, “Support of this
bill and the accompanying shameful
public comments about refugees make
us less safe and respond from fear, not
strength.”
Messages in support of refugees con-
tinue to pour in, stating loud and clear
that America cannot turn its back on
refugees. I want to thank the constitu-
ents that I serve for their continued feed-
back.
Tomorrow, I will be addressing the
House once more about this subject at
length. I don’t want to remain silent
about this issue because the district
that I serve has made it very clear that
they care very deeply about it.

IMPORTANCE OF CAREER AND
TECHNICAL EDUCATION
(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania
asked and was given permission to ad-
dress the House for 1 minute and to re-
vise and extend his remarks.)
Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.
Mr. Speaker, as co-chairman of the bi-
partisan Career and Technical Edu-
cation Caucus, I rise today to em-
phasize the importance of quality CTE
programs, which allow students to succeed
in areas that keep our Nation competi-
tive in the global economy.
Last week, I visited a lab at Penn
State University, where three-dimen-
sional printers were used to create
parts for a wide variety of industries,
including those which support our na-
tional defense. These students are also
among those leading the way in cre-
ating metal parts which once could
only be fabricated at powdered metal
plants.

I was also proud to see very similar
programs being offered at the high
school level. I spoke to the super-
intendent of the St. Marys School Dis-
trict in Elk County and was pleased to
learn that students at St. Marys High
School who are graduating with many of
the skills needed to succeed in these
growing vocational and technical
fields.
I am hopeful that with the next reau-
thorization of the Carl D. Perkins Ca-
reer and Technical Education Act we
can enhance the partnerships that can
bridge the gap between our high
schools, technical schools, colleges,
universities, and employers.

EMBRACE MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY
(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given
permission to address the House for 1
minute and to revise and extend his re-
marks.)
Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, medical
technology makes a huge difference for
millions of Americans by giving them
life-improving and lifesaving tech-
ologies, devices, and treatments.
With new developments, we should be
encouraging the use of these innova-
tions to achieve better outcomes and
lower long-term health costs.
However, the agency that oversees
Medicare has continuously made deci-
sions that threaten the use of this
technology. As Yogi Berra once said,
“It’s deja vu all over again.”
First, the agency proposed rules that
would limit access to critical speech-
generating devices. Then, it was pa-
tients that use lower limb prosthetics
that could see reduced access.
Recently, we have seen proposed
rules now that would limit access to
pneumatic compression pumps for
those managing a condition called
lymphedema and those using individ-
ually configured Complex Rehab.
Mr. Speaker, Congress has been
forced to take action in some of these
instances, like when we passed the
Sarbanes-Oxley Act earlier this year.
But the series of proposed rules are
now alarming, in that they will raise
long-term health costs and result in
worse outcomes.
We need to look at a new path for-
ward when it comes to embracing and
protecting access to medical tech-
ology.

SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

HONORING VILLAGE OF
PINECREST POLICE OFFICER
VERNA GAY
(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was
given permission to address the House
for 1 minute and to revise and extend
her remarks.)
Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I
rise today in recognition of Officer
Verna Gay, who was recently named
Officer of the Third Quarter of 2015
of my hometown Village of Pinecrest Po-
lice Department.
During one particular incident ear-
lier this year, Verna showed brilliant
situation awareness in helping to in-
vestigate the burglary of a local busi-
ness. Responding to the scene as a backup,
Verna’s proactive efforts led to the
capture and arrest of two subjects
who were involved in the crime.
I commend Officer Gay for her im-
pressive actions in support of the safety
of the people of my hometown, the
Village of Pinecrest. Verna’s continued
dedication and service help make sure
our hometown remains a safe place in
which to live, raise a family, and con-
duct business.
Congratulations once again to Officer
Verna Gay on this well-deserved honor.

HONORING THE SERVICE AND
SACRIFICE OF DONALD R. BOYER
(Mr. YODER asked and was given
permission to address the House for 1
minute and to revise and extend his re-
marks.)
Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to
honor the service and sacrifice of one
of my constituents and my friend, Don-
ald R. Boyer, who passed away on No-
ember 21, 2015.
Don was a World War II veteran,
fought bravely in the Battle of the
Bulge, was captured by German forces,
and spent many months as a prisoner
of war, for which he was awarded the
Purple Heart.
After World War II, Don worked for
the Chrysler Corporation as a zone real
estate manager for 27 years. Through-
out his career, Don found several ways
to continue to serve our Nation and fel-
low veterans.
He was commander of Post 370 and
Second District commander of the
American Legion, trustee of the Vet-

ers of Foreign Wars Post 846, and was
serving as local chapter commander of
the American Ex-Prisoners of War
when he unfortunately passed away.
Don also served on my Veterans Ad-
voy committee and included was the
creation of more than 5 years, provid-
ing great insight to issues
involving our Armed Forces, veterans,
and their families.
Mr. Speaker, without Don’s service
and sacrifice, along with all the men
and women of the Greatest Generation,
our hometown remains a safe place in
which to live, raise a family, and con-
duct business.

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under
the Speaker’s announced policy of Jan-
uary 30, 2015, the gentleman from Illi-
nois (Ms. KELLY) is recognized for 60
minutes as the designee of the
minority leader.

EMBRACE MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I
ask unanimous consent that all Mem-
bers be given 5 days in which to revise
and extend their remarks.
The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there
objection to the request of the gentle-
woman from Illinois?
There was no objection.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, tonight is a night of action and reflection for this Congress. This evening, the Congressional Black Caucus will take a look at a number of significant events that have occurred this year and discuss the urgent and pressing concerns of today.

In the waning weeks of 2015, we will have this moment of reflection in order to examine the issues that have caused our great sorrow and concern. This conversation must be had, so we have to have an honest and impactful dialogue that will help Congress engage communities and act so we can create a better future today.

It is said that the blood brother of apathy is the inability to prioritize that which is important. Congress cannot afford to be apathetic any longer. We must get serious about the issues that threaten the true potential of our Nation—issues like gun violence that imperil our safety and security, issues like joblessness and wage discrimination that are barriers to our collective economic prosperity, issues like repressive voting laws that are fundamentally contrary to the democratic right of American citizens and concerns with bad-apple community police.

The Congressional Black Caucus has come to this very floor numerous times to address many of these issues, and, sadly, this body has yet to act on many of these concerns.

Last week, in my home district, Chicago was rocked by a disturbing video that was released showing the police shooting of 17-year old Laquan McDonal. He had been shot 16 times by his arresting officer. Most of the shots were fired when McDonald was no longer standing. Some entered through his back.

I cannot begin to fully express the depth of my outrage at this senseless killing. The video is nothing short of horrific. Tonight, I want to express my condolences to the McDonald family, for whom the pain of losing their loved one has undoubtedly been compounded by having his death on public display.

The Caucus has long committed in Congress can play in putting the issues of violence in our communities in the forefront. We have chosen not to.

As horrifying as the video of Laquan’s death is, it needed to be made public because the lingering questions surrounding this case and cases like the death of Walter Scott are equally disturbing.

In reflecting on this tragedy, I want to take a moment to give my thanks to the many activists in Chicago who expressed their outrage in a civil and productive way and, particularly, the young activists.

I remain encouraged by those who have been at the forefront of the call for justice for Laquan and their positive and productive movement for change. It is an example I hope all Americans will follow in helping to create a fairer, more equitable system of justice for us all.

So, in that vein, tonight we will have a conversation about how, in the midst of these tragedies and national adversity, the Congressional Black Caucus is working for positive and productive moments of change.

In this hour, you will hear from my colleagues about efforts the CBC has led to usher in criminal justice reform, about the work of the Congressional Black Caucus in making progress in considering the diversity in the tech sector through our TECH 2020 initiative, about the CBC Health Braintrust work and addressing the issue of health disparities through the release of the 2015 Kelly Report, about how we are raising awareness and working to bring back kidnapped victims of Boko Haram in Nigeria, and about how the CBC has been a critical broker in numerous legislative efforts before this Congress.

There is much to discuss this evening because there is much worth reflecting on and celebrating.

Mr. Speaker, this is Mr. PAYNE and my last Special Order hour for the year. I must say that, while this time has flown by, it has been an honor and a privilege to represent this distinguished caucus.

So I yield to the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. DONALD PAYNE, Jr., my very distinguished partner in crime for this past few months, or years, actually.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my dear friend and colleague, Congresswoman KELLY, for anchoring this final Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour. In fact, I would like to thank Congresswoman KELLY for coanchoring all the Special Order hours with me throughout 2015. It has been my real honor and pleasure to spend all these Mondays with you bringing forth issues that matter in our communities.

I would also like to thank the CBC chair, Congressman G.K. BUTTERFIELD, for his outstanding leadership this past year.

I appreciate you choosing me to coanchor these congressional Special Order hours with Congresswoman KELLY. It is a great honor, and we are a body of 40-plus, so to have that honor to be chosen means a great deal to me. And I am certain that 2016’s coanchors will proudly act as we have.

As Congresswoman KELLY mentioned, we are here to reflect on all the work that the Congressional Black Caucus has done throughout the year, to look at the accomplishments.

In February, we kicked off the CBC Special Order hour by reflecting on the 50th anniversary of the March on Selma, where we are today, and where we are headed for tomorrow. Through this hour, we were able to set the tone for the Congressional Black Caucus agenda.

We remembered all the strides that were made by African Americans to the place that we are today. We reflected on the work that is being done right now through the caucus in the House of Representatives.

And, most importantly, during that hour, we looked towards the future. We intend to put forward the most effort in order to make sure that African Americans are well-represented and afforded equally in all phases of these United States.

Monday after Monday, we have addressed the many challenges and inequalities that face African American communities. We have contributed to this country with blood, sweat, and tears, hard work and entrepreneurial ideas and inclusiveness. We aren’t owed anything. We are a significant thread in the cloth that makes this United States grow.

We have talked about criminal justice reform, economics, unemployment, underemployment, incarceration, voting rights, felon disenfranchisement, and health disparities, and those are just a few of the issues that we have tackled this year.

So I yield to the esteemed chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, the gentleman from North Carolina, Congressman G.K. BUTTERFIELD.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Thank you, Ms. KELLY.

Let me begin this evening by first thanking Congressman DONALD PAYNE, Jr., from the Tenth District of New Jersey for his friendship and for his tireless work on behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus and on behalf of the people that he represents back home in the great State of New Jersey.

Thank you, Mr. PAYNE, for your work and thank you for those kind words that you had to say about me this evening.

And to my other colleague, Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY from the Second District of Illinois, not only do you manage the floor on Monday nights, Ms. KELLY, on behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus, but you also are the chair of our CBC Health Braintrust that does so much for so many.

You also have carved out a niche. You have begun to focus the attention of the Nation on the issue of gun violence in our country.

So I want to begin this presentation this evening by thanking both of you for your work.

Mr. Speaker, many of my colleagues here this evening, especially the newer ones to this body, may not fully understand what the CBC is. The Congressional Black Caucus is an organization.
It is a caucus of African American Members of Congress.

We were founded in 1971. But, Mr. Speaker, that does not mean that 1971 was the first year that this body had African American Members of Congress. Actually, the first African American Congress was elected to Congress in 1870.

There were some 21 African Americans who served in this body during Reconstruction and post-Reconstruction. The CBC formally organized, Mr. Speaker, in 1971 with 13 Members. Over the years, those 13 members have now grown into 46 members.

I might say that two of the founding members of the CBC continue to belong to this body. They are Congressman John Conyers from Michigan, who is actually the dean of the House, as well as Congressman Charles Rangel from the State of New York. They were two of our founding members.

The CBC, as I said, now consists of 46 members. Of the 46 members, one is from the House, one from the United States Senate, and 45 serve here in the House of Representatives.

I might say that one of our 45 members is a Republican Member of this body, our dear friend from Utah (Mrs. Loepp). Absolutely correct for us to say that we are bicameral and we are bipartisan.

Collectively, we represent 33 States in addition to the District of Columbia and the Virgin Islands. Collectively, Mr. Speaker, we represent more than 50 million people.

I might say, of the 21 standing committees that we have here in this House, 7 of those 21 committees have a CBC member as the top Democrat on the committee. We call that the ranking member. The gentleman who will speak in just a moment, Mr. Scott of Virginia, is one of those ranking members on the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. Speaker, the past year has been very demanding on CBC members. We have been busy. We have consistently fought back every day and every week against Republican attempts to balance the budget on the backs of hardworking Americans—not just African Americans, but hardworking Americans, Black, White, and Brown.

The struggle continues. We, as the CBC, have been focused on many different things. I will mention just a few. In this time, we have been focusing on criminal justice reform because that is so important to the African American community.

We have been protecting—or trying to protect—the social safety net that many of our vulnerable communities depend on. We have been trying to enhance educational opportunities for African American students and strengthening and preserving HBCUs, that is, Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Mr. Speaker, we have spent considerable energy this year trying to have full enforcement of the Voting Rights Act. As many of my colleagues may know, the U.S. Supreme Court decided in a decision some years ago, 4 years ago—actually, in 2013 it was—that the Voting Rights Act, at least a part of it—that part that deals with preclearance of voting changes—that section was struck down until this Congress redefined the formula for determining which States or which counties should be subject to that part of the Voting Rights Act, and this Congress has not acted.

This Congress continues to not fully enforce the Voting Rights Act. We have exposed that and we continue to fight. We are talking about diversity in corporate America, and we are going to hear more about that in the years to come.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we have talked about investments in underserved communities.

Mr. Speaker, we have attempted to take these priorities. This year the CBC launched the CBC TECH 2020. This initiative brings together the best minds in technology in nonprofit education in the public sector to increase African American inclusion at all levels of the technology industry.

In addition to outlining best practices for diversity principles, CBC TECH 2020 has empowered our members to provide resources for African American students and entrepreneurs through the introduction of legislation focused on increasing STEM education.

I would hope that every American would embrace that concept, the concept of STEM education—science, technology, engineering, and mathematics—and workforce development, cybersecurity, and copyright and patent reform.

In August, we traveled to Silicon Valley, talked to the technology giants like Apple, Google, Bloomberg, and Intel about their diversity efforts. We were pleased with their response and their willingness to improve the diversity within their companies.

This year, Mr. Speaker, we have revamped the biweekly CBC message to America. We now broadcast across several digital platforms. The messages to America have been highly received. They have been widely watched with some of our most popular messages focusing on criminal justice reform, police violence, poverty, education, the importance of HBCUs, and ending the stigma of racism in America.

Finally, on August 6, the CBC recognized the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act. In the 2 years following the Supreme Court’s ruling to overturn section 4 in the Shelby County v. Holder case, voting rights have come under assault, Mr. Speaker. They have come under attack.

Since 2010, new voting restrictions have been put in place in 22 States, making it harder for millions of eligible Americans to exercise their right to vote. The CBC has been very vocal on these efforts, including outreach in Wisconsin. We filed an amicus brief in the States of Wisconsin, in North Carolina, and in Alabama.

The CBC has asserted for years that Black Americans are unfairly treated and disproportionately exposed to the criminal justice system. Police bias and excessive use of force are real in the African American community. We see it every day. We must restore the confidence and the trust in our criminal justice system.

Finally, we have worked to expand the economic opportunities for African Americans. The CBC, in coordination with the Joint Economic Committee Democrats, have held public forums in Baltimore and Harlem. I might say, entitled “The American Dream on Hold: Economic Challenges in the African American Community,” where we discussed with those communities the impact of economic challenges and persistent inequities facing African American communities across the country.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many more things that I could say about the work of the Congressional Black Caucus. We have been busy. We are engaged every day not only representing African Americans, but representing every American who is affected by some of the policies that have been enacted by this Congress.

Thank you for the time this evening. Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Thank you, Congressman BUTTERFIELD. That was certainly a great list of our achievements. Like you said, that was just some of the things that we have been able to accomplish, and there is a lot that we are going to do on and on. Thank you for your leadership and making sure that we get some of these things done.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Ms. KELLY, I believe you mentioned to Mr. PAYNE that he was your partner in crime. I want those who may be watching this on television to know that was really a joke. Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Of course. At this time, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Illinois and the gentleman from New Jersey for organizing this Special Order tonight. It takes a lot of work and a lot of time to organize these efforts, and I want to thank them both for the time and effort that they have put into this.

We have heard a lot about what the Congressional Black Caucus has done over the years. There are two areas have been focused in with the CBC effort in the areas of education and criminal justice reform. On both we have worked hard and achieved bipartisan support.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which is a civil rights bill, makes sure that the admonition in Brown v. Board of Education becomes a reality. It says that no child shall reasonably be expected to succeed in life if denied the opportunity of an education and such an opportunity must be made available to all on equal terms. That is what the Brown decision held.

But we know that we don’t have equal education in America because we
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Mr. Speaker, the next area that we are going to be working on is the Higher Education Act, also originally passed 50 years ago. When President Johnson signed that bill, he pointed out that every child should be able to go to any college in any State. Back then that was actually a reality because fundamental student aid was a maximum Pell Grant and a summer job could virtually work his way through college with no debt.

Now, because the buying power of the Pell Grant has eroded, instead of 75 percent of the cost of education, now it is down to about one-third and the rest has to be picked up with devastating student loans. We need to pass a Higher Education Act that makes access to college a reality, not just a dream.

We know there is bipartisan support for that effort. So in education we are making progress with the Congressional Black Caucus and we have been able to achieve bipartisan support.

It is interesting that we have also been able to achieve bipartisan support in the criminal justice reform efforts. We have a problem in criminal justice now because, for decades, we have been passing all these slogans and sound bites, particularly, mandatory minimums that have run our incarceration rate up to number one in the world by far. We have 5 percent of the world’s population and 25 percent are prisoners.

Several recent studies have pointed out that our incarceration rate is so high that it is actually counterproductive; that is, we have got so many children being raised with parents in prison and we have got so many people with felony records that can’t find jobs and the prison budget in the Department of Justice is eating up so much of the budget that the other things that can actually reduce crime don’t have the funds that they actually need.

One bipartisan effort that we were able to achieve late last year was the

Death in Custody Reporting Act, which requires any death in the custody of law enforcement—that is a death in jail, a death in prison, or death in the process of arrest—will be reported to the Justice Department so that the discussion about all of these deaths can be based on facts.

We also are in the process of trying to pass criminal justice reform. The Judiciary Committee, in a subcommittee task force led by Jim Sensenbrenner from Wisconsin and myself, has been a task force. The one thing we noticed was that 30 States were able to reduce incarceration and reduce crime at the same time.

One example was Texas. Texas was faced with a $2 billion request for prison expansion to keep up with the slogans and sound bites that they had been codifying over the years—$2 billion. Someone suggested, instead of spending $2 billion, how about trying to spend $200 million on mandatory minimums—research-based, evidence-based targeted expenditures—to actually reduce crime, and maybe they wouldn’t have to spend all $2 billion.

Well, that is what they did. They intelligently spent. With a research-based and evidence-based approach to reduce crimes, they made those expenditures and looked up. They didn’t have to build any new prisons at all. In fact, they were able to close some of the prisons they had now. Over 30 States have reduced their prison populations and saved money just in using the same strategy.

So as a result of the overcriminalization task force, we created a comprehensive criminal justice bill that starts with investments in prevention and early intervention, has diversion to drug courts so that people with drug problems can have their problems solved rather than just spinning through the criminal justice system, a significant reduction in mandatory minimums to be reserved for true kingpins, not for people caught up in the conspiracy, like girlfriends and things like that.

Only the true kingpins would get the mandatory minimums. Everyone else would get a sentence that made sense. If you go to jail, then you should be rehabilitated, not just warehoused, and we should have funding for Second Chance programs.

The beauty of the bill is that the savings in prison space by the reduction in mandatory minimums will be redirected to pay for the prevention and early intervention, the drug courts, the prison reform efforts, and the Second Chance programs so all of those programs are paid for.

\[2000\]

We also have significant funding for police training. As we go through the trauma of these trials that are going on now in Ferguson and Chicago, when you get to a solution, it will undoubtedly involve police training and probably body cameras, and those are funded in the Safe Justice Act by diverting money from the savings in mandatory minimums to those programs. We have broad bipartisan support, many very conservative, many very liberal organizations, all supporting the Safe Justice Act and other criminal justice reform efforts. The Black Caucus should be proud of the efforts that they have put in to making sure that we have a fair and equitable criminal justice system.

I would like to thank again the gentlemen from all of her hard work and the gentleman from New Jersey for his hard work in pointing out many of the good things that the Congressional Black Caucus has accomplished, many things they have accomplished this year and a lot of things we are working on for next year.

So I thank you for your hard work and dedication.

We have a conference committee report that came out with an overwhelming bipartisan vote that will ensure that young people will have their educational needs met. I want to thank the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. Kline) for his hard work and cooperation on that bill.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Thank you for the information on the Safety Justice Act and education. The two really go hand in hand. If our young people have more skills and are educated, then I think that we will see less crime. We always say, in my area, “Nothing stops a bullet like a job.” So thank you for that information and for all of your hard work.

At this time, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. Lee), a woman of great knowledge and experience, and one of my heroes.

Ms. LEE. First, let me thank Congresswoman KELLY for those very generous remarks, but also for your tremendous leadership and for staying the course and making sure we were here really speaking truth to power each and every week on behalf of the Black Caucus.

Also, to you, Congressman DON PAYNE, thank you very much for your leadership and for really rising to the occasion on so many issues. In the very short time that you have been here, you have hit the ground running and really have made a tremendous difference.

I want to just speak for a few minutes as it relates to the review of the Congressional Black Caucus for the last year or 2 years. I have to just say that our leader, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, has been a very bold and tremendous leader. We have accomplished quite a bit, and we have a lot more to do. While 2015 has been very challenging, I believe that the Congressional Black Caucus has really stepped up and made a huge difference not only for the African American community and communities of color, but for the entire country.

It has also been an inspiring year. We have seen the birth and growth of the
vital Black Lives Matter movement. We have also witnessed powerful and moving protests across the country in places like Missouri, New York, and even in my district in Oakland and in Berkeley, California, with people of all backgrounds and ages coming together to demand justice and to petition their government, to exercise their democratic rights.

I am so proud of the young activists who are standing up and demanding an end to racism and injustice in many of our communities. They are truly bringing the civil rights movement into the 21st century. I want them to know that they have allies here in the people’s House.

For too long Congress has ignored or brushed aside issues affecting the African American community and other communities of color. It is past time that everyone steps up and does the good work that we were sent to Washington to do, that the Congressional Black Caucus has done for many, many decades.

We need to start by talking about and looking at what has happened with the Voting Rights Act. As you know, this year marks the 50th anniversary of this landmark legislation. The Voting Rights Act was gutted by the Supreme Court in its Shelby v. Holder decision, and, of course, Republican State legislators have fallen all over to restrict voting rights across the country everywhere.

These dangerous restrictions come in the form of voter ID requirements, elimination of same-day voter registration, and really severe reduction in early voting efforts. We must call these efforts for what they are: Republican attempts to take away one of our most fundamental rights. But we will not let this happen.

I am so proud of the Congressional Black Caucus—Congresswoman Terri Sewell and Ms. Kelly, and the entire Congressional Black Caucus. Our bill, H.R. 2667, the Voting Rights Advancement Act, sponsored by Congresswoman Sewell, who represents Selma, Alabama, would restore the preclearance provisions of the Voting Rights Act for any State that has had 15 or more voting rights violations in the last 25 years in the preclearance process.

As Dr. King once said: Give us the ballot, and we will fill our legislative halls with men—and, of course, women—with goodwill.

We can fill this body with those who really want to see democracy fulfilled. So we need our young people to keep up the street heat and demand that Congress act.

It is past time that we get serious about restoring the Voting Rights Act and ensuring that all Americans—and that means all Americans—have free and unobstructed access to the ballot box. Also, the serious economic disparities that persist in the African American community are very, very evident.

According to a report released earlier this year by the Joint Economic Committee, led by ranking member Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, and the Congressional Black Caucus, we learned, and it is very glaring, that more than one in three Black children are poor, and the African American poverty rate is three times that of White Americans.

The cycle of poverty and inequality starts in our school systems, where Black students account for 42 percent of our schools yet are only 37 percent accounting for only 18 percent of enrollment. Now, that is preschool expulsion. Every time I remember this and say this, it really makes me very terrified about what is taking place with young Black kids, especially with young Black boys, because there is no way anybody, no kids, should be expelled from preschool. That is ages 1 to 4. That is outrageous.

I am the mother, yes, of two fabulous great Black grandchildren all of us. I am the mother of two Black boys, and I find statistics like that very, very troubling. For African Americans, we have allowed our school system to be turned into a pipeline to prison. We must act now to address systemic issues facing our education and our criminal justice systems.

I want to applaud Congressman Bobby Scott and Congressman Yericks because they have worked for decades on criminal justice reform, and we are beginning to see some progress as a result of their diligent work.

Our criminal justice system is broken. It needs to be rebuilt from the ground up. So alongside of our CBC colleagues, once again we are calling for comprehensive criminal justice reform.

Also, I want to mention our effort, which I co-chair with Chairman Butterfield, our Tech 2020 initiative. Silicon Valley is right next to my district. There are great opportunities there for everyone, including African Americans and communities of color and people who have been shut out and marginalized, our country becomes stronger. This means that everybody benefits—not only for the Congressional Black Caucus, this is for the entire country. So thank you again for your leadership.

Ms. Kelly of Illinois. Well, we want to thank you for your leadership and the work that you have done to make Congress stronger, as well as the caucus stronger.

At this time, I yield to the gentleman from Brooklyn, New York (Mr. Jeffries).

Mr. Jeffries. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman for yielding. And I also thank, of course, my good friend and colleague, Congressman Don Payne, from across the Hudson River, who does such a tremendous job of representing the people of Newark and Essex County.

It has been an honor and a privilege to watch my two colleagues during this year preside over the CBC Special Order hour, giving us, as a caucus, an opportunity to share with the American people some of our thoughts and ideas and the issues that we are working on to improve a lot of those that we represent in the African American community and all across this great, gorgeous mosaic in the United States of America.

I am troubled, of course, by the events of the last few days as relates to the Laquan McDonald case out of...
ROBIN KELLY’s hometown in Chicago. About a year ago, many of us from the Congressional Black Caucus were on this very House floor talking about the failure to indict in the killing of Michael Brown; and in the same week, 3 days later, the failure to indict in the strangulation of Eric Garner, who, of course, was put into an unauthorized choke hold and killed as a result of allegedly selling loose cigarettes.

It, of course, highlighted the problem of African American men being killed at the hands of police officers, which is a decade-old problem that, hopefully, here in America we will find the courage one day to confront.

And now, of course, we are compelled to come to the House floor to deal with the tragedy of the Laquan McDonald case, a 17-year-old shot 16 times in 15 seconds by an officer who had 20 prior civilian complaints filed against him. I am no mathematician, but there is no way of adding up. The tape comes out and we see what occurred: an individual, Laquan, who was walking away from the officers, not toward the officers. There is no reasonable circumstance of self-defense that led to that individual being shot down like a dog on the streets of Chicago.

The officer has now been indicted 13 months later, and, hopefully, the justice system will run its course and the officer will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

2015

I am here today to talk briefly about another troubling issue that relates to this problem of the police use of excessive force. That is not just the bad apples who engage in this behavior; it is the fact that, far too often, the police officers in the department, who may not otherwise engage in excessive force but who have grown up in a culture of a blue wall of silence, support these officers either with their inaction or, in some instances, by actively participating.

Now, I know that is hard for a lot of Americans to hear because, listen, I also believe that the overwhelming majority of officers are hardworking individuals who are there to protect and serve.

I don’t take lightly the fact that I am here concerned on the House floor that far too many officers stand by, tolerate, and enable the excessive use of force, sometimes resulting in American citizens being killed without justification.

This case actually highlights the problem. Laquan gets killed, and if you look at the reports in the immediate aftermath of his death last October—and I just pulled a few—here is what we were told.

“’The suspect fled, and officers gave chase, police said. When the officers confronted him near 41st Street and Pulaski Road, he refused their orders to drop the knife and began walking toward the officers, police said.

“Pat Camden, spokesman for the Chicago Fraternal Order of Police, said the teen had a ‘crazed’ look about him as he approached the officers with the knife.”

That was reported by CBS.

Let’s go to NBC. “Responding officers found a 17-year-old boy ‘with a strange gaze’ who was carrying a knife and wouldn’t drop it when police ordered him to do so, Fraternal Order of Police spokesman Pat Camden said.

“Other officers used a squad car to try and box the boy in against a fence near West 41st Street and South Pulaski Road, Camden said. An officer shot him in the chest when the teen didn’t drop the knife and continued to walk toward officers, police said.”

WGN-TV: “Chicago police officers shot and killed a 17-year-old after a foot chase near 41st Street and Pulaski . . . Officers shot the teen after he waved the knife at them.”

In the interest of time, let me just read one more. This is from the Chicago Tribune: “Pulaski grew turbulent out of their car and began approaching McDonald, again telling him to drop the knife, Camden said. The boy allegedly lunged at the officers, and one of them opened fire.”

“’When police tell you to drop a weapon, all you have to do is drop it.’”

I mean, Shakespeare would be proud at the fiction that was put out there to justify the murder of this 17-year-old.

Here is what is worse. It has now been reported that in the immediate aftermath of the shooting four or five officers went to a nearby Burger King and asked to view the surveillance tape. The manager at Burger King gives them the password to the video. They spend a couple of hours in Burger King—“I mean, a couple of hours in Burger King to do what you need to do. But they spent hours there, getting the password to the video.”

Then, they go back and ask the officers, “Can we have the video?”

These are the things that were reported occur that night.

I will not even try to match the videotape. When did he lunge? When was he shot once in the chest? When did any of those things that were reported occur in the video? He did not lunge. He did still have the knife in his hand, but he was walking away. Most of the shots that were put into his body were after he was on the ground. The officer feared for his life.

Black lives matter.

Our next speaker is the gentlewoman from Houston, Texas, the wonderful, dynamic, one of my heroes, the Honorable SHEILA JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey and the gentlewoman from Illinois but I want to specifically say Chicago. I join my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I think this is, again, an important statement of the value of the Congressional Black Caucus. I am glad our tone is such that we are compassionate, we have emotion, but we are detailed.

With the remaining time, let me try to be concise on the value of the Congressional Black Caucus in American history, its place in this Congress to be the provocative orators and articulators of the conscience of this Nation.

Let me first of all say that I have been privileged but certainly have mourned May 15, when all of us paid attention to fallen law enforcement officers who are honored here in the United States Capitol. Any number of us have gone to the grounds, and we have hugged those from our districts, we have honored families, and we have recognized the pain.
I think many of you recall that there was an assassination of sorts of a deputy sheriff in Houston, a number of unfortunate assassinations or shootings of police in New York, and I saw the Nation mourn.

I think it is important to say this because often, when we say "Black lives matter," it seems conflicted. People raise the issues that African Americans or the Nation seem to be hesitant about law enforcement officers, and that is not true.

I want to thank the Congressional Black Caucus and Chairman BUTTERFIELD because we started out this year with a criminal justice agenda. I just want to quickly go down memory lane or to reflect very quickly to say that it was the leadership and the combined Members who raised a number of issues that have brought us to the point that we have actually passed in the Senate and in the House Judiciary Committee criminal justice sentencing legislation.

We are not where we need to be, but the Sentencing Reform Act will reduce mass incarceration by 11,500. Of those who are currently incarcerated, it will give retroactive relief, and an additional 200 will benefit each year. Combined with that, it will be 50,000 over 10 years.

We are beginning to look at the criminal justice system in a way that speaks to the whole idea of Blacks, minorities, Hispanics, and others being the fodder for the criminal justice system. In my district in Houston, Texas, Black and Hispanic youth make up over 75 percent of the male population age 10 to 24 years, but Black and Hispanic youth account for 85 percent of the youth admitted in our detention centers.

We are working on the reduction of sentencing, and I think with the help of this bipartisan legislation, which has been brought the attention of this Congress by members of the Congressional Black Caucus in working with other Members of this body, both Republicans and Democrats, we have legislation that should pass.

As we all know and as we have been mystified and mourning this tape, I know that Congresswoman KELLY in her hometown has been a champion for justice, along with her fellow colleagues of the Congressional Black Caucus, BOBBY RUSH and DANNY DAVIS, who have been front and center on these issues. So we must continue the journey of dealing with the juvenile justice.

Might I say that I hope we will come around the issues of the RAISE Act, of the Fair Chance for Youth Act, and of Kalie's Law, ending solitary confinement for young people in the juvenile justice system, banning the arrest record, and, of course, giving alternative sentencing to these young people.

I want to quickly get back to this horrific shooting, because what "Black Lives Matter" speaks to is coming together around an improved law enforcement system. That is why I came to the floor today—to be able to say, unless we move forward on legislation that deals with best practices in our police departments, we are going to continue the tension that should not exist.

There is no explanation or no answer to the video that has been shown. I wonder what the sentencing or the retraction or the ultimate result would have been if there were a video of Darren Wilson or of Michael Brown. There was not. I still believe that with Michael Brown, an unarmed youth, his actor, who happened to be a law enforcement person, should not have gone unpunished.

In this instance, we see a video that was completely mischaracterized, or, in essence, the story was characterized completely wrongly to the video that was shown. So what is the answer?

Law enforcement officers who I work with who don't indicate that there are bad apples, and they are right. Then work with us to pass the Law Enforcement Trust and Integrity Act, which provides the roadmap and the incentive for all of these departments to be accredited and to have officers go through the specific training that documents how you address the question of the street.

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It includes video cameras. It includes community-oriented policing. It includes grants to incentivize better training and better training practices.

We must find an answer in this term of Congress. We should not end this Congress without a complete and reformed criminal justice system, including dealing with law enforcement, which is clearly what the Congressional Black Caucus has been working on.

So I am hoping that we can find this common ground because there is no explanation that is reasonable or rational of the actions of the officer in Chicago. There is no reasonable explanation to the officer in the Sandra Bland case. Ladies and gentlemen, you remember this young woman dying in a jail. They have yet to come up with an indictment or a response. They have yet to have an answer of the jail that standards were an embarrassment in Waller County.

The District Attorney has yet to come forward in the Sandra Bland case. The family has not been notified. The lawyer doesn't know what is going on. We met with those individuals not to direct them, but to ensure that they were going to respect this death. Nothing has happened about the stop that we saw in the video. Nothing has happened about the jail incarceration.

I simply have come to the floor to indicate to my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats, and work with us on a number of issues that those in the Congressional Black Caucus reach out in the spirit of bipartisanship, dealing with the Voting Rights Reauthorization in section 5, providing opportunities for Historically Black Colleges which we have been at the leadership realm of, making sure that the criminal justice system addresses the overincarceration of our youth, dealing with the question of which the Black Lives Matters speaks to it eloquently.

We should not be condemned for the massive protests of 10,000 people down this wonderful Michigan Avenue as they go to find a place at the table to be able to reorient, if you will, how we do policing in America. I would ask my colleagues that we move swiftly in this term in this Congress to be able to address this.

Let me finish on this one last point. The violence of guns is outrageous. I want to speak very quietly about the Planned Parenthood incident because I don't want to provoke, but I believe it is important to note we always say for those who don't want to hear about gun safety closing the gun show loophole, banning assault weapons which the individual had.

However it plays out, the individual may be determined to have a mental health concern or condition, but he had an automatic rifle of some sort. And, unfortunately, we lost several persons in the course of the incident, although the investigation is still ongoing.

It also happens in Black-on-Black crime. My friends, our community doesn't ignore that. But what we say is that guns are involved in most of these deaths. Not only are guns involved, but we must understand that, when a gun is used by an officer, it is distinct from Black-on-Black crime because it is under color of law.

The Congressional Black Caucus comes to the table to ensure that these very sensitive issues are handled with the greatest delicacy, but with the greatest commitment and passion that we want to stop the killing, stop the deaths, and have the decency to reflect, for weren't like Mr. PAYNE, a parent like Ms. KELLY, a parent like myself.

Black lives matter. Our children matter. The Congressional Black Caucus wants to work to ensure that we have the answers that the American people have asked us for and that they deserve.

As a senior member of the House Committee on Homeland Security as well as the Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Investigations, I am pleased to join my colleagues of the Congressional Black Caucus for this Special Order to speak to the issues that members of the 114th Congress must address.

No other country imprisons a larger percentage of its population than the United States or spends anywhere near the $6.5 billion that we spend annually on prison administration.

We now know that the cost of imprisoning so many non-violent offenders is fiscally unsustainable and morally unjustifiable and it
will take the combined efforts of policy makers, reform advocates, legal professionals, and private citizens to solve the problem.

Congress took a giant step forward on the road to reform with a law I co-sponsored, the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010, which eliminated the crack versus powder disparity. Earlier this month, the House took another big step when its Judiciary Committee favorably reported another bill I sponsored, the Sentence Reform Act of 2015 (H.R. 3713), which will help reform a criminal justice system that often seems less effective at arresting criminals and more effective in inflicting collateral damage on families and communities.

Specifically, the Sentence Reform Act will reduce mass incarceration by making over 11,500 individuals, who are currently incarcerated, eligible for retroactive relief and an additional 4,000 will benefit each year. Combined, this is over 50,000 in ten years. These estimates are conservative, as not all the positive reforms can be quantified.

Today, we know also that more and more young children are being arrested, incarcerated, and detained for lengthy out-of-home placements.

Our youth easily encounter law enforcement through the mass transit on the way to school, the school resource officer at school, and patrol officers on the way home.

A youth experience behavior issues when encountered should not be arrested but assessed for underlying issues that can nearly always be handled without ever having contact with the justice system.

At least 75 percent of children within the juvenile justice system have experienced traumatic victimization, making them vulnerable to mental health disorders and perceived behavioral non-compliance and misconduct.

Numerous studies have also shown that as many as 70–80 percent of youth involved in the justice system meet the criteria for a disability.

In my district in Houston, Texas, Black and Hispanic Youth make up over 75% of the male population at 10–24 years.

Yet, Black and Hispanic Youth account for 85% of youth admitted in our detention centers.

A majority of these admissionsinto detention were for minor and misdemeanor offenses—behavior that should not require locking youth up.

Especially when the rate of detention continues to reflect disproportionate minority contact and criminalization of minority youth.

As we look to reform our juvenile and criminal justice system, and be what President Obama has called upon us to be: "My Brother’s and Sister’s Keeper"—we must move away from the engrained culture of criminalization and the cycle of recidivism, we must give our young people a real chance to succeed after they have paid their debt to society.

President Obama has called upon us to: "My Brother’s Keeper"—we must move away from the engrained culture of criminalization and the cycle of recidivism, we must give our young people a real chance to succeed after they have paid their debt to society.

I am also a co-sponsor of the Fair Chance Act that aims to prohibit Federal agencies and Federal contractors from requesting that an applicant for employment disclose criminal history record information before the applicant has received a conditional offer, and for other purposes.

There now exists a broad and bipartisan consensus that our criminal justice system is broken and a historic opportunity to pass meaningful reform the system so that it works for everyone—the general public, law enforcement personnel, taxpayers, crime victims, and offenders who have served their time, paid their debt to society, and anxious to redeem the second chance so they can "pay it forward."

It is past time for us to Ban the Box! Missouri has lately taken center stage when it comes to racial tensions: the unrest in Ferguson and the protests at the University of Missouri.

Michael Brown, an unarmed black teenager, was shot and killed on Aug. 9, 2014, by Darren Wilson, a white police officer, in Ferguson, Mo., a suburb of St. Louis. The shooting prompted violent protests and helped form the Black Lives Matter Movement.

The unrest in Ferguson likely comes from Missouri’s acute levels of racial segregation. The African-American population is heavily concentrated in the segregated cities of St. Louis and Kansas City.

St. Louis is the fifth-most racially segregated city in the United States.

The state poverty is located mostly within predominantly black areas.

The racial segregation that is rampant in the “Show Me State” stems from white hostility towards African Americans and that hostility magnifies itself on college campuses, including the University of Missouri.

Protests have been on-going in Columbia, MO since October in response to racist incidents that further the rampant racism in the state.

For example, in 2010, two white students were arrested for dropping cotton balls in front of the Gaines/Oldham Black Culture Center and in 2011 a student was given probation for racially charged graffiti in a student dormitory.

On September 12, 2015, a Facebook post by the student government president Payton Head complained of bigotry and anti-gay sentiment around the college campus, which gained widespread media attention.

The Mizzou football team announced on November 7th that they would boycott playing until the administration took drastic steps.

The University President Tim Wolfe and Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin both stepped down on November 9th but the protests are ongoing.

October 20, 2014 is an unforgettable day because a young man named Laquan McDon-ald was fatally shot 16 times in the middle of the street by Chicago Police officer Jason Van Dyke.

Sadly, October 20, will serve as a yearly reminder of the unwavering slaying of a young man who will never have the chance to grow old.

More than 500 protesters marched through Chicago for nearly 9 hours after officials released the chilling dash-cam video showing the fatal shooting of Laquan McDonald.

Protesters marched along Chicago’s famous Michigan Avenue the day after Thanksgiving, demanding the resignations of the city’s top leaders.

The Protesters stood in harmony with locked arms outside the doors of major retailers chanting “Stop the cover-up!” and “16 shots! 16 shots!” which was the number of times the officer fired upon Laquan McDonald.

Other Police killings include:

The death of 43-year-old Eric Garner resulting from the application of a NYPD police chokehold occurred in the Northeast and the death of 18-year-old Michael Brown and the resulting events in Ferguson occurred in the border state of Missouri.

The killing of 12-year-old Tamir Rice by a Cleveland police officer occurred in the Mid-West.

The death of 26-year-old Jordan Baker by an off-duty Houston police officer occurred in Texas.

In Phoenix, Arizona, Rumain Brisbon, an unarmed black father of four, was shot to death in when a police officer allegedly mis-saw his bottle of pills for a gun.

In Pasadena, California, 19-year-old Kendrec McDade was chased and shot seven times by two police officers after a 911 caller falsely reported he had been robbed at gunpoint by two black men, neither of whom in fact was armed.

And, of course, on April 4, the conscience of the nation was shocked by the horrifying killing of 50-year-old Walter Scott by a North Charleston police officer in the southern state of South Carolina.

Nearly 1,000 people in Minneapolis, Minnesota marched to City Hall less than a day after five protesters were shot near a Black Lives Matter demonstration.

This shooting which is seen to be a racially motivated attack has pushed Minneapolis into the national spotlight.

The events in Minneapolis reminded us that we cannot and we must not allow tensions, which are present in so many neighborhoods across America, to go unresolved.

Beyond Broke: Why Closing the Racial Wealth Gap is a Priority for National Economic Security uses the most recently available data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) along with the National Asset Scorecard in Communities of Color (NASCC) to highlight the current state of America’s racial wealth gap.

The report findings include:

Between 2005 and 2011, the median net worth of households of color remained near 2000 levels, relative 8 percent for Latinos, 48 percent for Asians, 45 percent for African Americans but only 21 percent for whites.

Hispanic households experienced the largest drop in net worth following the recession. More than half of whites own four or more tangible assets, compared to 49 percent of Asians and only one in five of African Americans and Latinos.
African Americans (38 percent) and Latinos (35 percent) are over twice as likely as whites (13 percent) to hold no financial assets at all and to have no or negative net worth.

At no point in our nation’s history has a single human been more capable of inflicting massive death and misery, and our society is producing more individuals who seek to employ such means to carry out their ill intentions.

While it is certainly true that violent crime and homicide rates in this country have been declining in recent years, they are still far above those in other industrialized nations.

Most recently, the horrific attack on a Planned Parenthood in Colorado Springs that took the lives of 3 Americans, including a mother and an Iraqi war Veteran.

That is just one horrific example of why we must act now to stop gun violence, protect citizens, and end the urban warfare.

And we have a plan of action.

1. Require universal background checks to keep guns out of dangerous hands; an estimated 40% of gun transfers—6.6 million transfers—are conducted without a background check. 1/3 of “want-to-buy” ads online are posted by people with a criminal record. More than 4 times the rate at which prohibited gun buyers are caught in stores. That would equate to 25,000 guns in illegal hands.
2. Ban military-style assault weapons;
3. Closing of the gun-show loophole; and
4. Increase access to mental health services.

We must work to reduce access to firearms for people with suicidal tendencies. 90% of suicide victims should have been diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder. Firearms are the most common method of suicide—51%. We need to ensure that mental health professionals are better trained for reporting threats of violence—even as we acknowledge that someone with a mental illness is far more likely to be the victim of a violent crime than the perpetrator.

Every day, 48 children and teens are shot in murders, assaults, suicides & suicide attempts, unintentional shootings, and police intervention. Every day, 7 children and teens die from gun violence.

Over 17,000 (17,499) American children and teens are shot in murders, assaults, suicides & suicide attempts, unintentional shootings, or by police intervention each year. 2,677 kids die from gun violence each year. Every day, 297 people in America are shot in murders, assaults, suicides & suicide attempts, unintentional shootings, and police intervention. Every day, 89 people die from gun violence.

Over 108,000 (108,476) people in America are shot in murders, assaults, suicides & suicide attempts, unintentional shootings, or by police intervention. 32,514 people die from gun violence each year.

Thesenseless killings in Bamako, Mali, Beirut, and the Bataclan Theater in Paris are the most current examples of global terrorism.

The terror attacks that unfolded across Paris continue to tear at the hearts of all Americans. Those who think that they can terrorize the people of France or the values that they stand for are wrong. The American people draw strength from the French people’s commitment to life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness.

In response to these disgusting attacks, I call on my colleagues to pass my bill H.R. 48 the No Fly for Foreign Fighters Act.

This would require the Director of the Terrorist Screening Center to review the completeness of the Terrorist Screening Database and the terrorist watch list utilized by the Transportation Security Administration.

Despite the recent terrorist attacks around the world, ISIS is not the most deadly terrorist organization.

The 2015 Global Terrorism Index found that Boko Haram in Nigeria killed 6,644 people in 2014. 77% of deaths were private citizens. This compared to 6,073 at the hands of ISIS.

Boko Haram was formed in 2002 and became active in 2009.

In the last six years, Boko Haram has carried out more than 500 violent attacks against a broad array of targets: Christian and Muslim communities, government installations, schools, hospitals and medical facilities, aid workers, and journalists.

Their latest attack on Yola, Nigeria, left more than 30 people dead.

Boko Haram became well-known on a global stage when they kidnapped 200 school girls.

During my visit to Nigeria over the summer I met with government officials, including President Muhammadu Buhari, and others to discuss what is currently being done to bring these girls back to their families as soon as possible.

Children’s rights are human rights, and these types of attacks, specifically targeting of schools, are strictly prohibited under international law and cannot be justified under any circumstance.

Girls and young women around the world absolutely must be allowed to go to school peacefully and free from intimidation, persecution and all other forms of discrimination.

I have introduced H. Res. 528, Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding to the Victims of the Terror Protection fund, which expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that: Boko Haram and other terrorist organizations be declared an existential threat to the human rights and security of the Nigerian people and their regional neighbors; the global strategy for ending the suffering and creating solutions for displaced people involves the Victims of Terror Protection Fund, which should provide humanitarian assistance to Boko Haram victims; military technical assistance be provided to Nigeria and its neighbors; and the Victims of Terror Support Fund should be modeled after the cases of Kazakhstan and Equatorial Guinea where prior kleptocracy initiatives have been created to benefit communities and victims in need of support.

I also wear red every Wednesday to stand in solidarity with Representative Wilson in our combined efforts to BringBackOurGirls.

A terrible blow was dealt to the Voting Rights Act on June 25, 2013, when the Supreme Court handed down the decision in Shelby County v. Holder, 537 U.S. 193 (2013), which invalidated Section 4(b), the provision of the law demanding which jurisdictions would be subject to Section 5 “pre-clearance.” The reason the Court gave for its ruling “times have changed.”

Times have changed, but what the Court did not fully appreciate is that the positive changes it cited were due almost entirely to the existence and vigorous enforcement of the Voting Rights Act.

In the 50 years since its passage in 1965, the Voting Rights Act has safeguarded the right of Americans to vote and stood as an obstacle to many of the more egregious attempts by certain states and local jurisdictions to game the system by passing discriminatory changes to their election laws and administrate polices.

I am also a sponsor of H.R. 12, the Voter Empower Act of 2015, which protects voters from suppression, deception, and other forms of disenfranchisement by modernizing voter registration, promoting access to voting for individuals with disabilities, and protecting the ability of individuals to exercise the right to vote in elections for federal office.

This year I had the honor to present the Barbara Jordan Gold Medallion for Public-Private Leadership to a pioneer in her own right Hoyt Rainey Clinton.

The prestigious award is presented annually to a woman of demonstrated excellence in the public or private sector whose achievements are an example and inspiration to people everywhere, but especially to women and girls.

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

CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 1177, STUDENT SUCCESS ACT

Mr. KLINE (during the Special Order of Ms. KELLY of Illinois) submitted the following conference report and statement on the bill (S. 1177) to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to ensure that every child achieves:

CONFERENCE REPORT (TO ACCOMPANY S. 1177)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 1177), to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to ensure that every child achieves, having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the Senate recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the House and agree to the same with an amendment as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by the House amendment, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Every Student Succeeds Act.”

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title.
Sec. 2. Table of contents.
Sec. 3. References.
Sec. 4. Transition.
Sec. 5. Effective dates.
Sec. 6. Table of contents of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

TITLE I—IMPROVING BASIC PROGRAMS OPERATED BY STATE AND LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES

PART A—IMPROVING BASIC PROGRAMS OPERATED BY STATE AND LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES

Sec. 1000. Redesignations.