

building takes a pool of—it is a \$30 million investment and it takes a pool of 60 Chinese with half a million dollars each to build this commercial building, they then become conceivably partners in that, and they have a path into the United States. We are selling citizenship. There is a price on it.

And on top of that, we have birth tourism, Mr. Speaker, birth tourism that these numbers will be a little old, 3, 4, or 5 years old where—and I am focusing on the Chinese at this point—a turnkey operation. If you have \$30,000 and you are a pregnant Chinese woman, you can fly to, conceivably, California, most likely, and be put up there in housing and have your baby. Your baby gets a birth certificate. You can fly back to China. And when that baby becomes 18, then can begin the family reunification program and the extended family and all can be hauled into America—a \$30,000 turnkey. But you have to wait for 18 years before that baby is old enough.

□ 2015

If you can't wait, don't want to wait, and you have got the money, you can lay \$500,000 down on the barrelhead, cash on the barrelhead, and get a path into America, a green card and citizenship.

These programs are just wrong. The EB-5 program should be ended; it should be sunset.

If we have to make concessions on H-2B, we don't need to make them. We should not make immigration decisions in a CR. We ought not make them in a treaty. We ought not make them in a CR, and we ought not make them in a lameduck. Immigration decisions should be made subject to the pen, the signature of the next President of the United States. They need to have the considered judgment of the House of Representatives and of the Senate, Mr. Speaker. I will push that we do only the minimum in a lameduck, if we have to do anything at all.

I would promote that a continuing resolution could kick us into the early part of next year, when we have a new Congress seated, when we have a new President that is inaugurated and sworn into office, and that the will of the American people can be reflected in the large initiatives that would be advanced by the House of Representatives, by the United States Senate, and by the next President that should reflect the will of the people.

All of this, Mr. Speaker, is our charge and our responsibility because we have taken an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America. It is our duty, and we owe the people in this country our best effort and our best judgment. Our best effort and our best judgment includes: we listen to them; we gather all the information that we can; we look into the crystal ball of the future as far as we can; and, with good and clear conscience and good judgment, we make those decisions that reflect their

will that is within the confines of the Constitution, that fit within free enterprise, then lay down a foundation for America's destiny so that we can be ever-stronger in the future and so that we can have an ascending destiny rather than a descending destiny.

With all of that, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your attention. I yield back the balance of my time.

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REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3590, HALT TAX INCREASES ON THE MIDDLE CLASS AND SENIORS ACT

Mr. BURGESS (during the Special Order of Mr. KING of Iowa), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114-741) on the resolution (H. Res. 858) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3590) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the increase in the income threshold used in determining the deduction for medical care, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

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REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5620, VA ACCOUNTABILITY FIRST AND APPEALS MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2016

Mr. BURGESS (during the Special Order of Mr. KING of Iowa), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114-742) on the resolution (H. Res. 859) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5620) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

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CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

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

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise today once again to help coanchor, along with my distinguished colleague Representative JOYCE BEATTY, this Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour where, for the next 60 minutes, we have an opportunity to speak directly to the

American people on issues of great importance to the Congressional Black Caucus, to the House of Representatives, to the districts that we represent collectively, as well as to the United States of America.

It is a very special week for us, and we are going to spend some time during the next 60 minutes discussing the trajectory of the Congressional Black Caucus, which has been serving in this body for the better part of the last 45 years.

The Congressional Black Caucus was formally established on March 30, 1971, by 13 pioneering Members who had a vision of making sure that, within this great Article I institution, there was a body that could speak directly to the hopes, the dreams, the needs, and the aspirations of the African American people and all those underrepresented communities throughout America. We are going to talk a bit about that journey, about the accomplishments, and about the challenges that still remain.

I want to yield now to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON), one of the very distinguished members of the Congressional Black Caucus, who happens to be the ranking member of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee and has ably represented the 30th Congressional District in Texas, anchored in Dallas, for almost 25 years. It has been an honor and a privilege for me and for others to work with her, to learn from her, and to be mentored by her.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the leaders of the Special Order tonight, Congresswoman JOYCE BEATTY and Congressman HAKEEM JEFFRIES.

Mr. Speaker, as a proud member of the Congressional Black Caucus, I am proud to recognize the contributions of the CBC and its members after 45 years of service to the United States Congress and our Nation and, really, the world.

The CBC was founded March 30, 1971, with the chief objective of bringing awareness to the issues facing Black America and addressing the concerns of longstanding inequality in opportunity for African Americans.

We have an original member who is retiring this year, the Honorable CHARLES B. RANGEL. The most senior Member in this House is one of the original members, the Honorable JOHN CONYERS.

Today, the Congressional Black Caucus has grown to become a fundamental institution within Congress. From voting rights and gun violence to poverty in America and justice reform, the CBC engages on multiple fronts to address the plethora of issues facing our Nation and the world.

To date, we have had a string of able leaders chair the CBC, and I am proud to have been one of them from 2001 to 2003. Currently, as co-chair of the CBC Technology and Infrastructure Investment Task Force and a member of numerous other CBC task forces, I am

proud of the progress that we have been able to achieve through our coordination and cooperation with the Members of the Congress, stakeholders, and the community. History has proven that the importance of the CBC endures even today as we face new challenges to voting rights and experience new strife within our communities.

Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Black Caucus serves as a key voice in Congress for people of color and vulnerable communities. Together, the CBC and its allies have paved the way for new progress as we face the challenges of the 21st century. Our promise that was first made in 1971 to give the voiceless a voice is continually fulfilled through the CBC's work, and I look forward to keeping up with our fight to preserve liberty and equal justice for all. We have come from promise to progress.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentlewoman from the great Lone Star State for her eloquent words and observations and, of course, for her leadership not just in the Congress, but for her past leadership as a distinguished former chair of the Congressional Black Caucus.

It is now my honor and my privilege to yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from the great State of Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY), my classmate, who is one of the most distinguished Members of the House of Representatives. She had an incredible career before she arrived here in the Congress as a leader in the Ohio Legislature, as a successful small-business woman, as a university administrator at The Ohio State University, and in so many other ways, and then, of course, has taken the House of Representatives by storm since her arrival as part of the class of 2012.

Mrs. BEATTY. I thank the gentleman, Mr. Speaker, to my colleague, I am so honored to be here tonight speaking in this Chamber and to the American people about the Congressional Black Caucus: 45 years of leadership, from promise to progress.

You have heard my distinguished colleague and coanchor of our Special Order hour, Congressman HAKEEM JEFFRIES, tell and share with us the history of our beginning of the Congressional Black Caucus back on March 30, 1971. We have heard the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas share with us about our members who had the foresight and the vision. What she didn't tell you was that she was the first African American nurse to be elected and to serve in this Congress.

Somewhere along the line, Mr. Speaker, I am sure in our rich history someone made the promise that, in the future, we would have a Shirley Chisholm, the promise that some little girl would be able to come to this Congress and serve, and that became a reality with Shirley Chisholm. I am sure some mother said the promise should be that a woman should lead us as a nurse, and then came Congresswoman EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON.

You see, Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Black Caucus has been committed to advancing equity and access and equal protection under the law for Black Americans. And while we were established March 30, 1971, it was on that day that a Congressman by the name of Charles C. Diggs, Jr., a Democrat from the great State of Michigan, presented the statement to the President of the United States, which included more than 60 recommendations for executive action on issues for Black America and set the foundation for the promise and the progress of African Americans.

We heard my distinguished colleague talk about the hopes and the needs and the dreams. Those were the promises. And that is why it is so important for us to come today and talk about the progress that we have made.

Even though you will hear us say 1971, when the Congressional Black Caucus was established, we can trace our legislative history back further through the civil rights efforts of the 1960s, which included such landmark victories as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which we still champion today. Those legislative policy victories of the past demonstrate that when people speak with a singular, powerful voice, Mr. Speaker, we can have a government that works for us; we can fulfill our country's pledge and promise of liberty and justice for all.

It was through that statement that the Congressional Black Caucus began its history of advocacy on behalf of the African American community. Since then, for the last 45 years, the Congressional Black Caucus has been the voice for people of color and at-risk communities in our different districts. We have been and remain committed to utilizing the full constitutional power, statutory authority, and financial resources of the government to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to achieve the promise of the American Dream, Mr. Speaker.

From promise to progress gave us the first African American to hold the distinction of dean of this House, the most senior Member of Congress; and the first African American to swear in the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives was Congressional Black Caucus member Congressman JOHN CONYERS.

From promise to progress has given us a motivating book, "Blessed Experiences: Genuinely Southern, Proudly Black," a story of inspirational words on how an African American boy from the Jim Crow-era South was able to beat the odds, Mr. Speaker, to achieve great success and become, as President Barack Obama describes him, "One of a handful of people who, when they speak, the entire Congress listens," assistant Democratic leader and the third highest ranking Democrat in the House of Representatives, Congressman JAMES E. CLYBURN.

The 21st president, national president of the largest African American female

sorority serves here with us, Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE from the 11th Congressional District of my State.

□ 2030

From promise to progress, Mr. Speaker, has given us the first Black woman elected to Congress from Alabama and the only Democrat in Alabama's seven-member congressional delegation. That is Congresswoman TERRI SEWELL. Her first piece of successful legislation recognized the four little girls who tragically lost their lives during the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church.

Mr. Speaker, I hope you can see why it is important for us to be here and to talk about the many promises and, more significantly and of greater importance, the progress that we have made. We are one of the largest Member organizations in the United States House of Representatives, making up 23 percent of the House Democratic Caucus and 10 percent of the entire United States House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, when I think of where the Congressional Black Caucus is today, I think of the shoulders that we stand on. Fifty-one years later, I think of Bloody Sunday where on March 7, 1965, some 600 peaceful participants in a voting rights march from Selma, Alabama, to the State capital in Montgomery were violently attacked by Alabama State Troopers with nightsticks, tear gas, whips, and dogs, as they attempted to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge. These brave men and women, Mr. Speaker, were led by civil rights champion, Congressman JOHN LEWIS from the Fifth District of Georgia. What a great example of promise to progress.

Last year, I had the distinct honor of joining nearly 300,000 others, including 90 bipartisan lawmakers, distinguished guests, civil rights activists, and former Presidents of these United States as we marched, commemorating the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday over that Edmund Pettus Bridge, marching ourselves from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, from promises to progress.

Let me say or remind you again—and I want America to know—there were 90 bipartisan Members. That means Democrats and Republicans. I could say bicameral—Democrat and Republican Senators and Members of this great body that we serve in. Certainly, as we marched and they joined us, they were making a commitment to the progress from those promises that were made 50-some years ago.

We come here tonight, my colleague and I, representing the Congressional Black Caucus because we want you, Mr. Speaker, and America to know that when we reflect on our history, it is our culture, it is our passion, and it is our reason and resolve for standing here and standing up for the issues and the legislation that we believe in, that we write and we support. We think it is

important for you to have a better understanding why so often we come here and ask that we join together.

Mr. Speaker, when I think of our history, I reflect on names like Frederick Douglass, a historic social reformer and statesman; Shirley Chisholm, as I mentioned earlier, the first African American woman elected to the United States Congress; and, yes, Rosa Parks, the mother of the modern civil rights movement.

You see, Rosa Parks embodied courage, and she inspired me as a mentor when she refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama, bus to a White passenger on December 1, 1955. Some would say she was tired, but I say to you that she was tired not from her day's work as a seamstress, but she was tired from the injustices. I have followed her whole career and was so inspired by her that I wrote the first legislation when I served in the Ohio House of Representatives in this country to honor her on that December 1. Every day since then, I go back to the district and we honor her. You see, she sat down against the odds for something she believed in. I have carried that with me over the years, realizing that there could be a day, but never dreaming that it would be here in this Congress that I, too, would be willing to sit down for something that I believed in.

Mr. Speaker, there have been so many issues that I have done that because I want us to have the progress from the promises that I make to my district. The progress, whether it is gun safety, whether it is the progress of making sure that every child has enough food when they go to bed, whether it is making sure that there is an affordable college education for every child that is able to go, whether it is making sure that there is equal pay for equal work, those are just a few of the things that I wanted to make sure that we talked about.

Mr. Speaker, it is so important for us to tell our story, our history, and our culture. Hopefully, tonight is more than us just talking. Hopefully, tonight will help Members and the public understand our history and our passion.

This week, lastly, let me say how honored I am to be in Washington, D.C., when more than 10,000 people will come to our Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Annual Legislative Conference where we will talk about the issues and we will educate emerging leaders and civil rights leaders, not just all individuals of color. There will be individuals of all backgrounds, races, and ethnicities that will join us in our commitment to fulfill those promises on the progress that we would like to have.

We will open the National African American Museum. What an honor it will be to see the great achievements and contributions for those who have so courageously pushed the boundaries and moved our country forward in the name of justice and equality.

When I think about moving forward, I cannot help but reflect on the 44th President of these United States. Like many of us—and, Mr. Speaker, maybe even like you—he worked his way through school with the help of scholarship money and a student loan. Yet, maybe it was the progress and the promise of progress that a Martin Luther King, Jr., wanted when he said that he hoped his four children would not be judged by the color of their skin, but the content of their character. Maybe that is why a young Barack Obama pushed forward, went back to his community, and worked and gave service, which is the word that he likes to use so much. It was the service back to the movement and to his community in Chicago; that gave us the progress of having our first African American President, a scholar, someone who has had many firsts.

So I say to you that it is indeed my honor that I can stand here on this floor with my colleague as we move forward, the progress as we move forward on the promises of our colleagues.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentlewoman from Ohio for laying out both the history of the Congressional Black Caucus as well as documenting what current membership continues to do and breaks new ground here in the House of Representatives on behalf of the people that they are charged to represent in this august body, as well as on behalf of the great Nation that we are all privileged to serve.

As Representative BEATTY mentioned, there were 13 individuals who had the vision and the foresight to found the Congressional Black Caucus back in March of 1971. The actual founding took place at a meeting between those 13 Members and President Richard Nixon, where the President was presented, by the newly formed Congressional Black Caucus, a statement of requests, goals, objectives, and demands related to the plight of African Americans here in these United States of America. The Congressional Black Caucus was founded on the premise that it was necessary to speak truth to power, given the unique plight of African Americans in this country.

As was mentioned by Representative BEATTY, there are two founding members who still serve in the House of Representatives; Representative JOHN CONYERS from Detroit, Michigan, and, of course, CHARLIE RANGEL, the Lion of Lenox Avenue, the first African American ever to chair the Ways and Means Committee in this institution, a prolific legislator here in the House who has announced earlier this year his intention to retire.

I am proud to serve a district that was once represented in part by the Honorable Shirley Chisholm, the first African American woman ever elected to the House of Representatives in a district in Brooklyn in 1968. She came here indicating that she was unbought and unbossed, and that tradition has

been continued by people like MAXINE WATERS, MARCIA FUDGE, JOYCE BEATTY, and so many others who represent their district with passion and with integrity.

The question has been asked: Why is there a need for a Congressional Black Caucus? We have come a long way in America. We have made a lot of progress. The 44th President of the United States of America happens to be African American. Why is there a need for a Congressional Black Caucus?

That question was asked in 1971, of course. I think it takes an understanding of the unique journey of African Americans in this country to understand why the Congressional Black Caucus was first founded in 1971 and why it still remains relevant today.

This country was founded, of course, on high-minded principles of liberty and justice for all and the notion that all men are created equally and were endowed with certain inalienable rights by the great democratic republic that was birthed by the Founding Fathers of this Nation.

As many have observed, notwithstanding the tremendous nature of the principles embedded in the birth of this country, there was also a genetic defect on the question of race. That genetic defect first took the form, of course, of chattel slavery, which was one of the worst crimes ever perpetrated against humanity, resulting in the loss of tens of millions of individuals killed during the middle passage and the systemic oppression of African Americans, the kidnap, the rape, the enslavement here in the United States of America. This happened at the same time when the country was founded on these great, high-minded principles.

Of course, the question of slavery was finally resolved with the victory of the North in 1865. The North, of course, was fighting the South in the Confederacy. The Confederacy has been put to rest, although some people still want to uplift the Confederate battle flag. That is an issue for another day.

Slavery was put to rest. Then in an effort to correct the defect in our democracy, the 13th Amendment ending and outlawing chattel slavery was passed and added to the Constitution; the 14th Amendment, equal protection under the law; and the 15th Amendment related to the right to vote for African Americans. The so-called reconstruction amendments took place.

□ 2045

But then, thereafter, something interesting happened. We were on the pathway to fulfilling the great promise of a colorblind society in America, but then the North pulled out of the South, the Reconstruction era ended, and it was replaced systematically with a system of Jim Crow, enforced segregation of the races, and the suppression of African Americans largely in the Deep South, notwithstanding the high-minded principles that were just embedded

in the United States Constitution related to the 14th Amendment and the Equal Protection Clause and the 15th Amendment and the right to vote. Those were just words on a piece of paper, as far as many people were concerned in the Deep South who were perpetuating Jim Crow segregation.

That Jim Crow segregation, of course, was accompanied by a lynching epidemic that claimed the lives of thousands of individuals, race riots directed at successful African Americans and African American communities, and so many other things that were documented in this country.

Why is there a need for a Congressional Black Caucus? The country was founded under these great high-minded principles, but, at the same time on this journey, we have gone from slavery, a brief period of Reconstruction, into the Jim Crow era.

As Representative JOYCE BEATTY so eloquently documented, in terms of the legislative efforts of African American Members who were here in partnership with people of goodwill of all races, Democrats and Republicans, we passed the 1964 Civil Rights Act here in this Congress endeavoring to end Jim Crow segregation, passed the 1965 Voting Rights Act here in this Congress to try to bring to life the 15th Amendment, largely ignored in many parts of this country, and then of course in 1968 passed the Fair Housing Act.

Then an interesting thing happened. You have a President who is elected in the aftermath of the assassination of Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., the Senator from New York, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the great civil rights leader on what he terms a Southern strategy of trying to capitalize on White backlash against the progress that has been made by African Americans.

I am trying to figure out what was the nature of the backlash? The progress that was made was a Civil Rights Act to try to deal with the Jim Crow segregation that some people put into place in the aftermath of the end of slavery, and the 1965 Voting Rights Act that was put into place in order to try to bring to life the fact that there were people intentionally ignoring the 15th Amendment to the United States Constitution. Why is there a need for a Congressional Black Caucus?

So we moved from slavery into Jim Crow, and that is all dealt with for a brief period in the 1960s in terms of the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act, the Fair Housing Act, but then we enter into this interesting period where Richard Nixon is elected on a strategy that played to the racial fears and anxieties of some in America. I don't want to get in trouble by putting a percentage onto it, but played into the anxieties and fears of some in America. History often repeats itself.

And so the Congressional Black Caucus in 1971 made the decision that they were going to place a list of demands on the table for Richard Nixon to deal with, given this history. Little did they

know—or perhaps they suspected—that in that same year what I would call the third defect that America has had to grapple with in terms of the African American community as compared to its high-minded aspirations was about to be visited on communities of color, and that was mass incarceration.

It was in that year in 1971 where Richard Nixon declared a war on drugs by stating that drug abuse was public enemy number one. At the time in America, there were less than 350,000 people incarcerated in this country. Today, there are more than 2.1 million, the overwhelming majority of whom are Black and Latino. We know that African Americans are consistently incarcerated at levels much higher than others in the United States, notwithstanding a similar level of criminality as it relates to the crime that was committed, the activity that was engaged in, and the conduct that was prosecuted. The disparities are objectively clear.

Mass incarceration has been devastating for African American communities all across this country, and it is shameful that America incarcerates more people here in the United States than any other country in the world. We incarcerate more people than Russia and China combined. This overcriminalization is something that I am hopeful we can deal with in this Congress before this President leaves and then continue to work with the next President of the United States of America.

So people ask the question: Why do we need a Congressional Black Caucus? We have gone from slavery, a brief interruption with the Reconstruction Amendments into Jim Crow for another 100 years, 14th Amendment and 15th Amendment are ignored in large parts of the country, and then we get an interruption. Some progress was made with the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the 1965 Voting Rights Act, and the 1968 Fair Housing Act. Then we get Richard Nixon. And the Congressional Black Caucus is founded at the same time.

For the last 45 years, we have been dealing with mass incarceration. But notwithstanding the intensity of the systematic issues put upon the African American community, we have seen tremendous progress during that same period of time because of Members like William Clay, Sr., a founder from St. Louis, or Louis Stokes from Cleveland, Ohio, and Augustus Hawkins from Los Angeles, people who understood that when Abraham Lincoln asked the question, how do we create a more perfect Union, and he asked that question in the context of the Civil War that was raging at the time, that America is a constant work in progress. And year after year, decade after decade, century after century, we can improve upon who we are, but there is still a lot more that needs to be done.

Thankfully, we have seen increases in educational attainment, increases in

employment over the last 8 years in the African American community since the height of the Great Recession, and we have seen a return of some of the homeownership that was lost during the recession, but there are still a lot of things that need to be done. And so a Congressional Black Caucus which has grown from the 13 original founding members to 46 members today, 45 in the House of Representatives, 1 of whom is a Republican, and a 46th member who serves in the United States Senate.

We stand on the shoulders of these founding members, proud of what has been accomplished like the effort led by Ron Dellums which resulted in legislation to push back against the racist apartheid regime in 1986, a bill that was vetoed by Ronald Reagan, and then overridden by Democrats and Republicans in the House and the Senate, the first foreign policy bill overridden in the Congress passed by Ron Dellums that led the effort related to South African apartheid.

So many issues have been championed by the founding members. JOHN CONYERS held a series of hearings on the issue of police brutality. It is ironic that right now, along with Chairman BOB GOODLATTE, they are leading a bipartisan task force on police community relations to deal with what I view, at least, as an epidemic of police violence directed at unarmed African American men across this country, but JOHN CONYERS was involved in that effort in the early 1970s.

And so there is a lot of things that we have been able to work on during this 45-year journey. Tremendous progress has been made, despite the efforts to paint the community as overrun by some out there in this country as a thriving Black middle class. A successful group of entrepreneurs, professionals, lawyers, doctors, engineers, scientists, and so many others have shown what can be done based on their promise and their potential despite the obstacles that exist as we move toward a more colorblind society. But we, of course, are not there yet.

That is why we are of the view that, despite the fact that we have made tremendous progress in America, we still have a way to go. There is still a need, an urgent need for a Congressional Black Caucus, which has often stood up not just on behalf of African Americans but has stood up on behalf of those who are the least, the lost, and the left-behind in the United States of America, regardless of color.

That is why the Congressional Black Caucus has been known over these four decades as the conscience of the Congress, and it has been an honor and a privilege for me, during my two terms, to serve in this august body.

I want to yield for a moment to my colleague, Representative JOYCE BEATTY, and perhaps ask the question: What are some of the issues that you think are pressing as it relates to the Congressional Black Caucus moving

forward, and what do you say to critics who make the argument, why is there a need for African Americans in the Congress to get together at this point on behalf of the communities we were elected to represent? Is there still a need for a Congressional Black Caucus in 2016?

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, let me just say thank you to Congressman JEFFRIES for that question. If I think of one of my favorite quotes by Shirley Chisholm, Mr. Speaker, she said: "You don't make progress by standing on the sidelines . . . you make progress by implementing ideas."

That is what the Congressional Black Caucus does. We don't just come here on the floor and talk about our rich history. We meet, and we strategize, and we go back home to our districts, and we come back, and we write legislation, so there is definitely a need. And I think it will be witnessed all across this country this week when the thousands of thousands of individuals come here because they will have an opportunity to see Congressman CHARLIE RANGEL or Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS or Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY because of the issues and what they stand for, and that is why there is a need.

When I think of our commitment and conviction, Mr. Speaker, I remember when Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY said: I won't stand up for moments of silence again until we do something about the shootings and the deaths. She had the courage to walk up to the well and say: I am not being disrespectful, but I want us to really stand for something.

So, yes, I want us to have gun safety. I want us to have legislation because we have bipartisan legislation. I want us to bring that to the floor, so I can say in my district, I am standing up for families, I am standing up for safety.

□ 2100

You mentioned prison reform. I want us to look at how we can come together as Democrats and Republicans, Mr. Speaker, and pass some bipartisan legislation.

When I think of the Congressional Black Caucus and what we represent, when you add it all up together, we cover some 21 States, the District of Columbia, and the Virgin Islands, and we represent some 31 million people. Over half of our Congressional Black Caucus membership are lawyers, people who have studied the laws and understand the procedures and the rules and the regulations.

So, yes, there is a need for us to continue the journey. There is a need for us to listen to one another. You see, Mr. Speaker, we don't come here tonight to just talk about us as 46 members of the Congressional Black Caucus. We come here to leave you with a message and to speak to America to say: Just think of what we could do if we worked together. Just think about when you go back home to your dis-

trict and you say you want us to be safe and you want us to have equal and fair rights; you talk about wanting your children and families to be healthy and educated.

So, you see, we have the same message, it seems, until we come to the floor. That is why we come here tonight with strong messages—because we want to make sure that you understand that we believe that we could work together.

This week—again, I will say it repeatedly, because it is so important to us—we will have brain trust sessions, Mr. JEFFRIES, that will talk about how long we have been in this fight for progress for health care, how long we have been in this fight for criminal justice. We will also have workshops like financial literacy and financial services. If we don't come together to educate our communities and our people, if we don't come together to share with you, I believe that we won't be able to understand one another.

So the answer is yes and yes: yes, there is a lot of work to continue to be done; and yes, we need to continue to have a Congressional Black Caucus.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I mentioned during my remarks that we have been on this journey of the 15th Amendment to the United States Constitution to try to guarantee the right to vote, regardless of race, coming out of the oppression of chattel slavery. And then we moved, Representative BEATTY, from the 15th Amendment to this Jim Crow period and the 1965 Voting Rights Act to try to bring to life what is a fundamental tenet of American democracy, which is the ability of the people to represent those who will represent them in government—government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

But yet, as a result of a recent Supreme Court decision, *Shelby County v. Holder*, the 1965 Voting Rights Act, section 4 and section 5, the preclearance provisions, have been eviscerated because of, in my view, an inappropriate reading of that statute relative to the United States Constitution.

So the Congressional Black Caucus continues to fight to uplift for all Americans the ability to participate in our democracy. The shame is that voting in this country seems to have become a partisan issue, notwithstanding the fact that the Voting Rights Act has a great bipartisan tradition. It was passed with the support of Democrats and Republicans because, of course, we know at the time there were Dixiecrats in this Congress—Democrats, by registration, in the Deep South who fought hard against voting rights. So it took Republicans on the other side of the aisle in both the House and the Senate in order to get the legislation passed.

It is interesting to me that, every year, the Voting Rights Act was reauthorized. Four times it was signed back into law by a Republican President: in 1970, Richard Nixon; 1975, Gerald Ford; 1982, Ronald Reagan; 2006, George W. Bush.

So when we come to the floor of the House of Representatives or when I sit on the Judiciary Committee or we work with JOHN LEWIS and JOHN CONYERS and TERRI SEWELL and JIM CLYBURN and others to try to move voting rights legislation forward, we are just saying: return to the great bipartisan tradition of making sure that every single American in this country has an opportunity to participate in the right to vote.

Until that happens, the Congressional Black Caucus has an urgent issue that we need to deal with for the communities that we represent in African American or Latino neighborhoods and for all Americans.

The other thing I will point out and ask my colleague to perhaps react to is that what I found fascinating here in terms of common ground, the opportunity to uplift everyone through the mission and the work of the Congressional Black Caucus, is the fact that when you look at persistently poor counties in America, counties that will be defined as 20 percent or more of the population living below the poverty line for 30 or more years, persistently poor counties, a majority of those counties are represented by Republicans in the House of Representatives and not by Democrats.

So when JIM CLYBURN, for instance, presents things like 10-20-30, a funding formula where 10 percent of any funding allocation will be given to communities where 20 percent or more of that county has been living below the poverty line for 30 or more years, it would actually benefit Republican-represented counties more than it would Democrat-represented counties. This is because the Congressional Black Caucus really is interested in uplifting the plight of all Americans who have been left behind. We are hoping that we can find some bipartisan cooperation in that area as well.

I yield to Representative JOYCE BEATTY.

Mrs. BEATTY. Thank you, Congressman JEFFRIES, for mentioning 10-20-30. You are absolutely right that it would benefit Republican districts and their constituents more than many of our constituents. But I think that is because, when we think of poverty, we think of children and families living in poverty, not Democrats, not Republicans. Our mission here, Mr. Speaker, is to make this place a better place through our legislation for everyone. So I think that is just one example.

You mentioned a lot about our history and how far we have come and the roles of other Presidents. I think it is important, Mr. Speaker, for us to also share that we come here tonight almost with a proposition to say to you: We want to work with you on those issues that we have highlighted.

So often when we come here, we will hear colleagues say "We can't work together," "We don't work together," or, "Why don't you just come and work with us?" I don't want us to leave tonight without leaving the message that

we have a lot of work that still needs to be done.

I can remember reading back in 1971, Congressman JEFFRIES, when Richard Nixon was giving his first inaugural address, he refused to meet with the members of the Congressional Black Caucus. They stood up for something. They left the floor and did not stay for his address to the Nation. I say that with mixed feelings, but I say that to make the point of how strongly we believe in what we do.

You mentioned the 10–20–30 plan. We had Speaker RYAN come to the Congressional Black Caucus and hear the plan, to get a commitment from him. He represents all of us; and he gave us the nod, as you will remember, on that plan.

So I say tonight, let us reflect on all the things that my colleague and the coanchor of this Special Order hour said, because that is what it is. It is our hour to address you, Mr. Speaker, and the Nation about so many of the issues that we want to make sure that, when we leave here, we are not leaving with just promises, but we are leaving with progress.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Thank you for those very thoughtful observations.

Perhaps I will end by talking for a moment or so about the progress that we have made under a former member of the Congressional Black Caucus who was a Senator from Illinois and here in the Capitol for a few years before he was elected to be the 44th President of the United States of America. We are proud that he came through the CBC on his way to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Upon his election, there was the view that perhaps we were entering into a phase of a post-racial society. I think we understand that that was probably irrationally optimistic of those who made that observation because of the long history that we detailed here of what the African American journey has been in America.

But I find it interesting that so many people, to this day, refuse to give this President credit for the progress that has been made under his watch over the last 8 years. There have been more than 75 or so consecutive months of private sector job creation under this President. More than 14 million private sector jobs have been created under this President.

Parenthetically, I make the observation that, under the 8 years of George Bush, the country lost 650,000 jobs. But we are going to talk about a sluggish recovery. We lost 650,000 jobs under supply-side economic policies of George W. Bush. We have gained more than 14 million jobs under progressive policies of Barack Obama.

The deficit has been reduced by over \$500 million. When the President came in, the stock market was at 6,000; now it is over 18,000. Of course, more than 20 million previously uninsured Americans now have health coverage under the Presidency of Barack Obama.

So he came in with a lot of promises, and I am proud that there has been tremendous progress that has been made for the United States of America as a whole, and certainly for African American communities.

As the President himself observed, the problems that we have to confront in America won't be resolved by one President during one term or even during an entire tenure, because we are on this long, necessary, and majestic march toward a more perfect Union. The hope is that, each time a President steps up and Congress is there to represent the will of the people, working on behalf of our constituents, we can make meaningful progress on dealing with the economic and social justice issues of the day.

Fundamentally, that is what the Congressional Black Caucus is all about. That was the vision that was put forth by those 13 Founders: speaking truth to power, representing the interests of the African American communities they were elected to serve—and everyone else—regardless of race, who is entitled to the fiercest possible representation in this democracy.

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So it is with great pride that Representative BEATTY and I stand here today, as members of the Congressional Black Caucus, standing on the shoulders of those 13 founding members, under the current leadership of Representative G.K. BUTTERFIELD from North Carolina, representing this continuum of the African American journey, both here in Congress and in this great country; confident that, despite the obstacles that will consistently be erected that, as we have demonstrated over time during 45 years, we will make progress, we will translate promise into action, and we will continue the journey of perfecting a more perfect union in the United States of America.

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, as a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus, I believe that the week of our Annual Legislative Conference is an appropriate time to reflect on the progress we have made as a group and the challenges we face in articulating a vision for a more free and fair America.

When 13 of us first gathered in 1969 as a "Democratic Select Committee," we had ambitions of using our collective voices to advance a political agenda for black America in response to expected retrenchment from the incoming Nixon administration. Two years later, on the motion of Rep. Charlie Rangel, we became the Congressional Black Caucus.

In that time, the Caucus has gone from being on Nixon's "original enemies list" to the conscience of the Congress. Our membership has grown from 13 to 46 and our alumnae include numerous cabinet members and a President of the United States.

In looking back 45 years, the Caucus can point to many victories in the areas of voting rights, economic empowerment, education and healthcare. These victories were not just for

black Americans, but all Americans in search of justice and equality before the law.

However, in reflecting on the history of the Caucus, we must be honest about the uneven nature of politics. Many of the challenges we faced in 1971 still burden the African-American community today. Black Americans are still disproportionately poor, under-educated, unemployed and incarcerated. Daily we confront the political challenges of how to ensure that the rising economic tide lifts the boats in our communities.

The more surprising challenge faced by the Caucus is mounted by those who would turn back the clock on some of our hardest won victories: namely those who would suppress our voting rights as a means of defeating a progressive agenda for equality. We beware of those who want to make "America great again," harkening back to a past where Jim Crow and discrimination ruled the day.

This politics of division is one of our main challenges as a Caucus. Our nation once again finds itself at odds over the issue of race relations, most clearly illustrated by the issue of police accountability. A recent ABC poll found that a majority of Americans surveyed believed that race relations are bad and getting worse. With the election of the first African-American President, this is clearly not what we hoped for in this new millennium.

As the former Chairman and now Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Committee, I have dedicated my career to 3 goals to jobs, justice and peace. After decades of community complaints about police brutality, I chaired hearings in Los Angeles, New York City, and even Dallas which built the record for passage of marquee legislation like the 1994 "Pattern and Practice" statute, which gives the Department of Justice the authority to investigate law enforcement discrimination and abuse in cities like Ferguson and Baltimore.

The loss of lives in Baton Rouge, suburban St. Paul and Dallas, has left the nation in shock, as seemingly every day the media brings us news of violence borne of hate and intolerance. Modern technology and the advent of social media have made us all witnesses, just like the marches in Selma and Birmingham, making it impossible to dismiss them as fiction or some else's problem. We live these injustices first hand.

Vivid images of police abuse galvanized our national resolve to pass civil rights legislation, like the Voting Rights Act, and is putting all politicians on notice that simmering community unrest with the police has reached a turning point. Today, we represent communities that are increasingly unified, unafraid, and unwilling to wait. We have a growing coalition of allies. Some white, some Hispanic, some Asian, and some who serve as police and who want their badges to mean something more. The daily reminders of injustice have forced us to measure the distance between Dr. Kings' Dream and our own reality—but they also give us the resolve to close it for good.

Last year, the Judiciary Committee held a hearing on 21st Century Policing Strategies to begin addressing these issues at the Federal level. I also re-introduced both the End Racial Profiling Act and the Law Enforcement Trust and Integrity Act around the same time. The Republican Chairman of the Judiciary Committee and I are currently negotiating a version of the Law Enforcement Trust and Integrity Act and during the August recess, we joined together to form a bipartisan Congressional

working group—including three Caucus members—with a focus on finding common ground between police and the communities they are sworn to protect and serve.

The profound support for criminal justice reform I have seen from Members of the CBC and all sides of the political spectrum from across our country is something we need to build upon. It's not the only solution, but one of them.

As a Caucus, our work is far from done. We can't bring back Alton Sterling, Philando Castile, Tamir Rice, Eric Garner, or the hundreds of black men and women who've lost their lives to excessive force. And we can't bring back the officers in Dallas and Baton Rouge or others who've been killed while protecting their communities. But at a time when we face so much that challenges our faith and tries to break our spirit, we must dedicate ourselves in our 45th year to engaging the difficult issues to make lasting change in our communities.

History shows that Members of the Congressional Black Caucus have overcome great challenges. Now we have within us and beside us, an intentionally peaceful and unified community that is now better able to confront today's challenges than ever before.

#### A STEP BACKWARDS IN RACE RELATIONS AT CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KNIGHT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it is always an honor to appear here on the House floor, especially following colleagues giving an important address.

I was saddened to see what seemed, in fact, to be a huge step backwards in racial relations.

"California State University Debuts Segregated Housing for Black Students."

"California State University Los Angeles recently debuted segregated housing for Black students, a move intended to protect them from 'micro-aggressions,' according to the College Fix.

"Last year, Cal State L.A.'s Black Student Union wrote a letter to the university's president outlining a series of demands, including the 'creation and financial support of a CSLA housing space delegated for Black students and a full time Resident Director who can cater to the needs of Black students.'

"Many Black CSLA students cannot afford to live in Alhambra or the surrounding area with the high prices of rent. A CSLA housing space delegated for Black students would provide a cheaper alternative housing solution for Black students. This space would also serve as a safe space for Black CSLA students to congregate, connect and learn from each other," the letter stated.

Anyway, "Robert Lopez, a spokesman for the university, confirmed to The College Fix that students' demand for housing specifically for Black stu-

dents had been met, saying that the school's new Halisi Scholars Black Living-Learning Community 'focuses on academic excellence and learning experiences that are inclusive and non-discriminatory.'

That seems to be a bit of anathema. But anyway, "Lopez said the Black student housing is within the existing residential complex on campus.

"The College Fix noted that other universities, including the University of California, Davis; the University of California, Berkeley; and University of Connecticut offer similar housing arrangements."

It just seems like we are going backwards with that kind of thing.

I heard my colleagues mention the great dream—part of the great dream of Martin Luther King, Jr., a Christian, ordained Christian minister. As I have heard a Black minister explain recently, he was, first and foremost, above all a Christian minister. His belief in the Bible and his belief in Jesus Christ as a Savior was his guiding force, which brought him to the place that Jesus brought his disciples to, and that the Apostle Paul was brought to rather abruptly, and that is, Jesus did not discriminate against anyone and that we, who believe, as Christians, should follow those teachings and treat people equally, regardless of skin color. And that would help fulfill that part of Dr. King's dream, that people would be judged by the content of their character and not the color of their skin.

However, California has digressed, regressed to the point where no longer are they making progress toward racial harmony. They are going the other direction, saying that what we need is to segregate, like that great Democrat, George Wallace believed.

So it is unbelievable. We have supposed liberals in California not pursuing the dream of Dr. King, where people would be judged by the content of their character rather than the color of their skin; but we have these California universities that are now fulfilling the dream of the Democratic Party candidate, George Wallace, who felt like segregation in all things was the far better way to go.

So congratulations to the University of California System for helping fulfill the dream of George Wallace. What a wonderful combination we have. Not a progressive, as they might claim the name, but of regressives who are going back and claiming the dream, not of Dr. King, but of Democrat Party activist, George Wallace. Congratulations. You make a great pair, California University System, and George Wallace's dream. Wow.

#### CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

Mr. GOHMERT. We also have had mention tonight of efforts toward what some call sentencing reform. I was honored back in 2007 to get a call from a man that I think the world of, former Attorney General Ed Meese. Apparently he had heard of my concerns about some of the Federal criminal

laws that needed to be changed; that we had too many people in America who were being harassed and their lives or their families destroyed by Federal criminal law that allowed people to be prosecuted for violating, not a law that Congress had passed, but some regulation that some cubicle-holder had decided would be a good thing to do.

Unelected bureaucrats in Washington decided we will make this a regulation, and since Congress passed a law saying you have to follow all the laws and rules regarding this issue, we fall under the rules and regulations; therefore, they can go to prison for failing to do what we, as unelected bureaucrats in Washington, decided that someone somewhere we have never been must do.

So I was greatly in favor and encouraged to hear of the interest from the Heritage Foundation, former Attorney General Ed Meese, to pursue criminal justice reform.

We have had difficulty moving that forward, and I greatly appreciate the leadership of Judiciary Committee Chairman BOB GOODLATTE. We have been able to get through some criminal justice reforms that I have been hoping to see passed since 2007.

At times we made strange bedfellows, politically speaking, I guess, when we had Ed Meese and others from the Heritage Foundation, along with leaders from the ACLU, who had similar concerns that we did, and we were coming together to try to correct great injustices within the criminal justice laws.

Unfortunately, the President, probably inspired by mentors like George Soros, they see that before criminal justice reform could be passed, at least contemporaneously, you have to pass sentencing reform.

The Obama administration wants that to be a major part of the Obama legacy. And when you see how many people are being completely failed and harmed by ObamaCare, I can certainly understand why President Obama would rather have his legacy be that of something in the criminal justice area rather than ObamaCare.

Without—and I have to say, this has certainly damaged in a bipartisan fashion people across America. There are people who have been helped by having government pay a good part of their health care.

You look at the bottom line, especially, from the people I have heard from all over east Texas, we have vast numbers complaining they have lost their insurance they liked. They lost the doctor that was keeping them healthy or had gotten them cured, and now they were back in trouble. They lost the doctor or the insurance company, they lost the hospital they wanted to go to, all because of that around-2500-page monstrosity that is normally referred to as ObamaCare. It is easier to call it ObamaCare than the Affordable Care Act because it is not affordable. It has cost some people every-thing.