

“That order is unconstitutional.

“In my view, the appeal should have been disposed on the ground that the League of Women Voters and their allies have not even come close to demonstrating the type of harm entitling them to an order suspending these State laws.”

□ 1015

Notwithstanding Judge Randolph's dissent, the bad guys prevailed.

Now, what does all that mean? It means that, right before the Presidential election, Federal courts created a massive legal hole that empowers noncitizens to register to vote and, once registered, to vote in America's elections with impunity, thereby undermining and diluting the vote of lawful Americans and striking at the very heart of our democracy.

It means that President-elect Trump may very well be right that he “won the popular vote if you deduct the millions of people who voted illegally.”

Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, we will never know for sure if hundreds of thousands or millions of noncitizens voted in the 2016 elections. Worse yet, if the leftwing media pundits continue to summarily dismiss and turn a blind eye to the problem, it will be harder to stop future elections from being stolen.

FAREWELL ADDRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, it is hard to condense 28 years into 5 minutes, but that is what I am going to try to do here.

This is a wonderful opportunity that I have had to represent the Seventh District of the State of Washington, and I want to thank the people who sent me here. To represent people for 28 years, having their trust, is a great responsibility and a great honor.

My constituents have witnessed the good times and the bad. They have offered encouragement when I did what they thought was right and were gracious to point out to me when they thought that I had veered from where they thought I should be. I have enduring thanks for what they did for me.

I also want to thank my colleagues here in the House, my colleagues in the Washington State delegation, all the staff who have served me over these 28 years, and, of course, my family, who allowed me to serve here in the Congress.

When I envisioned what might be my final speech on the floor of the House, I had hoped for a brighter political future than the one currently unfolding. For me and for millions of Americans, it is difficult to see the coming 4 years as anything short of calamitous. Never has the role of congressional oversight been as critical to the integrity of our Republic as it is now, and I beg my colleagues to remain vigilant as we con-

front this menacing wave of nativism, misogyny, and racism that is raging in our country.

The systems of checks and balances underpin the very survival of the democracy, and this body must not fail in its constitutional responsibility to scrutinize every executive action and to pass sanction when the rights of the people are threatened. This is the people's House, designed not just to reflect the will of the people, but also to ensure the rights of the people endure.

The right to worship as you choose, the right to marry whom you love, the right to equal pay, the right to a livable wage, the right to affordable health care, the right to reproductive choice, and, of course, the basic founding rights affirmed by our earliest tenets and enshrined as “inalienable” are always at risk without the people's advocate to protect them.

As President Obama said in his second inaugural:

History may deem equality for all as self-evident, but we know these rights have never been self-executing; that while freedom is a gift from God, it must be secured by the people here on Earth.

Mr. Speaker, you have a dark and difficult road ahead. Please do not lose sight of the fundamental decency and respect for our fellow citizens that has always made this country great.

It is fashionable these days to ridicule the Congress, but I depart this institution steadfast in the belief that the government—and the Federal Government, in particular—can, should, and does make a positive impact on the lives of all Americans.

Moreover, I am a proud member of the Democratic Party. We may spend the next couple of years massaging our message and regrouping our strength, but the values that define us as a party are as true and as important today as they ever were. This is still the party of social and economic justice; it is still the party of environmental protection; it is still the party of international diplomacy; it is still the party of guaranteed health care and quality education; and this will always—always—be the party of ethnic, racial, and gender inclusion. We are a party of service, of dignity, and of hope.

I came to this House 28 years ago to work on health care, and with President Obama, we were able to get it started. It is incumbent on this body not to leave the American people out in the cold when they are sick or ailing or worried about whether they can go to the hospital and pay for what they have got.

Mr. Speaker, it has been an honor to serve here. I leave here. It has been a good run, and I thank everyone who has been helpful to me during that period of time.

Mr. Speaker, it's hard to condense 28 remarkable years into five minutes, and it's even harder to thank each of those people with whom I have worked and who have helped me over the course of this fortunate career.

First, I want to thank the people of the 7th District of Washington State. It has been my

privilege to serve them in the United States Congress. I leave forever grateful for their unwavering trust and support.

My constituents have witnessed the good times and the bad; they offered encouragement when I did something right, and were gracious to point me in the right direction when I had wandered off the path. They have my enduring thanks.

I also want to thank my colleagues here in the House; my colleagues in the Washington State delegation; all the staff who have served with me over the last 28 years; and of course my family who has supported me in my public service.

When I envisioned giving what is perhaps my final speech on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, I had hoped for a brighter political future than the one currently unfolding.

For me, and for millions of Americans, it is difficult to see the coming four years as nothing short of calamitous.

Never has the role of Congressional oversight been as critical to the integrity of our republic as it is now and I beg my colleagues to remain vigilant as we confront this menacing wave of nativism, misogyny, and racism that is raging our country.

The system of checks and balances underpin the very survival of our democracy and this body must not fail in its Constitutional responsibility to scrutinize executive action and to pass sanction when the rights of the people are threatened.

This is the “People's House,” designed not just to reflect the will of the people, but also to ensure that the rights of those people endure.

The right to worship as you choose; the right to marry who you love; the right to equal pay; the right to a livable wage; the right to affordable healthcare; the right to reproductive choice; and of course, those basic founding rights, affirmed by our earliest tenets and enshrined as “inalienable,” are always at risk without the people's advocates to uphold them.

As President Obama said in his Second Inaugural, history may deem equality for all as self-evident, but we know these rights have “never been self-executing; that while freedom is a gift from God, it must be secured by His people here on Earth.”

My colleagues, you have a dark and difficult road ahead. Please do not lose sight of the fundamental decency and respect for our fellow citizens that has always made this country great.

It is fashionable these days to ridicule the Congress, but I depart this institution steadfast in the belief that government, and the federal government in particular, can, should, and does make a positive impact on the lives of Americans.

Moreover, I am a proud member of the Democratic Party. We may spend the next couple of years honing our message and regrouping our electoral strength, but the values that define us as a party are as true and important today as they ever were.

This is still the party of social and economic justice; this is still the party of environmental protection; this is still the party of international diplomacy; this is still the party of guaranteed healthcare and quality education.

And this will always be the party of ethnic, racial, and gender inclusion.

We are the party of service, of dignity, and of I hope.

I came to the House 28 years ago as a proud liberal. And that is how I am going to leave.

Mr. Speaker, it has been an honor, and my privilege.

WAR ON COAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. JENKINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, coal communities throughout West Virginia and Appalachia are struggling. This administration's war on coal and market forces have combined to close coal mines and send thousands of coal miners to the unemployment lines.

While we work to repeal onerous and overreaching regulations and reopen mines, we also need to diversify our economy. That means attracting new industries to our coal communities and creating new opportunities for investment.

I have introduced, today, H.R. 6403, legislation that will help us do just that. The Creating Opportunities for Rural Economies Act would allocate a portion of available new markets tax credits to be used for development in communities impacted by the downturn in coal.

Over the next 3 years, it would mean \$525 million in credits for heavily impacted communities in West Virginia and Appalachia. These tax credits can be used to help spur investment for new businesses. They can go toward developing new mixed-use facilities, food and grocery stores in underserved communities, manufacturing, healthcare services, and so much more.

I want to thank Senator SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO for her leadership in the Senate on this important issue and legislation. Our coal communities deserve our support and help as they work to diversify their economies.

MINERS' PENSIONS

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, with only weeks left in this Congress—2, to be exact—our retired coal miners and widows are wondering if we will act to protect them. At the end of the year, the healthcare benefits for many miners and their widows will dry up, and their pensions could be cut in the months and years ahead.

When they went down into the mines, they were made a promise: when you retire, you will have a good pension and healthcare benefits. Now that promise is in jeopardy. The pensions and benefits they worked their whole lives for are in jeopardy.

Mr. Speaker, time is running out to do the right thing by our miners and their families. But we have a solution: the Coal Healthcare and Pensions Protection Act, legislation I am a proud cosponsor of. It is a bipartisan bill, and a similar bill is pending in the Senate.

Congress needs to act to fulfill this promise, to keep our word to the min-

ers of West Virginia and other coal States. These miners and their families deserve no less than what they worked their entire lives to earn: the peace of mind that comes with a pension.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to keep the promise and support this important legislation. Time is running out to stand up for our miners and their families.

STRENGTHENING THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of recent efforts to strengthen the partnership between Israel and the United States by this Congress.

Our countries have a long and important friendship. That is why my and this Congress' support of H.R. 5877, the United States-Israel Advanced Research Partnership Act, and H.R. 5843, the United States-Israel Cybersecurity Cooperation Enhancement Act, two bills that advance the vital goal of bolstering the U.S.-Israeli partnership on security, are so important. These bills focus specifically on strengthening cybersecurity collaboration through grants, research, and antiterrorism programs.

Knowing of the security challenges Israel faces in its region, these measures would reinforce our commitment to our most critical ally in the Middle East at a time when the evolving threat of a cybersecurity attack has never been more serious. It is imperative we continue to work together on the security issues faced by our respective countries.

STUDENT VETERANS

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of bipartisan legislation to improve and simplify the decisionmaking process for our student veterans.

H.R. 5047, the Protecting Veterans' Educational Choice Act, would help veterans clearly understand if and how their coursework credits might transfer between schools. The legislation would require the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide student veterans with detailed information about education assistance benefits, including how to request free education counseling services at the VA.

For our veterans who wish to obtain or complete a degree, access to this information can not only save them countless administrative headaches, but also precious time and money. I am proud to support measures such as this bill that would streamline the transition for veterans into civilian life and provide them with the tools and resources to succeed.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

FINDING CURES

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 34, the 21st Century Cures Act, a bipartisan bill that focuses solely on solutions for patients.

All of us have been affected, whether directly or indirectly, by tragic diseases. That is why advancing and improving medical innovation and providing much-needed resources that are required for finding cures, which this bill would do, are such important goals.

The 21st Century Cures Act would target diseases that do not yet have a cure. Bringing safe, effective drugs and devices to Pennsylvanians and Americans in a more efficient manner will benefit our families and communities. This bill would also bring much-needed certainty to job creators and help keep Pennsylvania at the forefront of medical innovation.

In Congress, we have a responsibility to ensure that resources are available to help defeat these yet incurable diseases. This bill is a significant step forward toward this goal.

The 21st Century Cures Act also includes important mental health reform measures. I have focused much of my attention since coming into office on ways to make Pennsylvania communities healthier and safer, and families across my district have shared their stories about how mental health issues impact individuals, families, and communities. Much-needed reforms are included in this bill: empowering patients and caregivers, ensuring availability of treatment, encouraging students to choose careers in mental health, providing for those on the front lines, and maintaining transparency in government programs.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

HOMENET AUTOMOTIVE WINS TECH AWARD

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate HomeNet Automotive, a company in my district, on receiving the Tech360 Technology Team of the Year Award from the Chester County Economic Development Council.

I had the opportunity to visit HomeNet Automotive over the summer and enjoyed learning about their innovative company, which is bringing jobs and forward-looking technology to our community.

HomeNet Automotive makes the SnapLot Photo Capture App, which provides car dealers with the ability to update the inventory it displays on their Web sites. A tech team from the company based in East Whiteland, Chester County, updated the technology to improve its ease of use for dealers. The app is currently used by dealers nationwide as well as at Manheim Auto Auctions, with the possibility of expanding with Manheim into Europe.

I am very proud of that company in Pennsylvania's Sixth Congressional District.