

seeker, who, in his role as chair of the Committee on Oversight and Reform, knew that the best disinfectant is sunlight, and he shone a light on every injustice.

He was a patriot, tireless in his efforts to preserve our democracy, and a statesman of unwavering conviction. He challenged each of us to appeal to our better angels, to be decent, to be fair, to comport ourselves with the reverence and dignity this institution demands and our country deserves.

He was consistent and did that even in the face of great physical fatigue and, some days, perhaps, even a weary spirit, in the face of injustice and indignities. He often reminded us that it was our charge on the Committee on Oversight and Reform to be an efficient and effective pursuit of the truth.

His body has transitioned, but his instructive words ring resoundingly and true. He was a selfless servant and leader until the end.

One of the final pursuits of justice we took on together was to maintain access to lifesaving healthcare for our immigrant neighbors in the medical deferred action program. His staffer, Anthony, drove through the night to Baltimore so the chairman could sign subpoenas, advancing our fight together.

Truly, in life, all you have is your name and your word, and when it comes to Elijah Cummings, both were good.

Until the very end, the chairman would stop my staff and me in the hallways, and he would say: Are you keeping up the fight?

He knew the fight was greater than one man or one mission or one legislative act. The pursuit of justice is not a box you simply check. So we continue in that pursuit, following in the footsteps of a giant.

No one can fill your shoes, but we will pick up the torch and press forward with your moral clarity as our roadmap and your vision as our charge. We will keep up the fight.

To my forever chairman, Elijah Cummings, rest in power.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I just want to close my portion of this by stating that, when it came to a notion of democracy, Chairman Cummings, in his speeches, insistently invoked it, and not in the inert way that elected officials tend to do.

He spoke of democracy as something vital and fragile and valuable, an inheritance that had to be safeguarded for future generations. He said that to all of us who sat under him in his chairmanship and ensured that we brought that passion and that desire to do the best for this democracy that our bodies could do.

So I thank him for that. I thank him for everything that he has been to all of us.

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

## PAYING TRIBUTE TO CONGRESSMAN ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. CLARKE) for 30 minutes.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and my privilege to continue the CBC's Special Order hour, and we are going to call this portion CBC and friends.

It is my honor now to yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN), one who has served alongside the Honorable Elijah E. Cummings throughout his tenure here and I know would like to bring forth his very special remarks and reflections at this time.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise, yes, to mourn his death, but I also rise to celebrate his life, because it was a life worthy of great celebration.

I rise understanding that, yes, he was brilliant. He was a Phi Beta Kappa with some 13 doctoral degrees, but he did not allow his brilliance to outshine his goodness.

His goodness was such that he was one who cared for the least, the last, and the lost. He was there for those whom we consider the least among us, those who were not born into plenty but, rather, into poverty.

He was there for those who were the last, the last hired and the first fired. He fought for jobs for them.

He was there for those who are lost, lost in poverty in the richest country in the world, and he fought to elevate their lives; those lost in chemical abuse, he was there to help them acquire healthcare.

He was truly a person who made a difference in the lives of people whom he never had the opportunity to meet and greet.

So I mourn his passing, but I celebrate his living.

And while I am sure there are many who will say that he left too soon, I can only say this: We had him for 68 years, and I am grateful for that 68 years.

God bless you, dear brother. You were a wise warrior and a seeker of peace. And while you may not be with us physically, your spirit will endure forever.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Houston for sharing those very inspiring, uplifting comments about our dear, beloved colleague at this time.

It is important for us, as we go through the stages of mourning, to recognize, as he has stated, rightly stated, that we were fortunate to have Elijah Cummings with us for 68 years—his family, his friends, even longer—and during the 68 years, we were fortunate to have him as part of our family here in the Congressional Black Caucus and in the Halls of Congress.

In that time, he was able to accomplish so much through his God-given talents and abilities that he has become well-known not only here in the United States, but around the world.

I am hearing from members of the Caribbean community who have read about and heard about the passing of Elijah Cummings, all of whom have reached out to share with me their comments and their condolences because they understand what Elijah has meant not only to the United States House of Representatives, United States Congress, but, indeed, because he was a world-class leader.

Mr. Speaker, I have some friends and colleagues of the honorable chairman of the Oversight and Reform Committee who would like to say a few words, if you will, about our great colleague.

It is my honor, at this time, to yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN), my classmate and colleague, a member of the Oversight and Reform Committee and the Judiciary Committee, to give his remarks.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I was just walking back to my office and I saw on the video this memorial service, this celebration of life, and I wanted to come listen. It has been inspiring for me, so many appropriate remarks made about this great man.

I feel privileged just to stand here at the podium where he spoke and next to his photograph just as I felt privileged to know him and become a friend, and where we spoke over here when he was in the wheelchair and in the Speaker's lobby before votes and during votes.

When I was home this weekend, more people came up to me in Memphis, and people on social media, and expressed their condolences, their appreciation of his life and their knowledge that the Congress had lost a person who was irreplaceable.

Elijah Cummings was one of the great people that I have had the opportunity to interact with in my life, in Congress, and in other places.

Truly, a giant has fallen. He had grace. He had knowledge. He had judgment. He had character.

It has been spoken, and I remember seeing him on television walking in Baltimore at some risk to himself, during the riots, to help bring calm to Baltimore, leadership where he put his community first and his safety second.

He talked about: We are better than this. Well, we are better than this, and, hopefully, one day, we will be as good as him.

He knew that we were only here for a minute and you should make that time worthwhile, and he made it worthwhile.

Friday, a week ago, the last Friday that Elijah was in our caucus, we had a caucus conference call, and the discussion toward the end was about the Congress' issuance of subpoenas and the attempt to get them enforced through the courts.

I believe Elijah was the last person to speak on the call, and when he spoke, it was like hearing the voice of God. He said that these cases will go through the courts, and they will be appealed, and they will eventually be appealed to

the Supreme Court, and, at that point, our democracy will be in the balance.

He was right, and those were his last words to the caucus.

He cared about democracy. He cared about this Congress. He cared about the Constitution.

And even when President Trump degraded his city, he was gracious in his response and never was in any way defensive or attacking the President.

Elijah Cummings would stop you and give you a word of encouragement to keep going. He was one of the great people to serve in the Congress. I am just blessed to have my life interface with his. I will miss him greatly.

I also extend my condolences to his family, and I hope I get the chance to serve along with his wife.

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Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Tennessee for sharing his insight and his own personal experiences with our dear colleague, Elijah Cummings, who touched so many lives, Members here in Congress, the members of their family, our own constituents.

Like Mr. COHEN, so many people in my district were reaching out and expressing their condolences and sharing their stories with me this past week. I attended a church service where, again, people talked about Elijah Cummings. His influence has gone far and wide, and I think that the values that he held about our democracy are reverberating, and that should give us all great heart to move forward and press forward as we fight the battle to preserve our democracy and lift up the Constitution and rule of law.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH), another colleague and also another classmate of mine, who has joined us and would like to share his sentiments, his insights into the life of Elijah Cummings and his interactions with our dear colleague.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my classmate for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it has been so wonderful to be sitting here listening to members of the Congressional Black Caucus talk about their work, their friendship, their respect for a giant who walked among us, and of course, that is Elijah Cummings.

The Congressional Black Caucus is regarded by many, myself included, as the conscience of this Congress. And there was no better representative of that conscience than Elijah Cummings, who served for a couple of years as the chair of the Black Caucus. All of us who served with Elijah are better for it and have fond memories and great appreciation for our friendship and admiration for him.

I was quite lucky because I have served with Elijah on the Oversight and Reform Committee for 13 years. So in those committees, along with you my friend, Representative CLARKE, we really got to see Elijah face a lot of very tough situations.

I am going to make it a little bit personal here about some of my vivid experiences I have had with Elijah. Elijah and I worked very hard on the drug bill that is now going to be named in his honor to provide the government with the ability to negotiate lower prices so that the people he represents, and we all represent, can get the drugs they need.

Shortly after President Trump was elected, I think it was April of 2017, the President invited Elijah to the White House to talk about prescription drugs. Since I had been working with Elijah on this for years, Elijah invited me. I kind of crashed the party.

Number one, how many of our colleagues would invite a junior Member to a White House meeting just because the two of us had been working on the issue together? I would like to say all of us would. Elijah did.

We went to the White House, and we talked a lot with the President about the prescription drug negotiation bill. But in the course of the conversation, the President expressed dismay about where Elijah lived. This was before the President was saying the horrible things about that community with rats and rodents and all the other things. He was genuinely dismayed that a person in Congress could live in a community that the President just didn't think that he could ever live.

And I remember Elijah was dismayed that anybody, including the President of the United States, didn't understand how wonderful the people were in that community, how dignified they were, how they faced adversity every single day, how they helped one another get up when somebody fell down. Elijah was astonished. He lived in the best place in the world. That was what Elijah conveyed to the President. And Elijah conveyed that he represented the best people in the world. That was Elijah Cummings.

I remember the topic was prescription drugs, and Elijah was quite disciplined. You know, the topic is the topic, we will get to the business at hand. But the question of voter fraud came up, and in the way that only Elijah can do, where he is not intimidated but he is not showing off—and it is a fine balance—he just said in his direct way, we don't have a problem with voter fraud. We have a problem with voter suppression.

And to be in the presence of this man in the Oval Office where there was no artifice to Elijah's presence, there was no sense from Elijah of disrespect for the office, certainly, even though he disagreed with the President on so many things, but it was no different for Elijah than if he was in a local diner in Baltimore talking to the people he represented; he was direct, to the point, and empathetic to the concerns of the people that he represented.

So it was just a wonderful opportunity for me to see a great man in action. It is how he lived. It wasn't like he had to think about it. It wasn't like

he had to calculate anything. He was present in that moment. He was present in that moment as he was present every moment of the day. It was there for the people he represented. He conveyed the immense appreciation and respect for the dignity of the people he represented and the humility that he felt that he had been given this opportunity to be their Member of Congress, a special man.

The memory of Elijah for all of us will sustain us through difficult times, and may his example be the one we aspire to follow.

I thank my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus for this wonderful tribute to a wonderful leader from the ranks of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Vermont for sharing his insight as a member of the committee led by the Honorable Elijah E. Cummings.

As we wind down here this evening, there are a couple of things that have been a running theme among our colleagues this evening, and it is sort of the quiet thunder, the strength, the dignity, the integrity of the Honorable Elijah E. Cummings. And I thought about the fact that still waters run deep. He wasn't a boisterous person, a showboater, but he knew how to command the moral authority that moves a Nation. Whether it was voting rights or civil rights, whether it was the children of Flint or the children of the border, whether it was preserving this democracy and making sure that the rule of law stands above all else in the Constitution of the United States, we could turn to our North Star, Elijah E. Cummings to be a champion, to be a voice, to be the compass that led this Congress into the next level of integrity that we need to move this Nation forward.

And so, we are honored this evening that so many colleagues have taken the time to be here in tribute to the Honorable Elijah E. Cummings. We again want to, on behalf of the members of the Congressional Black Caucus and colleagues of the wider body, express our heartfelt condolences to Maya Rockey Moore, the family, the constituents of Maryland's Seventh District, as well as the very dedicated staff of the Honorable Elijah E. Cummings.

Congressman Cummings will never be forgotten. As I stated in my comments, we are legacy keepers, and so everything that we have been taught and learned from Elijah will be applied in the days ahead as he would have us do.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of a great leader, legislator and servant of the people. A man of principle and unyielding resolve to be the voice of the people; Congressman Elijah Eugene Cummings.

A native of Baltimore, Maryland, Congressman Cummings maintained an unbreakable bond to the community that raised him, fighting for the people he loved every day.

From his days as Speaker pro tempore of the Maryland House of Delegates, to becoming Chairman of the powerful House Committee on Oversight and Reform of the U.S. Congress, Congressman Cummings defended the less fortunate by ensuring federal government programs were meeting the needs of the people of his district and this country. He became a powerful voice for equality and opportunity, a tireless advocate for affordable healthcare, quality education, civil rights, and criminal justice reform.

Congressman Cummings committed himself to civil rights advocacy and social justice. He was known as the gentleman who "will not yield" when it comes to educating our children, protecting communities of color, and migrant families. As his colleague, it was no surprise to see him take to the streets to extinguish the flames of outrage sparked by racism and excessive violence by law enforcement in his hometown. He will forever be remembered as a calming spirit in a time of civil unrest in the city of Baltimore.

Congressman Cummings' lifetime of public service was defined by compassion, integrity, and a commitment to empowering the people he was sworn to represent. His presence will be sorely missed. His legacy of leadership will continue to be an inspiration to us all. It was an honor to know him, and call him friend.

Elijah was a man of great and unwavering faith. I can imagine, as he was making his transition early last Thursday morning, he sang the words of the old hymn, "Oh, I want to see Him, look upon His face; There to sing forever of His saving grace; On the streets of glory let me lift my voice; Cares all past, home at last, ever to rejoice."

Farewell my friend. Another soldier gone home.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, last week, we lost the earthly man Elijah Cummings. Most of the country and many around the world knew him as a member of Congress from the city of Baltimore. He was a fierce fighter for the forgotten, a sworn opponent of hunger, poverty, abuse and addiction and a relentless advocate for civil rights. Chairman Cummings was a driven man, a person who pushed for what was right because he believed in the supreme responsibility of elected officials to advocate for those we represent.

I have the honor of being a member of the Committee he chaired for 5 years. Congressman Cummings was a mentor to me. I and those who had a chance to interact with him knew him as more than a Member of Congress. More importantly, he was a man of God. He lived and worked in Congress on Christian values.

He was a man of great wisdom and, although he needed little protection, I viewed my role on the Committee as not only being the

consummate prosecutor and counselor but as a frontline and protector to this gentleman. With a booming voice and speaking cadence that hinted of the pulpit—his parents were preachers—Chairman Cummings was a compelling figure on Capitol Hill for more than two decades, repeatedly re-elected by voters in Maryland's Seventh Congressional District, which covers much of Baltimore, including a section of the city with more than its share of social problems. He campaigned tirelessly for stricter gun control laws and was a consummate voice for those addicted to drugs. He was at times gruff, but always respected. But, it was as Chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform—the panel charged with maintaining integrity in government—that Chairman Cummings may have left his most legacy.

When it came to the notion of democracy, Chairman Cummings, in his speeches—particularly those he gave in the past few years—insistently invoked it, and not in the inert way that elected officials tend to. He spoke of democracy as something vital and fragile and valuable—an inheritance that had to be safeguarded for future generations. When he spoke of HR-1, the exhaustive election-protection bill that the Democrats introduced in January as their first piece of legislation of this Congress, he mentioned his ninety-two-year-old mother, who had died a year earlier. She was a former sharecropper, who implored him, "Do not let them take our votes away from us." He viewed his Chairmanship of the House Oversight and Reform Committee as part of the battle to protect voting rights. What remains clear is the void that Chairman Cummings's absence leaves in his district and his country. This would have been the case at nearly any point in his quarter century in Congress. But it's even more acute in this one. In a fiery bit of oration delivered at the introduction of HR-1, he pledged to "fight to the death" in defense of voting and, thereby, democracy. It was a promise that he made good on.

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to memorialize the life of an honorable statesman and dear friend, Congressman Elijah Cummings.

Congressman Cummings graduated from Baltimore City College High School before attending Howard University, where he earned a Bachelor's degree in Political Science. At Howard, he served as the president of the student government and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, the oldest academic honor society in the United States. He continued his studies at the University of Maryland School of Law and went on to be admitted to the Maryland Bar Association.

Congressman Cummings was elected to the Maryland House of Delegates in 1982, where he served for 16 years. As a Member of the House of Delegates, he was elected as the first African American Speaker Pro Tempore in the state's history and was selected as Chairman of the Legislative Black Caucus. Following the conclusion of his service in the state legislature, Congressman Cummings was entrusted to represent the constituents of the 7th District of Maryland in the United States House of Representatives, where he had served dutifully since.

During his tenure in the House of Representatives, Congressman Cummings championed issues including civil rights, access to

affordable healthcare, and congressional oversight, to name a few. He has served as Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus in the 108th Congress and Ranking Member of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform. At the time of his passing, he was Chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform and a senior Member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

Congressman Cummings was a faithful member of the Baltimore community above everything else. He served on many local boards, including the U.S. Naval Academy Board of Visitors, the University of Maryland Board of Advisors, and the SEED School of Maryland Board of Directors. In addition, he was an Honorary Board Member of KIPP Baltimore Schools and the Baltimore School for the Arts.

Mr. Speaker, I join with Members of Congress in extending our sympathies to Congressman Cummings' wife, Maya Rockey Moore Cummings, his family, and to all who had the great pleasure of knowing him. The legacy of Congressman Cummings will endure in this great institution, as those that live in the hearts of others never truly perish. May he rest in peace.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Congressman Elijah Cummings, a friend, mentor, patriot and titan of the House of Representatives.

Congressman Cummings was a giant among us who led with his heart and governed with the love of his district and our country. He worked until his very last breath for the good of our nation because he believed in the power of the American people to make our country a better place for our children to live and prosper.

After all, Congressman Cummings knew firsthand the power of the American dream. The son of sharecroppers, he grew up to graduate Phi Beta Kappa from Howard University, receive his law degree from the University of Maryland and go on to serve his beloved home of Baltimore in both the state legislature and in Congress.

Day in and day out, Congressman Cummings fought to ensure our government worked for the people, providing the tools to help Americans succeed and the opportunities to make their dreams a reality. He understood that patriotism is not looking at our nation's past through rosy glasses and a revisionist history, but rather that it is having the courage to examine more closely those areas that are broken and believing in the power of our system to fix them.

Social justice was in his blood—when he was just 11 years old, he and his friends worked to integrate a segregated swimming pool in his native Baltimore. I was honored to work with him closely to ensure every American is able to cast his or her ballot on election day. And he fought passionately against forces that undermine the integrity of our democracy and the principles upon which our nation was founded.

Congressman Cummings will be forever missed, but his legacy lives on and continues to inspire us to live our lives for the benefit of others—and the good of our nation.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to: