

United States through legislative redress. Those one hundred years saw the advent of the civil rights movement and Jim Crow, but it also was marred by undercurrents of racism and random acts of violence.

As the Representative of the Fourth Congressional District of Georgia and a senior member of the House Judiciary, this legislation, which would finally make the act of lynching a hate crime, has particular significance to me and my constituents. Our district is home to Stone Mountain which is commonly known as the symbolic birthplace of the modern Klu Klux Klan. Since 1915, the Klu Klux Klan has met at Stone Mountain and as recently as 2018, white supremacist organizations sought to rally atop the mountain with Confederate flags. Over the years, many civil rights battles have been won in our district, but our fight for equality is not over.

Lynching is a vestige of slavery and America's views on race and racism in this country. It has long been a practice used to keep enslaved Africans, and later, free Black men, women, and children living in terror. The practice has irrevocably damaged the American psyche. It is time to formally distance our country from these heinous acts and raise the crime to the consideration of a hate crime. In doing so, we declare to ourselves and the rest of the world that we will not tolerate bigotry in the United States and that those who would harm others because of the color of their skin will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Rep. BOBBY RUSH's Emmett Till Antilynching Act will finally be considered by the Full House. This bill honors Emmett Till, a 14-year-old African American boy lynched in Mississippi in 1955. As we progress towards a more perfect union by recognizing lynching for what it is—a hate crime, we reflect on how this heinous practice has been wielded to oppress minorities throughout American history.

My good friend Rep. RUSH brings this legislation to the House floor citing the riots that took place in Charlottesville in 2017 and during the deadly El Paso shooting in 2019. The lynching of black and brown people in our country is truly, as he says, prevalent in American society today. Its face may have evolved, but the crime of hate that it represents is indisputable.

The Senate passed a resolution in 2005 that apologized to victims of lynching crimes; however, lynching still is not classified as a federal hate crime. We honor, today, the herculean efforts from American heroes like my fellow Georgia Congressman JOHN LEWIS, who worked to mobilize our country against these violent acts.

We have waited too long to raise this crime to the level of a federal hate crime, and we cannot delay any longer. Only when we reckon with our troubled history and the epidemic of hate crimes against black and brown people in the United States can we begin to construct a more perfect union.

I'm proud to lend my support and my vote to this important legislation.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO DESIGNATE THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AS AN EMPOWERMENT ZONE

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, March 2, 2020

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce a bill that would statutorily add the District of Columbia to the national empowerment zone program, which provides federal tax incentives for businesses to locate and invest in low-income areas. In 1993, Congress created the national empowerment zone program and left it to federal agencies to designate a certain number of low-income areas as empowerment zones. The District was not one of the areas selected. However, in 1997, working primarily with Republicans in Congress, I created federal tax incentives for investment in the District by businesses and individuals. The business incentives were similar to, but more generous than, those available under the national empowerment zone program. I got the D.C. incentives reauthorized regularly until 2011, when Congress refused to extend only the D.C. program. At the same time, the national empowerment zone program continued to be reauthorized and was reauthorized last year through 2020. Under my bill, certain low-income neighborhoods, particularly in Wards 5, 7 and 8, would be treated as empowerment zones as long as the national empowerment zone program remains in effect.

The wisdom of the bipartisan, modest, targeted business tax incentives for D.C. has been amply and visibly demonstrated in the economic resurgence of parts of the nation's capital where they were applied. Among the most visible examples are the formerly run-down area around the Verizon Center (now Capital One Arena), which is now surrounded by offices, restaurants and vibrant nightlife, and the Penn Quarter neighborhood, which had limited residential, commercial and retail spaces, and is now a popular mixed-use neighborhood.

Unfortunately, the D.C. tax incentives were allowed to expire before the poorest D.C. neighborhoods were ready to make use of them, especially in Wards 5, 7 and 8. Withdrawing the D.C. tax incentives, particularly after they had proven to be effective in other areas of the city, has left the nation's capital with essentially half of a revival, and was tragically timed just as the lower-income parts of the District, which need the incentives most, are ready for redevelopment. The effectiveness of these incentives for the District has been demonstrated and their costs have been de minimis compared to the measurable benefits they have generated in the District.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill.

HONORING AL WHITE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, March 2, 2020

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable community servant Mr. Al White.

Mr. White was born in Duck Hill, Mississippi in July of 1955. Duck Hill is in Montgomery County, a county laden with much civil rights history. Mr. White has committed his life to documenting and preserving this history.

Mr. White graduated from Duck Hill High School in 1973. He is also a graduate of Mississippi Valley State University. Mr. White worked with "Why Was Mississippi Burning" in response to the "Mississippi Burning" documentary. He documented the inception of Southern Echo and other entities. He's worked with the NAACP, COFO, ACLU, Kellogg, and the Algebra Project. He also continues to be instrumental in documenting the conferences, events, and interviews around the Veterans of the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement.

Mr. White is currently the Director of the MVSU TV Studio and Instructor at Mississippi Valley State University. In this role, he shares the history of the civil rights movement with his students, ensuring that this history is passed on to the next generation.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Al White for his dedication and tenacity to serving his community and desire to be an example for all.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, March 2, 2020

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, on Friday, February 28, 2020 I regret not being present for a vote session. Had I been present, I would have voted in support of H.R. 2339—Protecting American Lungs and Reversing the Youth Tobacco Epidemic Act of 2019, Roll Call vote 78, and voted in support of H.R. 2819—Gold Star Mothers Families National Monument Extension Act, Roll Call Vote 76.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, March 2, 2020

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, I was unable to attend votes due to circumstances beyond my control. Had I been present, I would have voted Yea on Roll Call No. 76; Yea on Roll Call No. 77; and Nay on Roll Call No. 78.

HONORING THE LIFE OF BILL O'ROURKE, JR

HON. JOSEPH D. MORELLE

OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, March 2, 2020

Mr. MORELLE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Bill O'Rourke, Jr., a beloved pillar of our community, who passed away on January 28, 2020.

Mr. O'Rourke was above all an educator, coaching hundreds of students in the Webster Central School District for over forty years. Under the coaching of his father, O'Rourke became an outstanding player at St. John