

and recognize the remarkable achievements of the African-American community. Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing these distinguished students and their accomplishments in celebration of Black History Month.

I include in the RECORD Trenton Blake Townes' winning essay:

WHAT BLACK HISTORY MONTH MEANS TO ME  
(By Trenton Blake Townes)

As an African American male, Black History means a great deal to me. In today's society racism impacts the lives of my people in a number of ways and for me that is very scary. Black history means to me that no matter how the world views me, I am somebody and I stand on the shoulders of those before me. I can not think of what black history means to me without thinking of the years of slavery my ancestors had to endure. I think of the world we live in, and I don't understand why racism continues to exist today. The achievements of black people compared to the many pitfalls set before us should allow people to see how strong and resilient of a people we are, instead they only continue their attempts to destroy us and what we value and love.

I wish black history month would mean to everyone what it means to me. Black history month means to me that in times of turmoil I have the strength to rise victorious. Black history month is a time where all can reflect, not on the narrative they want us to believe in, but one that is factual and full of strength, hope and promise. It's one where Mansa Musa was King of the Mali empire in 1312 and is regarded even today as the richest man in the history of the world. Black history month means to me even as an enslaved people, Harriet Tubman led about 13 missions to help many to freedom and shared she could have freed more if they only knew they were enslaved. Black history month means to me we must pass the knowledge of the achievements of our ancestors like the establishment of what was known as Black Wall Street. Black wall street was a very prosperous and self-sufficient business district in Oklahoma where black people owned barbershops and stores, schools and even a local newspaper. Black history month means to me that I can help the advancement of the world like Dr. Gladys West who is a mathematician who grew up locally in Sutherland VA and helped with the technology used to create the GPS systems everyone uses today.

Black history month means to me it is a time where all people should be able to reflect upon the history of African Americans. This is a time where our culture, contributions, music, and arts should be celebrated as a positive influence and reviewed as leaving a positive impact on the entire world. Black history month is a time where we should be able to come together as a people and uplift one another and celebrate the many achievements of our past and the hope and realization of a rich future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 2, 2020

Mr. CLYBURN. Madam Speaker, I was necessarily absent and unable to cast my votes on all or part of June 4 and June 25. Had I been present, I would have voted: YEA Roll Call No. 235; YEA Roll Call No. 236; YEA Roll Call No. 237; YEA Roll Call No. 238; NAY Roll

Call No. 239; YEA Roll Call No. 240; YEA Roll Call No. 403; YEA Roll Call No. 404; NAY Roll Call No. 405; YEA Roll Call No. 406; NAY Roll Call No. 407; YEA Roll Call No. 408; YEA Roll Call No. 409; YEA Roll Call No. 410; and NAY Roll Call No. 411.

REVERSING THE YOUTH TOBACCO  
EPIDEMIC ACT OF 2019

SPEECH OF

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2020

Mr. DeFAZIO. Madam Speaker, I will vote in support of H.R. 2339, the Protecting American Lungs and Reversing the Youth Tobacco Epidemic Act of 2020.

Despite a previous years-long decline in youth tobacco use, we have witnessed a sharp rise in youth tobacco use and nicotine addiction in recent years. At the heart of this trend are flavored e-cigarettes, which Big Tobacco companies have marketed toward young people in their ongoing drive to increase their profits at the cost of public health.

I believe H.R. 2339 takes important steps toward tackling the youth tobacco epidemic and curtailing Big Tobacco's unfettered promotion of these highly addictive products, including closing loopholes in current law that cover traditional tobacco products but not e-cigarettes.

This includes H.R. 2339's provisions to prohibit the marketing, advertising, and promotion of e-cigarette products to individuals under 21 years of age; ban online sales of e-cigarettes; close a tax loophole for e-cigarettes by establishing tax parity with current tobacco taxes; apply graphic health warnings to cigarette packages; and provide funding for tobacco cessation research, therapies, and counseling, as well as for outreach and grants to medically underserved communities.

I also support provisions in H.R. 2339 which would waive Medicare's coinsurance requirements for colorectal cancer screening and increase access to asthma medications. While I will vote in support of H.R. 2339, I believe important improvements could have been made to strengthen the overall bill.

For example, in light of the legislation's ban on all tobacco flavors—including menthol—I strongly opposed the inclusion of a provision that creates a discriminatory exemption for premium cigars. This clearly unfair provision protects the tobacco habits of wealthier individuals—who use premium cigars at higher rates—while imposing new restrictions on tobacco products that low-income individuals and communities of color are more likely to use.

I also believe H.R. 2339 should have contained stronger provisions to alleviate criminal justice concerns that this legislation could disproportionately impact people of color, increase criminal penalties in state and localities across the country, and potentially encourage harmful police practices.

Additionally, while I am pleased H.R. 2339 takes vital steps to address the youth tobacco epidemic, this legislation unfortunately does not address the disturbing outbreak of vaping-related lung illnesses and deaths that we witnessed in recent months. The CDC found that

these deaths and illnesses stemmed primarily from black market THC-containing e-cigarettes with vitamin E acetate—an additive that can damage lungs when inhaled.

Despite these concerns, I believe the clear public health benefits of this legislation outweigh its faults. There is no time to waste. I will not stand idly by while corporate greed and Big Tobacco marketing tactics threaten to engulf yet another generation to the ravages of addiction, cancer, stunted brain development, damaged lungs, and more.

You can be sure I will work with my colleagues in the Senate to improve this legislation in order to put forward well-balanced legislation that can comprehensively address the youth tobacco epidemic.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, March 3, 2020 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's record.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED  
MARCH 4

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Department of Defense  
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2021 for the National Guard and Reserve.

SD-138

Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies  
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2021 for the Department of the Interior.

SD-124

Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies  
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2021 for the Department of Transportation.

SD-192

Committee on Armed Services  
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities  
To hold open and closed hearings to examine the Department of Defense review of vetting policies for international military students following