United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 117th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 167 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2021 No. 4

House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SWALWELL).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 6, 2021.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ERIC SWALWELL to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

O God, our refuge and our strength, a very present help in times of discord and trouble. Mountains crumble, waters rage, nations roar, and yet we need not be afraid, for even now You abide with us in these times of great discord, uncertainty, and unrest.

We, who have pledged to defend our Constitution against all enemies, we pray Your hedge of protection around this Nation. Defend us from those adversaries, both foreign and domestic, outside these walls and perhaps within these Chambers, who sow seeds of acrimony to divide colleagues and conspire to undermine trust in Your divine authority over all things.

The journey of this experiment in democracy is perilous and demanding, fraught with anger and discontent. But wise rulers still seek You.

So help us, God, to find You in the midst of us.

So help us, God, to see Your gracious plan even in the events of these days.

So help us, God, to serve You and this Nation with Godliness and dignity.

We lay before You the gifts of our hopes, our dreams, our deliberations, and our debates, that You would be revealed and exalted among the people.

We pray these things in the strength of Your holy name.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 5(a)(1)(A) of House Resolution 8, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MANN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. MANN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF TELLERS ON THE PART OF THE HOUSE TO COUNT ELECTORAL VOTES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution 1, and the order of the House of January 4, 2021, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of two Members as tellers on the part of the House to count the electoral votes:

The gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN); and

The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS).

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 5, 2021.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on January 5, 2021 at 5:05 p.m., said to contain a message from the President regarding additional steps addressing the threat posed by applications and other software developed or controlled by Chinese companies.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON,
Clerk of the House.

ADDRESSING THE THREAT POSED BY APPLICATIONS AND OTHER SOFTWARE DEVELOPED OR CONTROLLED BY CHINESE COMPANIES—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 117–6)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order declaring additional steps to be taken concerning the national emergency with respect to the information and communications technology and services supply chain declared in Executive Order 13873 of May 15, 2019 (Securing the Information and Communications Technology and Services Supply Chain) to deal with the threat posed by applications and other

Printed on recycled paper.

software developed or controlled by Chinese companies.

The pace and pervasiveness of the spread in the United States of certain connected mobile and desktop applications and other software developed or controlled by persons in the People's Republic of China (PRC), to include Hong Kong and Macau (China), continue to threaten the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. By accessing personal electronic devices such as smartphones, tablets, and computers, Chinese connected software applications can access and capture vast swaths of information from users, including sensitive personally identifiable information and private information. The continuing activity of the PRC and the Chinese Communist Party to steal or otherwise obtain United States persons' data makes clear that there is an intent to use bulk data collection to advance China's economic and national security agenda. To deal with this threat, additional steps are required against those who develop or control certain Chinese connected software applications to protect our national security.

The Executive Order prohibits certain future transactions, as determined by the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary), involving the following Chinese connected software applications: Alipay, CamScanner, QQ Wallet, SHAREit, Tencent QQ, VMate, WeChat Pay, and WPS Office. The Secretary is also directed to:

(i) continue to evaluate Chinese connected software applications that may pose an unacceptable risk to the national security, foreign policy, or economy of the United States, and to take appropriate action in accordance with Executive Order 13873; and

(ii) in consultation with the Attorney General and the Director of National Intelligence, provide a report to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs with recommendations to prevent the sale or transfer of United States user data to, or access of such data by, foreign adversaries, including through the establishment of regulations and policies to identify, control, and license the export of such data.

I have delegated to the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury and the Attorney General, the authority to take such actions, including adopting appropriate rules and regulations, and employing all other powers granted to the President by IEEPA, as may be necessary to implement the Executive Order. The heads of all executive departments and agencies are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to implement the provisions of the Executive Order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

DONALD J. TRUMP.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *January 5, 2021*.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 12:55 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1255

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 12 o'clock and 55 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. As the House comes to order for this important, historic meeting, let us be reminded that each side, House and Senate, Democrats and Republicans, each have 11 Members allowed to be present on the floor. Others may be in the gallery. This is at the guidance of the Attending Physician and the Sergeant at Arms.

The gentlemen on the Republican side of the aisle will please observe social distancing and the agreement to have 11 Members on each side so that we can honor the responsibility to this Chamber of this House of Representatives.

Please exit the floor if you do not have an assigned role from your leadership. You can share with your staff if you want to have a few more, but you cannot be that close together on the floor of the House with that many people in here.

I thank the Senate, and the Democrats and Republicans, for following the rules.

COUNTING ELECTORAL VOTES—JOINT SESSION OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE HELD PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 1

At 12:59 p.m., the Sergeant at Arms, Paul D. Irving, announced the Vice President and the Senate of the United States.

The Senate entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, headed by the Vice President and the Secretary of the Senate, the Members and officers of the House rising to receive them.

The Vice President took his seat as the Presiding Officer of the joint convention of the two Houses, the Speaker of the House occupying the chair on his left. Senators took seats to the right of the rostrum as prescribed by law.

The joint session was called to order by the Vice President.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Vice President, parliamentary inquiry.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The gentleman from Virginia will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Vice President, in order to follow the Speaker's instructions that only a limited number of people be on the floor, may I ask how one would make an objection or make a parliamentary inquiry in the future if you are not on the floor but in the gallery.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Under section 18 of title 3, United States Code, debate is not permitted in the joint session.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Further parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. Vice President, I am not attempting to debate. I am trying to find out how a parliamentary inquiry or a parliamentary point of order would be made in following with the Speaker's request that most of us not be on the floor. How do you make one of those points of order when you don't know what is going to happen later?

The VICE PRESIDENT. Respectfully, the gentleman's parliamentary inquiry constitutes debate, which is not permitted in the joint session under section 18 of title 3, United States Code.

Madam Speaker, Members of Congress, pursuant to the Constitution and the laws of the United States, the Senate and House of Representatives are meeting in joint session to verify the certificates and count the votes of the electors of the several States for President and Vice President of the United States.

After ascertainment has been had that the certificates are authentic and correct in form, the tellers will count and make a list of the votes cast by the electors of the several States.

The tellers on the part of the two Houses will take their places at the Clerk's desk.

The tellers, Mr. BLUNT and Ms. KLOBUCHAR on the part of the Senate, and Ms. LOFGREN and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois on the part of the House, took their places at the desk.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without objection, the tellers will dispense with the reading of the formal portions of the certificates.

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. After ascertaining that the certificates are regular in form and authentic, the tellers will announce the votes cast by the electors for each State, beginning with Alabama, which the Parliamentarians have advised me is the only certificate of vote from that State, and purports to be a return from the State, and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of that State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Senator BLUNT. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Alabama seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 9 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 9 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Alabama that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Alaska, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Alaska seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 3 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 3 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Alaska that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Arizona, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote that the State purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of that State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Arizona seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 11 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 11 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Arizona that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Vice President, I, PAUL GOSAR from Arizona, rise for myself and 60 of my colleagues to object to the counting of the electoral ballots from Arizona.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Is the objection in writing and signed by a Senator?

Mr. GOSAR. Yes, it is.

Senator CRUZ. It is.

The VICE PRESIDENT. An objection presented in writing and signed by both a Representative and a Senator complies with the law, chapter 1 of title 3, United States Code.

The Clerk will report the objection.

The Clerk read the objection as follows:

OBJECTION TO COUNTING THE ELECTORAL VOTES OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA

We, a Member of the House of Representatives and a United States Senator, object to the counting of the electoral votes of the State of Arizona on the ground that they were not, under all of the known circumstances, regularly given.

PAUL GOSAR,
Representative, State of Arizona.
TED CRUZ,
Senator, State of Texas.

SENATORS

Mike Braun, John Kennedy, Ron Johnson, Steve Daines, James Lankford, Bill Hagerty, Marsha Blackburn.

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Mo Brooks AL–5, Andy Biggs AZ–5, Jim Jordan OH–4, Madison Cawthorn NC–11, Scott Perry PA–10, Mike Kelly PA–16, Clay Higgins LA–3, John W. Rose TN–6, Bill Posey FL–8, Jeff Duncan SC–3, Brian Babin TX–36, Louie Gohmert TX–1, Brian J. Mast FL–18, Warren Davidson OH–8, Andy Harris MD–1, Steven Palazzo MS–4, Doug Lamborn CO–5, Kat Cammack FL–3.

Tracey Mann KS–1, Bob Good VA–5, Adrian Smith NE–3, Billy Long MO–7, Jack Bergman MI–1, Michael Cloud TX–27, Rick Crawford AR–1, Roger Williams TX–25, Bob Gibbs OH–7, Russ Fulcher ID–1, Ted Budd NC–13, Barry Moore AL–2, Lee Zeldin NY–1, Jake LaTurner KS–2, David Rouzer NC–7, Jason Smith MO–8, Lauren Boebert CO–3, Chuck Fleischmann TN–3, Tim Burchett TN–2, Chris Jacobs NY–27.

Andrew S. Clyde GA–9, Lance Gooden TX–5, Diana Harshbarger TN–1, Mary E. Miller IL–15, Mark E. Green TN–7, Ron Estes KS–4, Neal Dunn FL–2, Ronny Jackson TX–13, Ralph Norman SC–5, Joe Wilson SC–2, Vicky Hartzler MO–4, Scott DesJarlais TN–4, Marjorie Taylor Greene GA–14, Doug LaMalfa CA–1, Jeff Van Drew NJ–2, Ben Cline VA–6, Michael D. Rogers AL–3, Markwayne Mullin OK–2, Pat Fallon TX–4, Randy K. Weber TX–14.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there further objections to the certificate from the State of Arizona?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The two Houses will withdraw from joint session. Each House will deliberate separately on the pending objection and report its decision back to the joint session.

The Senate will now retire to its Chamber.

The Senate retired to its Chamber.

□ 1315

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will remind Members of the need to adhere to the decorum requirements of the Chamber as laid out in the Speaker's announced policies of January 4, 2021, in accordance with the guidance of the Attending Physician.

Members are advised to remain in the Chamber only if they are participating in debate and must wear a mask at all times, even when under recognition for debate.

Members must also practice proper social distancing while present in the Chamber.

Please, in the interests of your own health and as an example to the American people, abide by the numbers, now up to 25 on each side of the aisle, to participate in this stage of the debate.

Pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution 1 and 3 U.S.C. 17 governing the procedure for counting the electoral votes, when the two Houses withdraw from the joint session to count the electoral vote for separate consideration of objection, a Representative may speak to the objection for 5 minutes, and not more than once. Debate shall not exceed 2 hours, after which the Chair will put the question, Shall the objection be agreed to?

The Clerk will report the objection made in the joint session.

The Clerk read the objection as follows:

OBJECTION TO COUNTING THE ELECTORAL VOTES OF THE STATE OF ARIZONA

We, a Member of the House of Representatives and a United States Senator, object to the counting of the electoral votes of the State of Arizona on the ground that they were not, under all of the known circumstances, regularly given.

PAUL GOSAR,
Representative, State of Arizona.
TED CRUZ,
Senator, State of Texas.

SENATORS

Mike Braun, John Kennedy, Ron Johnson, Steve Daines, James Lankford, Bill Hagerty, Marsha Blackburn.

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Mo Brooks AL–5, Andy Biggs AZ–5, Jim Jordan OH–4, Madison Cawthorn NC–11, Scott Perry PA–10, Mike Kelly PA–16, Clay Higgins LA–3, John W. Rose TN–6, Bill Posey FL–8, Jeff Duncan SC–3, Brian Babin TX–36, Louie Gohmert TX–1, Brian J. Mast FL–18, Warren Davidson OH–8, Andy Harris MD–1, Steven Palazzo MS–4, Doug Lamborn CO–5, Kat Cammack FL–3.

Tracey Mann KS–1, Bob Good VA–5, Adrian Smith NE–3, Billy Long MO–7, Jack Bergman MI–1, Michael Cloud TX–27, Rick Crawford AR–1, Roger Williams TX–25, Bob Gibbs OH–7, Russ Fulcher ID–1, Ted Budd NC–13, Barry Moore AL–2, Lee Zeldin NY–1, Jake LaTurner KS–2, David Rouzer NC–7, Jason Smith MO–8, Lauren Boebert CO–3, Chuck Fleischmann TN–3, Tim Burchett TN–2, Chris Jacobs NY–27.

Andrew S. Clyde GA–9, Lance Gooden TX–5, Diana Harshbarger TN–1, Mary E. Miller IL–15, Mark E. Green TN–7, Ron Estes KS–4, Neal Dunn FL–2, Ronny Jackson TX–13, Ralph Norman SC–5, Joe Wilson SC–2, Vicky Hartzler MO–4, Scott DesJarlais TN–4, Marjorie Taylor Greene GA–14, Doug LaMalfa CA–1, Jeff Van Drew NJ–2, Ben Cline VA–6, Michael D. Rogers AL–3, Markwayne Mullin OK–2, Pat Fallon TX–4, Randy K. Weber TX–14.

The SPEAKER. The Chair will endeavor to alternate recognition between Members speaking in support of the objection and Members speaking in opposition to the objection.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to object to a number of States that did not follow the constitutional requirement for selecting electors.

Madam Speaker, this is something that is clear that our Founding Fathers debated about as a fundamental decision of how we choose our President. There was a lot of back and forth, if anyone reads the founding documents of our country, about the different versions they went through to ultimately come up with a process where each State has elections; each State has a process for selecting their electors and sending them to Washington.

Madam Speaker, in a number of those States, that constitutional process was not followed, and that is why we are here to object.

If you look at what the requirement says, nowhere in Article II, Section 1

does it give the secretary of state of a State that ability; nowhere does it give the Governor that ability; nowhere does it give a court that ability. It exclusively gives that ability to the legislatures. In fact, in most States, that is the process that was followed. But for those States, this wasn't followed.

Unfortunately, this is not new. We have seen over and over again more States where the Democratic Party has gone in and selectively gone around this process. That has to end, Madam Speaker. We have to follow the constitutional process.

Now, there might be reasons why some people don't like the process laid out by a legislative body.

Madam Speaker, I served on one of those legislative bodies when I was in the State legislature for 12 years. I served on the House and Governmental Affairs Committee, where we wrote the laws for our State's elections. And I can tell you, when we had to make changes, those were extensively negotiated. We would have people on both sides come.

Republicans and Democrats, Madam Speaker, would get together to work through those changes, any minute change to how a precinct would function, to how a change would be made in the time of an election, signature requirements, all the many things that involve a clerk carrying out the duties in each parish, in our case.

You would see people come and give testimony, Madam Speaker. Both sides could come. Clerks of court were there in the hearing rooms.

It was an open process, by the way, not behind closed doors in a smoke-filled room where somebody might want to bully a secretary of state to get a different version that might benefit them or their party or their candidate. That is not what our Founding Fathers said is the process. Maybe it is how some people wanted to carry it out. But they laid out that process.

So when we would have to make those changes, they were in public view; they were heavily debated; and then, ultimately, those laws were changed in advance of the election so everybody knew what the rules were. People on both sides knew how to play by the rules before the game started, not getting somewhere in the process and saying, well, you don't think it is going to benefit you, so you try to go around the Constitution.

That is not how our system works. It has gotten out of hand. So President Trump has called this out, and President Trump has stood up to it. So many of us have stood up to it.

In fact, over 100 of my colleagues, Madam Speaker, asked the Supreme Court to address this problem just a few weeks ago, and, unfortunately, the Court chose to punt. They didn't answer it one way or the other. They didn't want to get in the middle of this discussion.

We don't have that luxury today. We have to discuss this. We have to fix this.

In fact, on our first full day of this Congress, many of us brought legislation onto the House floor to start fixing the problems with our elections, to restore integrity to the election process, which has been lost by so many millions of Americans. And we had a vote. Every single Republican voted to reform the process. Every single Democrat voted against it. They don't want to fix this problem.

But the Constitution is our guide, and it is time we start following the Constitution. It is time we get back to what our Founding Fathers said is the process for selecting electors: that is the legislatures in public view, not behind closed doors, not smoke-filled rooms, not bullying somebody that might give you a better ruling.

Let's get back to rule of law and follow the Constitution, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER. For what purpose does the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN) seek recognition?

Ms. LOFGREN. Madam Speaker, I rise to strike the last word.

The SPEAKER. The gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LOFGREN. Madam Speaker, this day marks a crossroads for American democracy. Those who object to the counting of the electoral college votes, which reflect the votes of the American people, want to substitute their preferences for the voters' choice. That is not what our Constitution requires, and it is at odds with our American democratic Republic.

If Congress selects the next President instead of the American voters, we would have no need for an electoral college. In fact, we would have no need for Presidential elections at all. We would be moving from a government elected by the people to a government selected by those already governing.

That is not America. In the United States, we abide by the choices of the people, not by an elite few.

The Framers of our Constitution considered to have Congress select the President and specifically rejected it. Instead, they wrote Article II and the 12th Amendment.

Article II creates the electoral college, where each State appoints electors. Laws of all 50 States and D.C. require electors to vote for the winner of the State's popular election. Each State provides for the orderly conduct of elections, including lawful challenges, recounts, and the like.

The 12th Amendment is what brings us to today. It says the electors meet in their States. That happened December 14.

The amendment says the electors shall cast their votes, sign and certify them, and transmit them to us, sealed. That has been done. The sealed envelopes containing the signed and certified ballots from each State's electors reflecting the votes of the people are in those mahogany boxes.

The 12th Amendment directs the Vice President, as the President of the Senate, to do only this: open the sealed envelopes and then the votes shall be counted. Simple. It doesn't say counted in a manner that some Members of Congress or the Vice President might prefer. No. The votes are simply to be counted as certified and transmitted by the States.

□ 1130

During reconstruction after the Civil War, more than one slate of electors were appointed by States. Dueling lists were sent and protracted processes were undertaken in Presidential elections. And, as a result, to make an orderly process, Congress enacted the Electoral Count Act of 1887. This law governs our proceedings today. The act provides dispute resolution mechanisms.

Under the ECA, if a Governor certifies a slate of electors and there are no competing slates in that State, the Governor-certified must be counted. Today, every single slate of electors won by Joe Biden, or won by Donald Trump, got their Governor's certification. Not a single State submitted a competing slate. There is no dispute to resolve.

The 2020 election was the most secure election conducted in modern history. Challenges were resolved by lawful recounts and audits.

The result?

Vice President Biden won the 2020 election.

More than 60 lawsuits were filed contesting elements of the election process. None of these lawsuits prevailed.

Why?

As even President Trump's own judicial appointees ruled, there was no evidence of any wrongdoing that would change the outcome.

The people spoke. It was not a close election. The margin of victory for Biden in 2020 was larger than Trump's margin in 2016. In fact, the Biden victory is one of the most decisive in modern times, exceeding the margin enjoyed by Reagan when he defeated Carter in 1980.

Congress has gathered in a joint session to count electoral votes every four years since 1789. I understand the disappointment people feel when their candidate for President loses. I have felt the same several times in my voting life.

When that happens, it is not an invitation to upend the Constitution and the laws of the United States. It is an invitation to work with the new President for the good of the country and to wait for the next election in 4 years if you are dissatisfied.

In that spirit, I urge my colleagues to uphold the American democracy and reject the objection.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Speaker, I rise to support the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Speaker, Americans instinctively know there was something wrong with this election. During the campaign, Vice President Biden would do an event and he

would get 50 people at the event. President Trump, at just one rally, gets 50,000 people. President Trump increases votes with African Americans; increases votes with Hispanic Americans; won 19 of 20 bellwether counties; won Ohio by 8; Iowa by 8; and Florida by 3. President Trump got 11 million more votes than he did in 2016, and House Republicans won 27 of 27 toss-up races.

But somehow the guy who never left his house wins the election?

Eighty million Americans, 80 million of our fellow citizens, Republicans and Democrats, have doubts about this election; and 60 million people, 60 million Americans think it was stolen.

But Democrats say: No problem. No worries. Everything is fine.

We asked for an investigation. We asked Chairman NADLER, Chairwoman MALONEY for an investigation. They said no. They wouldn't want to investigate something that half the electorate has doubts about. It is just the Presidency of the United States.

Why? Why not one single investigation? Why not even one single hearing over the last 9 weeks in the United States House of Representatives? Why?

Because all the Democrats care about is making sure President Trump isn't President. For 4½ years that is all they have cared about.

July 31, 2016, before he was elected the first time, Jim Comey's FBI takes out the insurance policy; opens an investigation on the President based on nothing.

May 17, 2017, Bob Mueller was named special counsel. Two years they investigate the Russia hoax. Nineteen lawyers, 40 agents and $40 million of taxpayer money for nothing.

December 18, 2019, Democrat House Members vote to impeach President Trump based on an anonymous whistleblower with no firsthand knowledge, who was biased against the President and who worked for Joe Biden.

But none of that worked. As hard as they tried, none of that worked. They threw everything they had at him.

So what did they do next?

They changed the rules. They changed the election law and they did it in an unconstitutional fashion, and that is what we are going to show over the next several hours of debate.

The Constitution is clear, as Whip SCALISE just said. State legislatures and only State legislatures set election law.

In Arizona, the law says voter registration ends on October 5.

Democrats said: We don't care what the law says.

They went to a court, got an Obama-appointed judge to extend it 18 days. No debate, as Steve talked about. No debate. No discussion. They just did it.

Pennsylvania, same thing. Pennsylvania laws says mail-in ballots have to be in by 8 p.m. election day.

Democrat Supreme Court said: Nope. We are going to extend it.

Election day doesn't end on Tuesday now. They took it to Friday. Extended the election 3 days; not the legislature, the partisan Supreme Court.

Pennsylvania law says mail-in ballots require signature verification.

Democrat secretary of state said: Nope. I am going to decide by myself that it doesn't, for 2.6 million ballots.

Pennsylvania law says mail-in ballots can't be processed until election day. Some counties said no. And you can imagine which counties they were. Democrat-run counties said no and allowed ballots to be cured and fixed before election day.

They did an end-run around the Constitution in every State that Republicans will object to today. Every single one. It was a pattern. It was their template. They did it in Arizona. They did it in Georgia. They did it in Michigan. They did it in Pennsylvania. They did it in Nevada. They did it in Wisconsin.

Yet, some of our Members say: Don't worry about it. We shouldn't do anything. Just let it go. It was just six States who violated the Constitution.

What if it is 10 States next time? What if it is 15? What if, in 2024, 2028, it is 26 States? What if it is half the States that do an end-run around what the Constitution clearly spells out?

We are the final check and balance. The authority rests with us, the United States Congress, the body closest to the American people, right where the Founders wanted it. We should do our duty. We should object to and vote for this objection to the Arizona electors.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, a little more than 2 months ago, America performed an extraordinary feat. Under some of the most trying circumstances in our history, our fellow citizens conducted a free and fair election, vindicating our Founders' belief once again, that we were capable of self government and a peaceful transition of power.

On November 3, the American people chose Joe Biden to be their next President by an enormous margin. The successful conduct of that election, among the most secure in American history, was not an accident. It was the result of the dedicated work of thousands of volunteers, canvassers, poll workers, electors, and State and local election officials.

When the conduct of any State election was challenged, the courts, through judges appointed by Democrats and those appointed by Republicans, heard unsubstantiated claims of fraud, found they had no merit, and said so.

But most important, the American people persevered. In the midst of the worst pandemic in a century, America had one of the most impressive elections in a century, with historic voter turnout.

Our fellow citizens did their civic duty. The question we face today is: Will we do ours?

That we are here, with a substantial number of our Members seeking to overturn an election is remarkable, tragic, and all too predictable, for it is the natural result of a locomotive set in motion months ago with a myth. For weeks and weeks, before, during, and after our election, a dangerous falsehood was propagated: That our election would be marred by massive fraud.

Never mind it was the same election which brought the very men and women to this Chamber who would challenge its results. What value has consistency when measured against ambition?

A former Senator from Georgia, remarking on a contested election over a century ago, said: ''Able men, learned men, distinguished men, great men in the eyes of the nation, seemed intent only on accomplishing a party triumph, without regard to the consequences to the country. That is human nature. That is,'' he said, ''unfortunately, party nature.''

Was he right?

We stand in a House which was once the place of giants. Have we become so small? Does our oath to uphold the Constitution, taken just days ago, mean so very little?

I think not. I believe, to quote our dear departed friend, Elijah Cummings, that we are better than that. I think Elijah would be proud that the debate here today is not between Democrats and Republicans, and that some Republicans, including the Republican leader of the Senate, remain devoted to the principle that we are a nation of laws, not individuals, let alone a single individual.

It may seem unfair to the new Members who have only just taken the oath for the first time, that they should be so soon tested with one of the most consequential votes they may cast, no matter how long they serve. But it is so, and none of us can shrink from that responsibility. Nor can we console ourselves with the intoxicating fiction that we can break that oath without consequence because doing so will not succeed in overturning the election. An oath is no less broken when the breaking fails to achieve its end.

We must be mindful that any who seek to overturn an election will do injury to our Constitution, whatever the result. For just as the propagation of that dangerous myth about this election made this moment inevitable, our actions today will put another train in motion. This election will not be overturned.

But what about the next? Or the one after that?

What shall we say when our democratic legacy is no more substantial than the air, except that we brought trouble to our own house and inherited the wind?

This isn't the first time we have had a contentious election, and it won't be the last. In 1800, John Adams lost a closely contested election to Thomas

Jefferson, in the first peaceful transition of power from one party to another in our history. Adams was hardly pleased with the result, choosing to skip the inaugural activities, but he did what leaders are required to do in a democratic government when they lose. He went home. He went home.

Jefferson would later refer to his victory as the Revolution of 1800, but marveled that the Revolution had occurred ''by the rational and peaceful instruments of reform, the suffrage of the people.''

It has never been our place to overturn an election, and if we hope to remain a democracy, it never will be.

Mr. BIGGS. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Arizona is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BIGGS. Madam Speaker, I join the objection to counting votes of electors from my home State of Arizona, as well as Georgia, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Nevada, because election integrity is the heart of our American constitutional republic?

In a representative form of government, we must be able to trust that our elections accurately represent the will of the American voter. This is the appropriate forum anticipated and provided for by our Founders to debate whether this election complied with the Constitution that we have all sworn to protect.

Every particular of the Constitution is to be protected, including Article II, Section 1. The debate as to the legitimacy of the 2020 Presidential election has been suppressed by the left and its propagandists in the media until today.

State legislatures are required to determine the manner in which electors are chosen. Arizona names its electors on the general election ballot and identifies what candidate those electors are required to vote for should that candidate obtain the majority of votes in the general election.

As part of the manner for determining electors, Arizona also establishes deadlines for voter registration. The deadline has been in place for 30 years.

□ 1345

This year, that voter registration deadline was October 5. Early voting commenced 2 days later. Five days before the deadline, a group filed a lawsuit demanding that Arizona election officials not enforce the deadline.

The Federal District Court decided that since other States have a deadline later than Arizona's and some even allow for registration when voting, that Arizona's new deadline would be a time he chose, not the legislature's timeline.

The appellate court effectively overturned the lower court ruling and noted that the Arizona deadline established by the State legislature was sound and appropriate and complied with the Constitution. But the appellate court merely shortened the extension, the bypassing of the deadline to 10 days.

The appellate court, without legal justification, also decided that everyone who registered after the legal deadline, but before the deadline created by judicial fiat, could still vote.

Note that the Arizona legislature was no longer in control of determining the manner of appointing Presidential electors because the court had set a new deadline, even though the appellate court found the legislature's deadline was constitutionally sound.

During that window, more than 32,000 voters registered in Maricopa County alone. Here are copies of those voter registration records. In going around the deadline set by the legislature, the court ignored the Arizona legislature's obligation and right to direct the manner of choosing Presidential electors as set forth in Article II, Section 1.

As a consequence of that judicial usurpation, more than 32,000 people were allowed to unlawfully cast ballots in Arizona's Presidential election in 2020.

The Arizona legislature seeks an independent audit of the election. The Governor refuses now to call them into a special session. The Maricopa County Board of Supervisors has refused to comply with legislative subpoenas. In Arizona, the people who control the evidence related to the election have done everything possible to prevent an independent audit directed by the legislature.

Arizonans have used the limited amount of records available to investigate the 2020 Presidential election. Of a limited sample of 1,000 addresses of voters, they found 539 voters did not live at the addresses on the voter rolls. Here is a stack of 1,000 declaration of affidavits supporting that.

I object to counting the votes of Arizona electors because the Federal courts went around the legislatively constructed mechanism for choosing Arizona's Presidential electors, allowing tens of thousands of voters to unlawfully cast votes. The court usurped a key component of the Arizona legislature's manner of selecting Presidential electors, thus violating Article II, Section 1. The legislature is being obstructed in its efforts. And what little evidence we have and what little information we have has produced this kind of evidence, which indicates a significant problem with the integrity of the Presidential election.

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD my written comments, together with the voter registration records that reflect the 32,000 registrations permitted in contravention of State law; letters and resolutions from Arizona legislators pertaining to the count of votes from electors; along with approximately 1,000 affidavits and declarations pertaining to potential voter fraud in Arizona in the 2020 Presidential election; and the statement of Congressman RANDY WEBER of Texas.

DECEMBER 31, 2020.

DEAR VICE PRESIDENT PENCE: As the Chairwoman of the Arizona House Elections Committee, I write to you with upmost urgency to communicate to you several occurrences that thwart our ability as legislators to investigate legitimate and concerning allegations of election fraud in the most recent general election. On December 14, 2020, Arizona sent an alternate slate of electors, along with a resolution from 21 current and 8 newly elected legislators asking you to refrain from accepting the Biden electors until we could adequately investigate these claims of fraud.

Soon after the election, I requested an Elections Committee discovery hearing in order to use subpoena power to acquire the voting machines and ballots in order to do a comprehensive and forensic audit. I was told that it was not a good idea and was denied the ability. I continued to request the hearing with the Speaker of the House, asked publicly, and tried every avenue to no avail. A full month later on December 9th, the Senate President authorized a hearing via the Judiciary committee, and that did result in subpoenas to the Maricopa County Supervisors (who oversee the elections process) that have yet, as of the writing of this letter, been complied with.

Court cases have been dismissed due to not having evidence, however our efforts to do an audit to obtain such evidence have been suppressed. We held a hearing on 11/30/2020 with Rudy Giuliani to at least hear testimony from citizens who experienced irregularities, along with subject matter experts who reported severe irregularities and probable tampering with the machine apparatus. On 11/30/2020, a group of Arizona citizens reported publicly that they had uncovered with great confidence a minimum estimation of 160,000 fraudulent voters, based on over 1000 declarations/affidavits collected. This supports an earlier document submitted to the Attorney General and would largely impact the outcome of the election.

We have experienced obstruction at every turn. For your reference, I have itemized, in Exhibit A, many of the various ways we have been stopped from investigating claims of fraud and gross irregularities. It is my hope that you will see that the Arizona Presidential election is still in dispute and unresolved. We call on you to take this into consideration as you perform your duties on January 6th, and not accept the electors until we have resolution to these matters.

With utmost respect,

KELLY J. TOWNSEND,
Senator-Elect.

EXHIBIT A

1. Requests from the House Elections Chairwoman (myself) and the House Federal Relations Chairman (Mark Finchem) to hold an evidentiary hearing were repeatedly denied and have yet to be honored. Multiple Chairmen of various committees requested a hearing in order to investigate claims, to no avail. We were forced to hold an unofficial hearing on November 30th where many came forward with very concerning evidence and claims.

2. The Senate Judiciary Committee hearing was not held until 41 days after the election on 12/14/2020, the same day as the Electors were to cast their votes. This delay rendered the hearing of little effect regarding having confidence in the correct votes cast. The Chairman thus issued a subpoena for the equipment and ballots, but the Maricopa Board of Supervisors has countersued and refuse to comply. They will not release any machine or ballot info, even though within the RFP for the Dominion machines, it is stated that their key features are their ability to conduct hand counts, perform risk limiting audits, and publish ballot images and adjudication records with markings on a

public website, calling it their open data initiative. Now that they are being asked for it, they are refusing to make it available, citing voter confidentiality. There is no voter information contained in the machine or on a ballot, however, so that reasoning is insufficient. Their inaction and nonfeasance prevent us from proper discovery.

3. I, along with several others, requested the Governor to call us in for special session to be able to deal with the issue. It is our understanding that we cannot enforce the subpoena for equipment and ballots unless we are in session. His ongoing unwillingness to call us into session to address these issues had kept us from adequate discovery. On 12/02/2020, Governor Doug Ducey was asked by the media if he was going to honor the Legislator's request for a special session. He proceeded to incorrectly name Monday January 13th as our first day back in regular session. In response, the reporter asked, ''So you see no need for a special session to look at any of these issues or the issue of Presidential electors...,'' to which the Governor interrupted and said, ''I'll see the Legislature in January.''

4. The House leadership attempted to deter Representative Bret Roberts from sending a letter to Attorney General Brnovich and the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors regarding the accurate performance of a hand count based on the statutory requirement to do so by precinct, versus vote center. By doing a hand count based on voting centers, it renders it impossible to tell if there was a rogue precinct involved in fraud. Nevertheless, Rep. Robert's efforts to enforce statute were thwarted by House leadership.

5. One week prior to the Electors voting, on December 7th, the House and Senate leadership closed the buildings in the name of COVID–19, preventing any in-person hearings or work to be performed. This greatly hindered our ability to push for discovery regarding election integrity during the last days before the Elector's votes were cast.

6. The Maricopa County Board of Supervisors held a closed meeting on 11/20/2020 in order to certify the election results, where the public was not allowed to participate and ask questions. Prior to that meeting, on 12/08/2020, Merissa Hamilton (a data integrity expert) delivered to the Attorney General a statistically significant listing of deceased voters that received a ballot and those deceased who actually returned a ballot. At the aforementioned meeting, the Maricopa County Elections Director Ray Valenzuela stated that the list of deceased voters casting a ballot was mere folklore and dismissed it as a nonissue. This accusation is still pending an investigation.

7. After submitting a public records request for the Federal only voters who cast a ballot in the 2020 General election, I was told by a staff member that the Elections Director was ''vetting the list'' before he gave it to me. I did not request a cleaned-up list of voters, but the list in its entirety. This diminished my confidence in that list, that I have a true representation of persons who cast a ballot that cannot establish their identity or citizenship.

8. Arizona State House leadership prevented Legislators from issuing press releases having to do with the election that did not conform to their own opinion. This diminished our ability to communicate to the public our concerns about how the election and post procedures were being handled.

9. On 12/01/2020, I requested the Attorney General's Elections Integrity office to investigate the claims made at the November 30th Giuliani hearing and provided them the link. I was told that none of the items listed at the Giuliani hearing would be investigated by that office.

10. The Maricopa County Recorder attended more than one DefCon conference that focused on the ability to hack voting machines. The Legislature was never informed that the outcome of these conferences recommended that elected officials be notified due to unprotected ports on the machines, passwords left unset or left in default configurations and security features of the underlying commercial hardware were left unused or even disabled. It was recommended that to improve election security, paper ballots should be used, and a rigorous post-election audit be performed. We learned about this issue via social media, and it was obfuscated by the Election officials.

11. Arizona Republican State Chair Kelli Ward reports the following malfeasance and obstruction:

a. No allowed review of the digitally adjudicated ballots—over 200,000.

b. Only 100 of the duplicated ballots reviewed—3% error rate in favor of President Trump. Maricopa County refused to look at the other 28,000 ballots.

c. No meaningful signature verification. County employees doing signature verification offsite, over the internet, without oversight, and at times at a rate of 30 signatures or more per minute.

12. The Secretary of State took 24 days to answer a public records request by Merissa Hamilton, asking them to deliver the meeting minutes from their technical committee to certify the Dominion voting equipment. Only after four requests and the involvement of the Ombudsman did she obtain the information. The results of that request showed that despite the voting equipment not being able to calculate the votes properly, which was never addressed, the machines were still certified. The Maricopa County RFP for the Dominion equipment did not give the public a chance to give input on the procurement. There was never any discussion or an offer of various options to choose from. The Board of Supervisors went straight to a vote with no discussion and approved the machines unanimously.

13. There are multiple/numerous examples of how on election day observers and poll workers were prevented from overseeing the various procedures, thereby undermining confidence that there was no illegal activity and violating Arizona's statutes regarding election integrity. We have had no formal investigation into the vast majority of these accusations.

SUMMARY

Arizona has many unresolved issues that we would like to have investigated in order to confidently say our electors voted for the true victor in the 2020 Presidential election. We still have outstanding issues left unresolved and are being stopped at nearly every turn from investigating. For example, the Maricopa County Recorder's office started counting early ballots 14 days before election day. During that time, the backup server was removed each night by a Dominion employee. This is of significant concern because the information on those servers could have been manipulated and/or provided to nefarious people as to how many ballots/votes were needed to change the results of the election as time went on.

Many in the Legislature believe that if we are able to do a forensic audit, we could investigate these and other serious claims brought forward to us. However, as you can see by the list above (not exhaustive but brief for your benefit) we have many entities who appear to be blocking our efforts to get to the bottom of the issue. One can only ask, in a supposedly secure and fair election, why discovery is being quashed.

CONCLUSION

It is asked that all of these issues be considered when contemplating the eleven Arizona electoral votes. Our election is still in dispute, and we have obfuscation and attempts at running out the clock to prevent discovery of the facts. We believe it is impossible to conclusively declare a winner in Arizona and pray that you would refrain from counting the electoral votes from our state, and consider the alternate slate should we be able to establish validity to the various claims of election fraud on such a scale that would change the outcome.

Thank you, kindly, for your attention to these matters.

A RESOLUTION TO CONGRESS

Whereas, it is the constitutional and legal obligation of the Legislature of the State of Arizona to ensure that the state's presidential electors truly represent the will of the voters of Arizona; and

Whereas, pursuant to the direction of Congress as set forth in United States Code, title 3, section 1 as authorized by Article II, section 1, clause 4 of the Constitution of the United States, and state law adopted pursuant thereto, Arizona conducted an election for presidential electors on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November of 2020–that is, on November 3, 2020; and

Whereas, that election was marred by irregularities so significant as to render it highly doubtful whether the certified results accurately represent the will of the voters; and

Whereas, Congress has further directed in U.S. Code, title 3, section 2 that when a state ''has held an election for the purpose of choosing electors, and has failed to make a choice on the day prescribed by law, the electors may be appointed on a subsequent day in such manner as the legislature of such State may direct''; and

Whereas, that provision implicitly recognizes that Article II, Section 1, Clause 2 of the U.S. Constitution grants to each state legislature, with stated limitations, the sole authority to prescribe the manner of appointing electors for that state; and

Whereas, the United States Supreme Court and other courts have explained that when a state legislature directs the manner of appointing electors, it does so pursuant to a grant of authority from the U.S. Constitution rather than by reason of any state constitutional or other legal provision; that this authority may be exercised by the legislature alone without other aspects of the normal lawmaking process; and that the state legislature's authority over the appointment of presidential electors is plenary and may be resumed at any time; and

Whereas, because U.S. Code, title 3, section 7 mandates that all presidential electors vote for President and Vice President of the United States on December 14, 2020, it is impossible to pursue the Legislature's preferred course of action, which would be for Arizona's voters to participate in a new and fair and free presidential election before that date; and

Whereas, in view of the facts heretofore recited, the Legislature is required to exercise its best judgment as to which slate of electors the voters prefer; and

Whereas, legal precedent exists where in 1960 the State of Hawaii sent an alternate slate of electors while the Presidential election was still in question in order to meet the deadline of selecting electors, and upon recount the alternate slate of electors' ballots were ultimately counted; and

Whereas, the undersigned have an obligation to find the truth. For this reason, on several occasions since November 3, we state lawmakers have requested fact-finding hearings to include a comprehensive and independent forensic audit. At this time, no such

audit has been authorized. This leaves the uncertainty of the election results in a state that requires further investigation and resolution; and

Whereas, ongoing election irregularity litigation is currently active, and there are unresolved disputes by both the Legislature and at least one Presidential campaign, rendering the election inconclusive as of date of signing of this letter,

Therefore, be it

Resolved by the undersigned Legislators, members of the Arizona House and Senate, request that the alternate 11 electoral votes be accepted for to Donald J. Trump or to have all electoral votes nullified completely until a full forensic audit can be conducted. Be it further resolved that the United States Congress is not to consider a slate of electors from the State of Arizona until the Legislature deems the election to be final and all irregularities resolved.

Signed this day, 14 December, 2020.

Senator Elect Kelly Townsend, Legislative District 16; Representative Kevin Payne, Legislative District 21; Representative Mark Finchem, Legislative District 11; Senator Sonny Borrelli, Legislative District 5; Representative Bret Roberts, Legislative District 11; Representative Bob Thorpe, Legislative District 6; Senator David Farnsworth, Legislative District 16; Representative Leo Biasiucci, Legislative District 5; Representative Anthony Kern, Legislative District 20; Senator Sylvia Allen, Legislative District 15; Senator Elect Nancy Barto, Legislative District 15; Majority Leader Warren Petersen, Legislative District 12; Representative Steve Pierce, Legislative District 1; Representative Tony Rivero, Legislative District 21; Senator David Gowan, Legislative District 14; Representative David Cook, Legislative District 8; Representative John Fillmore, Legislative District 16; Representative Travis Grantham, Legislative District 12; Representative Walter Blackman, Legislative District 6; Representative Shawnna Bolick, Legislative District 20; Representative Noel Campbell, Legislative District 1; Representative Elect Jacqueline Parker, Legislative District 16; Representative Elect Beverly Pingerelli, Legislative District 21; Representative Elect Jake Hoffman, Legislative District 12; Senator Elect Wendy Rogers, Lt Col, USAF (ret), Legislative District 6; Representative Elect Steve Kaiser, Legislative District 15; Representative Elect Brenda Barton, Legislative District 6; Representative Elect Joseph Chaplik, Legislative District 23; Representative Elect Judy Burges, Legislative District 1; Representative Elect Quang Nguyen, Legislative District 1.

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, I claim the time in opposition to the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, I thank you first and all my dear beloved colleagues for your love and tenderness, which my family and I will never forget.

Abraham Lincoln, whose name is a comfort to us all, said: ''We have got the best government the world ever knew.''

It is best because the first three words of the Constitution tell us who governs here: We the People.

Watch this proceeding today and tell the world with pride, as Lincoln did, about the brilliant meaning and promise of our country. Our Government belongs to the people.

As President Ford said: Here the people rule.

Today we are in the people's House to complete the people's process for choosing the people's President. We assemble into joint session for a solemn purpose that we have all sworn a sacred oath to faithfully discharge. The 12th Amendment obligates each and every one of us to count the electoral votes to recognize the will of the people in the 2020 Presidential election.

We are not here, Madam Speaker, to vote for the candidate we want. We are here to recognize the candidate the people actually voted for in the States.

Madam Speaker, the 2020 election is over and the people have spoken. Joe Biden received more than 80 million votes. Seven million more than President Trump. A number larger than any other President has received in U.S. history. The sweeping popular victory translated into an electoral college victory of 306–232, a margin which President Trump pronounced a landslide when he won by those exact same numbers in 2016.

So now we count the electoral votes that were just delivered to us in the beautiful mahogany cases brought by those hardworking Senate pages. These mahogany cases contain only the 538 electoral votes that were sent in by the States, not the 159 million ballots that were cast by our constituents. Those were counted 2 months ago by hundreds of thousands of election officials and poll workers across America who risked their health and even their lives in the time of COVID to deliver what our Department of Homeland Security called the most secure election in American history. Many of these officials have endured threats of retribution, violence, and even death just for doing their jobs.

Just as the popular vote was for Biden, so was the electoral vote. On December 15, Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL recognized it. ''The electoral college has spoken,'' the Senator said from the Senate floor. ''Today I want to congratulate President-elect Joe Biden.''

Yet, we have seen escalating attacks on our election with unfounded claims of fraud and corruption. More than 60 lawsuits have been brought to date seeking to overturn the results. They have failed repeatedly and they have failed spectacularly.

Every objection we hear today maligning our States and their officials—both Republican and Democrat—has been litigated, adjudicated, and obliterated in both Federal and State Courts. The President has not just had his day in court, Madam Speaker, he has had more than 2 months in court looking for a judge to embrace these arguments. In more than 50 cases, Madam Speaker, at least 88 different judges, including many appointed by the President himself, have meticulously rejected the President's claims of fraud and corruption.

Take Georgia U.S. District Court Judge Steven Grimberg, who was named to the bench by President Trump last year. He rejected President Trump's prayer to block certification of Biden's victory in Georgia, saying it ''has no basis in fact or law.''

Take U.S. District Judge Brett Ludwig, another Trump nominee who took the bench in September. He dismissed a lawsuit seeking to overturn the results in Wisconsin, calling it ''extraordinary.''

He said: ''A sitting President who did not prevail in his bid for reelection has asked for Federal Court help in setting aside the popular vote based on . . . issues he plainly could have raised before the vote occurred.

''This court allowed the plaintiff the chance to make his case, and he has lost on the merits.''

Trump has asked for the rule of law to be followed, Judge Ludwig observed, and he said definitively: It has been.

I have been a constitutional law professor for 30 years, and if I were to test my students on these decisions, it would be the easiest test in the world because the plaintiffs have lost nearly every case and every issue in the most sweeping terms. That is all they would have to remember. There is no basis in fact or law to justify the unprecedented relief that is being requested of nullifying these elections.

We are here to count the votes. Let us do our job.

Mrs. BOEBERT. Madam Speaker, I rise to support the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentlewoman from Colorado is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BOEBERT. Madam Speaker, to ease everyone's nerve, I want Members to all know that I am not here to challenge anyone to a duel like Alexander Hamilton or Aaron Burr.

Madam Speaker, my primary objection to the counting of the electoral votes of the State of Arizona is based on the Constitution and the direction of State legislatures through State law, as spelled out in the following two clauses of Article II, Section 1, Clause 2: ''Each State shall appoint, in such manner as the legislature thereof may direct, a number of electors.''

And the election clause of the Constitution provides State legislatures with explicit authority to prescribe ''the times, places, and manner of holding elections.''

For more than three decades, Arizona law, set by the State legislature, has required that voter registration end no later than 29 days before an election.

This is clear. It is law, unless amended by the State legislature. This is the way it needs to be carried out.

In Arizona, the deadline for voter registration for the 2020 Presidential election was October 5, 2020. Using COVID as a reasoning, Democrats filed a lawsuit to extend this deadline by 18 days. An injunction was made by an Obama-appointed judge preventing the Arizona secretary of state from enforcing the constitutional deadline set by the State legislature.

As a result of this frivolous, partisan lawsuit, 10 extra days were added via

judicial fiat to allow voter registration. These 10 days were added after voting had already begun. This is completely indefensible. You cannot change the rules of an election while it is underway and expect the American people to trust it.

Now, in this 10-day period, at least 30,000 new voters were registered to vote in Arizona. All of these votes are unconstitutional. It does not matter if they voted for President Trump or if they voted for Vice President Biden. They did not register in time for the election. The law states October 5. Either we have laws or we do not.

If we allow State election laws as set forth by the State legislatures to be ignored and manipulated on the whims of partisan lawsuits, unelected bureaucrats, unlawful procedures, and arbitrary rules, then our constitutional Republic will cease to exist.

The oath I took this past Sunday to defend and support the Constitution makes it necessary for me to object to this travesty. Otherwise, the laws passed by the legislative branch merely become suggestions to be accepted, rejected, or manipulated by those who did not pass them.

Madam Speaker, I have constituents outside of this building right now. I promised my voters to be their voice. In this branch of government in which I now serve, it is my separate but equal obligation to weigh in on this election and object.

Are we not a government of, by, and for the people?

They know that this election is not right; and as their Representative, I am sent here to represent them. I will not allow the people to be ignored.

Madam Speaker, it is my duty under the U.S. Constitution to object to the counting of the electoral votes of the State of Arizona. The Members who stand here today and accept the results of this concentrated, coordinated, partisan effort by Democrats, where every fraudulent vote cancels out the vote of an honest America, has sided with extremists on the left.

The United States Congress needs to make an informed decision, and that starts with this objection.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MAST).

Mr. MAST. Madam Speaker, I rise as well to support the objection, and I rise with the simple question: Can the Chair honestly tell Americans, with a pending Supreme Court case over legal observers not being allowed to observe and inspect signatures, that the laws and the Constitution of that State were not violated to change voting outcomes?

Madam Speaker, I will wait for a response.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Florida (Mr. MAST) has 25 seconds remaining.

Mr. MAST. Madam Speaker, I will repeat my question.

Can you honestly tell Americans, with a pending Supreme Court case over legal observers not being able to observe and inspect signatures, that the laws and Constitution of Arizona were not violated to change voting outcomes?

And I will wait for a response.

The SPEAKER. The time of the gentleman has expired.

□ 1400

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Colorado is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, today is an important day. In 1862, during the depths of the Civil War, President Lincoln submitted his annual message to Congress, to this body, and in it, he wrote the following: ''Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history. We, of this Congress and this administration, will be remembered in spite of ourselves. . . . The fiery trial through which we pass will light us down, in honor or dishonor, to the latest generation. . . . We shall nobly save, or meanly lose, the last best hope of Earth.''

Madam Speaker, we gather today to ensure the survival of our grand American experiment, the greatest democracy this world has ever known, and there are millions of people watching today's proceedings. The eyes of the world are on us now, my colleagues, wondering if we will keep the faith, wondering if our constitutional Republic will hold.

Will we adhere to our Constitution, that solemn visionary document that has guided us so well for so long and enabled the peaceful transfer of power for the last 230 years?

Will we continue to be a country premised on the consent of the governed, a Congress that respects the will of the people, and a Republic that will endure?

Madam Speaker, those are the questions before us today. With respect to my new colleague from Colorado, the question is not whether Joe Biden was elected the 46th President of the United States. He clearly was. The people of Arizona, like so much of the country, spoke clearly and resoundingly. They voted in record numbers, and over 81 million Americans selected Joe Biden as the next President.

Now, today, we hear from some in this Chamber—not all, but some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—vague claims of fraud.

No substance.

No evidence.

No facts.

No explanation for why over 88 judges across this land have rejected the very same claims.

Madam Speaker, the bottom line is this. As my colleague, Representative RASKIN, so eloquently put it, the people have spoken, and that is why, on December 14, the electoral college met to certify the election of a duly elected President, just as they have done for centuries during terrible world wars, recessions, depressions, plagues, and pandemics.

They met their duty, and they once again rose to the occasion and certified the election. And the question now is, will we do ours?

Now, I know there are many textualists among us, many of my colleagues who would understand that the Constitution must guide our work today. And the Constitution is crystal clear: Our duty today is a narrow one.

Article II, Section 1, Clause 3 reads: ''The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates, and the votes shall then be counted. The person having the greatest number of votes for President shall be the President.''

That is it, period. Our job is not to replace the judgment made by the American people with our own. Yet, that is precisely what so many of my House and Senate Republican colleagues ask this body to do, to substitute their judgment for the expressed will of the American people.

In America, we don't do that. In the United States, we accept the results of free and fair elections.

Madam Speaker, we don't ignore the will of the voters and attempt to install a preferred candidate into power. That doesn't happen here.

Madam Speaker, I will close with this. Our duty, our task, is a very simple one: to honor the voice of the people, to honor our Constitution, to count the votes, to certify this election, and begin to heal this great country of ours.

I pray each of us may find the courage to do so.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Louisiana is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, we have a solemn responsibility today. We must vote to sustain objections to slates of electors submitted by States that we genuinely believe clearly violated the Constitution in the Presidential election of 2020.

This is the threshold legal question before us, and it is an issue before us for the State of Arizona. We have to repeat this for emphasis because a lot of people seem to be confused.

Because judges and not the State legislature changed the rules of the election, Arizona clearly violated the plain language of Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution in its selection of Presidential electors.

The Framers of our Constitution recognized that elections were susceptible to corruption. We all know that. So, how did they fix it? How did they provide for that? They created the electoral college as a safeguard, and they expressly empowered State legislatures to ensure the integrity of our unique election system.

Only the State legislatures, because they are a full body of representatives and not rogue officials, were given the authority to direct the manner of appointing Presidential electors because it was so important.

The Supreme Court has acknowledged this over and over. They previously affirmed in Article II, Section 1, Clause 2: ''The appointment of these electors is thus placed absolutely and wholly with the legislatures of the several States.'' That authority can never be taken away or abdicated.

The Arizona Legislature did enact detailed rules and procedures that the State was supposed to follow to choose its electors. But in the months preceding the 2020 election, as we have heard—and by the way, a thousand pages of evidence have just been submitted on the facts on this—those well-established rules and procedures were deliberately changed.

They weren't changed by the legislature, friends. They were changed by judges. And those actions taken by the judiciary were not limited to mere interpretations of existing law. No, they were substantive, wholesale changes to those statutes.

Madam Speaker, that is a usurpation of the authority that the legislature had. That usurpation was repeated across the country this year. It is the primary reason—it is one of the reasons why the election of 2020 became riddled with an unprecedented number of serious allegations of fraud and irregularities all over the country.

National polls, it has been said, indicate that a huge percentage of Americans now have serious doubts about not just the outcome of this Presidential contest but also the future reliability of our election system itself.

Since we are convinced that the election laws in Arizona and some other key States were changed in this unconstitutional manner, we have a responsibility today. The slates of electors produced under those modified laws are thus unconstitutional. They are not ''regularly given'' or ''lawfully certified,'' as required by the Electoral Count Act, and they are invalid on their face. That is just the conclusion that you have to reach.

Madam Speaker, given these inescapable facts, we believe we have no choice today but to vote to sustain objections to those slates of electors.

Mr. RASKIN and others today have cited the 12th Amendment, and they cite Article II, Section 1, Clause 3—remember that, Clause 3. And they have asserted that Congress has only one narrow role today; we are just supposed to count the electoral votes that have been submitted. But those advocates have overlooked a critical first principle.

Their assertion is only true so long as Congress first is convinced that the electoral votes were not produced by a process that violated the Constitution is there. We have to get through Clause 2 of Article II, Section 1, before we get to Clause 3 is the point.

Look, in our unique system, Congress is positioned as the last bulwark in a Presidential election to ensure the Constitution has been followed. Indeed, just two decades ago, the Supreme Court spoke to this. They plainly acknowledged this important deliberative role of Congress. It was the famous Bush v. Gore litigation that everybody remembers from 2000.

In a per curiam opinion—meaning all nine Justices, that it was unanimous—they noted strict adherence to the provisions of the Electoral Count Act may create ''a 'safe harbor' for a State insofar as congressional consideration of its electoral votes is concerned.''

However, unanimously, the Court said since title 3, section 5 contains a principle of Federal law that would assure finality of the State's determination if they followed all the proscriptions there, if the will of the legislature is attempted to be changed by a State court, that is a problem. That, they said, Congress might deem to be a change in the law.

That is precisely why we are here right now. Go read Bush v. Gore, and you will see this.

Chief Justice William Rehnquist and Justices Scalia and Thomas joined in a concurring opinion 8 days later, and they reiterated this point.

A significant departure from the legislature's scheme for appointing Presidential electors presents a Federal question. It is a big problem for us, and it is one we cannot get around. That is why we are here.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues today to look at the facts, to follow the law, and to follow our congressional oath. We are supposed to support and defend the Constitution. That is what we do here today. I urge everyone to do the right thing.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Arizona is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, this exercise in futility that Congress is undertaking is at the behest of Republican Members of Congress. The effort to overturn the Presidential election and grant Donald Trump 4 more years is the motivation behind it. And to continue a baseless conspiracy-fueled threat to our democracy makes no sense because there is no viable constitutional or legal path to overturn the election that will make Vice President Biden and Senator HARRIS President and Vice President of the United States after January 20.

One certain outcome of this whole process is the weakening of our democracy and the threatening of our democracy. Beginning with Arizona, Congress is being asked to chase down a rabbit hole baseless, discredited, and judicially discarded fringe conspiracy theories.

Madam Speaker, for the record, let's talk a little bit about Arizona. Arizona and State and local officials did an unbelievable job to ensure that the 2020 elections ran smoothly. Mr. Hickman, the Republican chairman of the Maricopa County board, the largest county in the State of Arizona, said: ''No matter how you voted, this election was administered with integrity, transparency, and in accordance with State laws.''

Arizonans showed up to the polls in record numbers. More than 3.4 million people voted, with increases in every county, and 65 percent of all eligible voters in Arizona voted in the 2020 election. Arizonans cast their ballots up and down for Republicans and Democrats, and 11 electoral votes were granted to Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS based on their victory in Arizona. That is the story.

Arizonans voted in hundreds of races this year. In addition to the Presidency, these races include nine members of the State's congressional delegation that are with you—four of them, my Republican colleagues. These Members have already been seated in the 117th Congress. They do not question the accuracy of Arizona's 2020 elections to select the congressional delegation, yet my four Republican colleagues question the Presidential election.

Our colleagues may say they are only asking questions and seeking to reassure voters, but let us be clear: These questions have been answered by the voters and by the courts. Rather than accepting the answers and the results of the election, they are fanning the flames of unfounded suspicion and once again creating a threat, a very real and dangerous threat to our democracy.

Again, our friends do not question the outcomes of their own elections. That is because they have no reason to, just as they have no legitimate reason to question the results of the Presidential election in Arizona.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to reject this objection, to respect the will of the voters in the State of Arizona and throughout this country, and to fundamentally add some preservation to our democracy from any future damage, that this effort that we are undertaking in this House and in the Senate today does not further damage our democracy.

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of my objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Arizona is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOSAR. Madam Speaker, I filed my challenge on the slate of electors from the State of Arizona that was actually put forward by Governor Ducey of Arizona.

My ask to you, the Speaker, through the Vice President, is simple. Do not count these electors until and unless the secretary of state allows a forensic audit of the election, a request she has denied repeatedly.

We have been told over and over that even though this was a public election using public money and public machines utilizing public employees, the public today has no ability to simply double-check the veracity of these results.

□ 1415

If the Presidential election was a football game, we would get a slow-motion review from multiple angles and a

correction of a controversial decision. But not so, we are told by our secretary of state, for the Presidential election, no review for you.

No access to the Dominion voting machines with a documented history of enabling fraud through its now discredited adjudication system, a system that literally allows one person to change tens of thousands of votes in mere minutes.

In the only audit done in Arizona, a court found 3 percent error rate against President Trump. Vice President Biden's margin of error was one-tenth of that, at 0.03 percent. By the way, a 3 percent error rate at minimum is 90,000 ballots. After finding the 3 percent error rate, the court stopped the audit and refused to go further.

In Arizona, as my attachments make clear, mail-in ballots were altered on the first day of counting as shown in data graphs we have provided, as concluded by data analysts. Over 400,000 mail-in ballots were altered, switched from President Trump to Vice President Biden, or completely erased from President Trump's totals.

The proof is in the counting curves, the curves that cannot occur except with odds so rare and unlikely that winning the Mega Millions lottery is more probable.

Mr. Speaker, can I have order in the Chamber?

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCGOVERN). Pursuant to clause 12(b) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 18 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1426

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MCGOVERN) at 2 o'clock and 26 minutes p.m.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR) has 2¾ minutes remaining.

The gentleman may proceed.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, the probability of these ectopic curves, you have a better likelihood of winning the Mega Millions lottery than you do having statistical issues here.

Over 30,000 illegal aliens voted in Arizona using the Federal ballot, yet our secretary of state refused the public access to review the ballots.

Over a thousand residences were visited for proof of residency and address; 456 failed that test. They were vacant lots. Even the Recorder's office was used as an address.

What are they hiding? If the process was fair, these would be improbable. These would be once-in-a-lifetime-type applications.

So let's look at the ballots, the signatures, and the adjudicated records. Until this is done, Mr. Speaker, we should not count this slate.

You have a letter from the Arizona Legislature stating its intent to review the issue on January 11. Our Governor has refused to allow the State to properly convene to do its proper oversight.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you one question today: Are you a ceremonial figurehead in your current role, or did the drafters of the 12th Amendment and Congress, in the Electoral Count Act of 1887, envision a role where you made discretionary decisions about ballot fraud and fair elections?

If you are merely ceremonial, then let's be done with this. Let's eat our tea and crumpets and witness our national decline.

But if you are not merely ceremonial but vested with discernment, rationality, and legal authority to not just count from 1 to 270, then do not accept Arizona's electors as certified. Remand the slate back to the secretary of state, back to the Governor, with the following instructions: Until a full, complete electoral forensic audit is allowed by the secretary of state, the electors currently certified will not be counted.

It will then fall on the State of Arizona to decide are its electors in the game or not. Anything less is an abdication of our constitutional Republic and our ethos: one man, one vote.

We ask: Why? What is there to hide? Shouldn't the lawful victor of an election be proud, open, and transparent about an election audit? I would. Instead, we are met with denials, coverups, and contempt of subpoenas.

There is too much evidence of fraud, demonstrated by statistical anomalies that experts have determined cannot happen in the absence of fraud, to accept such a slate. I am not asking these electors never be counted; it is just that they need to be certified the proper way.

Our beloved Constitution is but a mere piece of paper if we do not follow the law, upholding the law. But now, alas, we find ourselves lawless, destroying the very thread that binds us together. But we need to get back to the rule of law. That is what has been violated, truly, by the actions in these States.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(b) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 29 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 2102

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 9 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will address the Chamber.

Today, a shameful assault was made on our democracy. It cannot, however, deter us from our responsibility to validate the election of Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS. For that reason, Congress has returned to the Capitol.

We always knew that this responsibility would take us into the night, and we will stay as long as it takes. Our purpose will be accomplished. We must, and we will, show to the country, and indeed to the world, that we will not be diverted from our duty, that we will respect our responsibility to the Constitution and to the American people.

On Sunday, it was my great honor to be sworn in as Speaker and to preside over a sacred ritual of renewal as we gathered under the stone of the temple of democracy to open the 117th Congress. I said, as we were sworn in then, we accept a responsibility as daunting and demanding as any previous generation of leadership has ever faced.

We know that we are in difficult times, but little could we have imagined the assault that was made on our democracy today.

To those who stoked deterrence from our responsibility, you have failed. To those who engaged in the gleeful desecration of this, our temple of democracy, American democracy, justice will be done.

Today, January 6, is the Feast of the Epiphany. On this day of revelation, let us pray that this instigation to violence will provide an epiphany for our country to heal.

In that spirit of healing, I invoke the song of Saint Francis. I usually do. Saint Francis is the patron saint of my city of San Francisco, and the ''Song of Saint Francis'' is our anthem.

Lord, make me a channel of thy peace.

Where there is darkness, may I bring light.

Where there is hatred, let us bring love.

Where there is despair, let us bring hope.

We know that we would be part of history in a positive way today, every 4 years when we demonstrate again the peaceful transfer of power from one President to the next, and despite the shameful actions of today, we still will do so. We will be part of a history that shows the world what America is made of, that this assault, this assault is just that. It shows the weakness of those who have had to show through violence what their message was.

My colleagues, it is time to move on. I wear this pin quite frequently. Actually, I gave it to our beloved JOHN LEWIS just the weekend or so before he left us. It is the flag of our country, a flag of the United States of America. On it, it says, ''One country, one destiny.''

''One country, one destiny'' is written on the flag. That was also what was embroidered in Abraham Lincoln's coat that he had on that fateful night—Lincoln's party, Lincoln's message: One country, one destiny.

So on this holy day of Epiphany, let us pray. I am a big believer in prayer. Let us pray that there will be peace on Earth and that it will begin with us. Let us pray that God will continue to bless America.

With that, let us proceed with our responsibilities to the Constitution to which we have just, within 72 hours, taken the oath to uphold.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, it is a sad day in America. It is a wrenching day in America. It is a day in which our words and our actions have had consequences of a very, very negative nature. We ought to watch our words and think what it may mean to some.

My remarks were written before the tragic, dangerous, and unacceptable actions—and ''unacceptable'' is such a tame word. My remarks started with, ''Madam Speaker, the American people today are witnessing one of the greatest challenges to our democracy in its 244-year history.''

Little did I know that this Capitol would be attacked by the enemy within. I was here on 9/11 when we were attacked by the enemy without.

We need to all work together to tame and reduce the anger and, yes, the hate that some stoke. What some—not all, Madam Speaker, but some—in this House and this Senate are doing today will not change the outcome of the election, which is the clear and insurmountable victory of President-elect Biden and Vice-President-elect Harris. Instead, all they will accomplish is to further the dangerous divisions.

This was written before this Capitol was assaulted, before this democracy was put aside by thousands, encouraged by the Commander in Chief.

Instead, all they will accomplish is to further the dangerous divisions, as I said, among our people and energize conspiracy theories stoked by our foreign adversaries, which seek to erode America's confidence in our democracy and our system of free and fair elections.

I was here in 2000. I was strongly in favor of Al Gore for President, and my candidate got more votes than the other candidate. His name was George Bush, of course. And one of the saddest days was January 20th of 2001 when our candidate, who won the election, in my view, was not elected. But it was also one of the proudest moments of my career because the greatest power on Earth passed peacefully from Bill Clinton to George W. Bush.

Not a shot was fired. Nobody assaulted this Caucus or this Congress or this Chamber. Because we were not disappointed? No. Because we were not angry? No. Because we believe in democracy. We believe in ''We the people.''

One of the speakers, I think it was the Senator from Texas, expressed: We are here for the people.

If those were the people, we are in a lot of trouble.

Our electoral system, our democratic system, however, did not break under the strains of the misinformation, the claims of fraud, which court after court after court have dismissed out of hand, not because there was a little evidence, but because there was no evidence.

That is why we are the longest-lasting constitutional democracy in the world. I hope all of us in this body are proud of that and understand why that is the case. Because, as Dick Gephardt said on this floor many years ago, democracy is a substitute for war to resolve differences. It proved once more the ever-beating strong heart that gives life to our Republic and our freedoms.

That strength, Madam Speaker, is derived in part from our institution and our laws, but most importantly, it is powered by citizens' and leaders' commitment to our Constitution. Not just us. We swear an oath. But it is all of America.

Barack Obama spoke from that Chamber, and he said: I am going to be taking another title next year—citizen.

And he was proud to take that. And every citizen needs to protect, preserve, and uplift our democracy.

Some today did not do that, many today.

Sixty-eight years ago in Springfield, Illinois, Governor Adlai Stevenson gracefully conceded his loss to General Dwight Eisenhower. He said this: ''It is traditionally American,'' he told his deeply disappointed supporters, ''to fight hard before an election.''

□ 2115

But then he added, it is equally traditional to close ranks as soon as the people have spoken—not the Congress, not the electors, the people have spoken.

That which unites us as American citizens is far greater than that which divides us as political parties.

It was another man from Springfield, fourscore and 8 years earlier, who won reelection to the Presidency in the national crisis that tested our country and its democratic institutions, who pleaded even in his hour of victory for the same spirit of reconciliation. That was the party of Lincoln. That hasn't happened to this hour.

Lincoln said: ''. . . now that the election is over,'' he asked, ''may not all, having a common interest, reunite in a common effort to save our common country?''

Such is the duty of an American who stands for elections, or participates in our politics, to be either humble in triumph or gracious in defeat.

I have lost some elections—not too many—and I have won a lot of elections. I hope that I have been gracious in defeat and humble in victory. I hope that I put my State and my country first, not myself.

It is clear to all that the outgoing President has not followed the path that Stevenson and Lincoln urged. So, we, the people—each one of us represents about 750,000 to 800,000 people, some a few less. The people, they have spoken in the way that our Constitution set for them to be heard by us and by the country—they voted, and they voted pretty decisively.

We, the people, together, must turn away from division and its dangers.

The senior Member of our body, DON YOUNG from Alaska, spoke the other day when we were sworn in and said: Ladies and gentlemen of this House, we are so divisive that it is going to destroy our country. We need to reach out and hold one another's hands.

We all have a title that we honor more than any other—perhaps parent, perhaps husband. But we are all Americans. Not Americans-R; not Americans-D. We are Americans.

Let us hope tonight that we act like Americans. Not as Ds and Rs, but as Americans, just as Al Gore, just as Hillary Clinton, just as Adlai Stevenson, just as Abraham Lincoln, who had won that election, of course. But he had defeated people, and he said that is not the issue; the issue is to reunite.

We, the people, must again be the strong heart of our American democracy.

We, the people, on this day in Congress, must be agents of unity and constructive action to face the grave threats that confront us and tell those who would assault our Capitol: That is not the American way.

We, the Members of Congress, who swore an oath before God to preserve and protect the Constitution of the United States and our democracy, must do so now.

I don't usually read Senator MCCONNELL's speeches, but I am not speaking as a Democrat, nor was he speaking as a Republican just a few hours ago.

''We're debating a step that has never been taken in American history, whether Congress should overrule the voters and overturn a Presidential election.''

He went on to say that he supports a strong State-led voting reform.

''The Constitution,'' he said, ''gives us here in Congress a limited role. We cannot simply declare ourselves a national board of elections on steroids. The voters, the courts, and the States have all spoken.''

Five people said the election of 2000 was over. We didn't agree with them. But Al Gore said: We are a nation of laws. Five people—yes, they were members of the Supreme Court, but they were five people—said the election is over. I sat on that podium and saw that power transfer to George W. Bush.

MCCONNELL went on to say: ''If we overrule them, it would damage our Republic forever.''

He said that, MCCONNELL, the Republican leader of the Senate, about 2 hours ago, 3 hours ago, now 4 hours.

He went on to say: ''If this election were overturned by mere allegations from the losing side, our democracy would enter a death spiral.''

He concluded: ''It would be unfair and wrong to disenfranchise American voters and overrule the courts and the States on this extraordinarily thin basis. And I will not pretend such a

vote would be a harmless protest gesture . . .''

How presciently he spoke. People who think that the election has been stolen with some fraud, why do they think it? Because the Commander in Chief said so, and they respect him and they follow him. And words matter.

''Pete,'' as he ended, ''I will not pretend such a vote would be a harmless protest gesture while relying on others to do the right thing. I will vote to respect the people's decision and defend our system of government as we know it.''

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this objection, as MCCONNELL said, a danger to our democracy.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Madam Speaker, I rise for a point of personal privilege to address the House for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Madam Speaker, I rise to address what happened in this Chamber today and where do we go from here.

The violence, destruction, and chaos we saw earlier was unacceptable, undemocratic, and un-American. It was the saddest day I have ever had serving as a Member of this institution.

The Capitol was in chaos. Police officers were attacked. Guns were drawn on this very floor. A woman tragically lost her life.

No one wins when this building and what it stands for are destroyed. America, and this institution, is better than that.

We saw the worst of America this afternoon. Yet, in the midst of violence and fear, we also saw the best of America.

It starts with our law enforcement—the Capitol Police, the National Guard, the FBI, and the Secret Service—who faced the most difficult challenges but did their duty with confidence and strength. Many of them are injured right now.

It also extends to this Chamber, where both Democrats and Republicans showed courage, calm, and resolve.

I would like to recognize the Members now who helped to hold the line: MARKWAYNE MULLIN, TONY GONZALES, JASON CROW, PAT FALLON, and TROY NEHLS. Working with the Capitol Police, they ensured the floor of this Chamber was never breached. These are the heroes among us. Thank you for the show of courage.

Looking back on the past few hours, it is clear this Congress will not be the same after today, and I hope it will be the better. I hope not just this institution, but I hope every American pauses for that moment and thinks among themselves that we can disagree with one another but not dislike each other; we can respect the voices of others.

There are many times we debate in this body, and we should. There are many times we can get heated. I still consider STENY HOYER a very good friend. There are times I get upset, and I will call him at home to express the things I may not see fair or just, but that is the way we should handle things.

The majority leader is right: We are all Americans first.

But we should also think for a moment: What do we put on social media? What do we convey to one another? Just because you have a personal opinion different than mine, you have a right to say it, but nobody has a right to become a mob. And we all should stand united in condemning the mob together.

We solve problems before our Nation, not through destruction, but through debate. That is the heart of this democracy. I know what we debate today is tough, but it is just; it is right.

This isn't the first side of the aisle that has ever debated this issue. I thought of what Madam Speaker said back in 2005, ''this is democracy at its best,'' when they talked about a Presidential election in Ohio.

These are the moments that we should raise the issue about integrity and accountability and accuracy in our elections. But you know what we should do, the next difference? Not just raise the issue, but work together to solve the problems.

Now is the moment to show America we can work best together. I will tell you, the size of the majority is slim, so it gives us the opportunity to make that happen. The only thing that can hold us back is the will of one another to do it.

This side of the aisle always believes in working with anybody who wants to move it forward. That does not mean that we are going to agree 100 percent of the time. That does not mean our voice cannot be heard. That does not mean we cannot be treated fairly; we should be. That may mean on the size of committees, that means on our ability to offer an amendment, that means on our ability to have our voice. But at the end of the day, it helps us come to a better conclusion.

By returning here to complete the work we were sent to do, we are proving that our democracy cannot be disrupted by criminal behavior. We will not falter; we will not bend; and we will not shrink from our duty.

Let me be very clear: Mobs don't rule America. Laws rule America. It was true when our cities were burning this summer, and it is true now.

When Americans go to bed tonight, their lasting memory should not be a Congress overrun by rioters. It must be a resolute Congress conducting healthy debate.

We may disagree on a lot in America, but tonight we should show the world that we will respectfully, but thoroughly, carry out the most basic duties of democracy.

We will continue with the task that we have been sent here to do. We will follow the Constitution and the law and the process for hearing valid concerns about election integrity. We will do it with respect.

□ 2130

We will respect your opinion, we will respect what you say, and we are willing to listen to it. I think the Nation will be better for it on both sides of the aisle. Let's show the country the mob did not win. We have a job to do. Let's do it with pride and let's be better when the sun rises tomorrow.

Mr. STANTON. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STANTON. Madam Speaker, over the last few hours, we have seen the consequences of dangerous un-American rhetoric; an armed insurrection against the seat of government of the most powerful country on Earth; a breach of this Capitol building to attack Congress, something that has not taken place since the British occupied this building during the War of 1812; an attempted coup spurred by rhetoric coming from those who are looking out for themselves, not country.

It is stunning, Madam Speaker, that there are some in this House who have voiced support for what happened. It was not a protest. It was treason. It was sedition. And it should be prosecuted as such.

At its root is a disease that has infected our politics, one that will make some political leaders do anything, including lie and incite violence to hold on to power. That is what we are seeing before our very eyes.

In contesting the outcome of this election, my Republican colleagues make a contradictory argument that puts party and power before country. They argue the election results were valid when it showed they won their races, but the same ballots were somehow fraudulent when it produced a result President Trump did not like.

Keep the results we like, they demand, cancel the one we don't.

That is not how democracy works, and neither is armed insurrection.

Here is the truth: Arizona has a long bipartisan record of conducting safe, secure, and fair elections. And I say that as someone whose party has more often than not been on the losing end of those elections. This last election was, once again, safe and secure. And I commend our State and county election officials, public servants on both sides of the aisle, for making Arizona proud once again.

We are here because the case that Republicans have brought before us has failed in court over and over and over again.

My colleagues say: Let's go back to the State, let them decide.

My friends, Arizona has spoken. They have sent the correct electors.

Arizona's Republican attorney general, one of the most partisan in the country, said: ''There is no evidence, there are no facts that would lead anyone to believe the election results will change.''

The Republican speaker of our State house has told us he doesn't like the

results of the election, but they are the right results. Joe Biden has won Arizona.

The State supreme court, made up entirely of justices appointed by Republican Governors, has spoken, too. The court said the President's challenge ''fails to present any evidence of misconduct, illegal votes, or that the Biden electors did not in fact receive the highest numbers of votes for office.''

Look to the words of one of the President's own campaign chairs in my State, our Governor, Doug Ducey. Our Governor loves the President. He has been so loyal. He made sure the President could hold large rallies in our State in the middle of a pandemic. The Governor personally attended them. They spoke so often that the Governor gave the President a special ''Hail to the Chief'' ring tone on his phone.

After election day, as the legal challenges played out, the Governor kept quiet; but when the truth became clear, even he acknowledged ''Joe Biden did win Arizona.''

I am grateful that, in this instance, the Governor put law, not partisan politics, first. And I urge my colleagues in the House to follow his lead.

Each and every one of us in this House, the people's House, swore an oath to preserve, protect, and defend our Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic. Over the last few hours, we have gained a better understanding of what that means.

The future of the Constitution, the most precious of the founding documents of the greatest democracy human kind has ever known, is in our hands. Defending democracy is not, and should not be, a partisan task. It is a sacred one. Right here, right now, we must recognize that fidelity to the founding principles of our Nation are not about loyalty to one man, but rather to ensure that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the Earth.

The world is watching us all right now. We must get it right. Reject this ill-conceived attack on our democracy.

Ms. STEFANIK. Madam Speaker, I rise to support the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentlewoman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. STEFANIK. Madam Speaker, I rise with a heavy heart. This has been a truly tragic day for America. We all join together in fully condemning the dangerous violence and destruction that occurred today in our Nation's Capitol.

Americans will always have their freedom of speech and the constitutional right to protest, but violence in any form is absolutely unacceptable. It is anti-America, and must be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Thank you to the heroic United States Capitol Police. And thank you to the bipartisan professional staff of the United States Capitol for protecting the people's House and the American people.

This hallowed temple of democracy is where generations of Americans have peacefully come together to face our Nation's greatest challenges, bridge our deepest fissures, and create a more perfect system of government. This is the appropriate place we stand to respectfully and peacefully give voice to the people we represent across our diverse country.

The Representatives of the American people in this House are standing up for three fundamental American beliefs: The right to vote is sacred, that a Representative has a duty to represent his or her constituents, and that the rule of law is a hallmark of our Nation.

And in the spirit of healing—those are not my words—those are the words of you, Madam Speaker, from this very Chamber, when some of my colleagues and friends across the aisle objected to the 2005 electoral college certification.

In fact, there were objections on this floor to the certification of nearly every Republican President in my lifetime: In 1989, in 2001, in 2005, and in 2017.

So history is our guide that the people's sacred House is the appropriate venue for a peaceful debate. And this peaceful debate serves as a powerful condemnation to the violence that perpetrated our Capitol grounds today. The violence that was truly un-American.

Today's discussion is about the Constitution and it is about the American people, but it must also be about clearly and resolutely condemning the violence that occurred today.

I am honored each and every day to represent New York's 21st Congressional District, and I believe it is my solemn and sacred duty to serve as their voice and their vote in the people's House.

Tens of millions of Americans are concerned that the 2020 election featured unconstitutional overreach by unelected State officials and judges ignoring State election laws. We can and we should peacefully and respectfully discuss these concerns.

In Pennsylvania, the State supreme court and secretary of state unilaterally and unconstitutionally rewrote election law eliminating signature matching requirements.

In Georgia, there was constitutional overreach when the secretary of state unilaterally and unconstitutionally gutted signature matching for absentee ballots and, in essence, eliminated voter verification required by State election law.

In Wisconsin, officials issued illegal rules to circumvent a State law, passed by the legislature as the Constitution requires, but required absentee voters to provide further identification before obtaining a ballot.

In Michigan, signed affidavits document numerous unconstitutional irregularities: Officials physically blocking the legal right of poll watchers to observe vote counts, the illegal counting of late ballots, and hand-stamping ballots with the previous day's date.

My North Country constituents and the American people cherish the Constitution. They know, according to the Constitution, elected officials closest to the people in State legislatures have the power of the pen to write election law, not unelected bureaucrats, judges, Governors, or secretaries of state.

To the tens of thousands of constituents who have reached out to me, thank you. Please know that I am listening and I hear you, both those who agree and those who disagree. Our Constitutional Republic will endure this tragic day because the Founding Fathers understood Congress and the American people would face unprecedented and historic challenges by debating them on this very floor.

I believe that the most precious foundation and the covenant of our Republic is the right to vote, and the faith in the sanctity of our Nation's free and fair elections. We must work together in this House to rebuild that faith so that all our elections are free, fair, secure, safe and, most importantly, that they are according to the United States Constitution.

Mr. ROY. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROY. Madam Speaker, today, the people's House was attacked, which is an attack on the Republic itself. There is no excuse for it. A women died. And people need to go to jail. And the President should never have spun up certain Americans to believe something that simply cannot be.

I applaud House leadership of both parties for bringing us back to do our job, which is to count the electors and no more.

The problem we face, though, is even bigger. We are deeply divided. We are divided about even life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The words which used to bind us together now, at times, tear us apart because we disagree about what they even mean.

My constituents at home in Texas are genuinely upset. I say to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, we have a constant barrage of those who wish to remake America into a socialist welfare State, efforts to attack our institutions, tear down statues, erase our history, defund our police. We have seen the debasing of our language. We teach our children that America is evil. We destroy our sovereignty, empower cartels. We attack our Second Amendment. We destroy small businesses through lockdowns. We divide ourselves by race. We can't even agree that there is man and woman. We extinguish the unborn before they even have a chance to see daylight.

But at the heart of our path forward lies the essence of our Republic, its cornerstone. That we are a union of States bound together for common defense and economic strength, and more

so bound together through federalism in which we may live together peacefully as citizens in this vast land agreeing to disagree, free to live according to our own beliefs and according to the dictates of our conscience.

Now, many of my colleagues were poised this afternoon to vote to insert Congress into the constitutionally prescribed decisionmaking of the States by rejecting the sole official electors sent to us by each of the States of the Union. I hope they will reconsider.

I can tell you that I was not going to, and I will not be voting to reject the electors. And that vote may well sign my political death warrant, but so be it. I swore an oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States, and I will not bend its words into contortions for personal political expediency.

Number one, rejecting the electors certified to Congress by sovereign States violates the 12th Amendment and the entirety of the Constitution it amends, notwithstanding claims that you must read certain sections first. It is clear, it is black and white, we count. It is ministerial. And our only job is to count the electors before us. We have only one slate of electors per State sent to us under color of law, and no more.

Number two, to the extent you believe we do have constitutional authority to reject, we are arguing using incomplete and often misleading data points to prove it. I am not afforded time to go point by point, but there are more misleading claims than legitimate ones.

□ 2145

Three, rejecting the electors ignores the Founder's specific admonition that Congress not choose the President, as articulated in Federalist No. 68.

Four, indeed, the Founders drafted the inclusion of a phrase specifically putting Congress into the manner of the election process then specifically rejected it.

Five, if more than a trivial bloc of this body votes to reject a sovereign State's electors, it will irrevocably empower Congress to take over the selection of Presidential electors, and doing so will almost certainly guarantee future Houses will vote to reject the electors of Texas or any of our States for whatever reason.

Six, voting to reject the electors is not remotely consistent with our vote on Sunday, a vote I forced to highlight the very hypocrisy: to accept the outcome of the election of ourselves through elections conducted under the same rules, by procedures put in place by the same executive branch officials, impacted by rulings from the same judges, State and Federal. To do so is entirely inexplicable on its face.

Seven, the argument for rejection most given by my colleagues is based on the allegations of systemic election abuse by executive or judicial branch officials interfering with the ''legislatures thereof'' in Article II.

Many States made poor policy decisions. Whether these poor policy decisions violate State laws is a contested matter and a matter for the States to resolve for themselves.

More, five of the six legislatures are controlled by Republicans. Not one body has sent separate electors. Not one body has sent us even a letter by a majority of its whole body. The only body, the Pennsylvania Senate, who managed to come up with a majority of Republicans to complain only did so yesterday in an eleventh-hour face-saving political statement. Not one GOP statewide official has formally called on us to change. Not one law enforcement organization, State or Federal, has presented a case of malfeasance.

History will judge this moment.

Let us not turn the last firewall for liberty we have remaining on its head in a fit of populist rage for political expediency when there is plenty of looking into the mirror for Republicans to do for destroying our election systems with expansion of mail-in ballots.

I may well get attacked for this, but I will not abandon my oath to the Constitution. And I will make clear that I am standing up in defense of that Constitution to protect our federalist order and the electoral college, which empowers the very States we represent to stand athwart the long arm of this Federal Government by its very design.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Alabama is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, for years, Democrats and their media allies deceived America about Trump-Russian collusion and the extent of foreign interference in the 2016 elections. Yet, in 2020, Democrats promoted massive foreign interference in American elections by helping illegal aliens and other noncitizens vote in American elections, thereby canceling the votes of and stealing elections from American citizens.

Want evidence? Exhibit A. In 1993, Democrats rammed through Congress the National Voter Registration Act, making it illegal—illegal—to require proof of citizenship that prevents illegal aliens and noncitizens from registering to vote.

Why did Democrats do that? Simple. To steal elections, of course.

Exhibit B. How bad is the noncitizen voting problem? In 2005, Democrat President Jimmy Carter's Commission on Federal Election Reform warned that ''noncitizens have registered to vote in several recent elections'' and recommended that ''all States should use their best efforts to obtain proof of citizenship before registering voters.''

Exhibit C. A June 2005 General Accountability Office report discovered that up to 3 percent of people on voter registration lists are not U.S. citizens.

Exhibit D. In 2008, Electoral Studies surveyed 339 noncitizens. Eight percent admitted voting in American elections.

As an aside, I have seen higher percentages in other studies.

Exhibit E. The 2010 Census counted 11 million illegal aliens in America.

Exhibit F. A 2018 Yale study estimated as many as 22 million illegal aliens in America.

Exhibit G. The math means between 880,000 and 1.72 million illegal aliens illegally voted in the 2020 elections.

Exhibit H. In 2014, Old Dominion University and George Mason University professors surveyed noncitizens and illegal aliens and found they vote Democrat roughly 80 percent of the time.

Exhibit I. The math is again straightforward. The 60 percent Biden advantage times the illegal alien voting number means Joe Biden gained roughly 1,032,000 votes from illegal alien voting. That is the high number.

Exhibit J. While no one knows for sure how massive the illegal alien voting bloc is, we do know Joe Biden and his campaign believed it large enough and critical enough to winning the Presidential race that, at the October 22 Presidential debate, Joe Biden publicly solicited the illegal alien bloc vote by promising: ''Within 100 days, I am going to send to the United States Congress a pathway to citizenship for over 11 million undocumented people.''

Ladies and gentlemen, Madam Speaker, that is the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow for illegal aliens. Joe Biden knew exactly what he was doing by seeking the illegal alien bloc vote. After all, on May 11, 1993, then-Senator Joe Biden voted for the National Voter Registration Act, which makes it illegal to require proof of citizenship from illegal aliens and other noncitizens when they seek to register to vote.

Madam Speaker, the evidence is compelling and irrefutable. Noncitizens overwhelmingly voted for Joe Biden in exchange for the promised amnesty and citizenship and in so doing helped steal the election from Donald Trump, Republican candidates, and American citizens across America.

Madam Speaker, in my judgment, if only lawful votes cast by eligible American citizens are counted, Joe Biden lost and President Trump won the electoral college.

As such, it is my constitutional duty to promote honest and accurate elections by rejecting electoral college vote submissions from States whose electoral systems are so badly flawed as to render their vote submissions unreliable, untrustworthy, and unworthy of acceptance.

Mr. REED. Madam Speaker, as a proud Republican, I rise in opposition to the objection to the electorate.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. REED. Madam Speaker, I come to this side of the aisle as a proud Republican but, most importantly, as a proud American.

Today, we saw an assault on our democracy. I love this institution. I love the United States Congress, and I love

the United States of America. And what I saw today was mob rule that spat upon the blood of my father that is in the soil of Europe and in the soil of Korea, and who gave us through that blood this sacred Constitution and the sacred ability to lead this world as a power that says we settle our differences not with mob rule; we settle our difference through elections. And when those elections are over, we have a peaceful transition of power.

Now, make no mistake to my colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle, I will be passionate in my disagreement with you. I will be passionate in my ideas for the future of this country, and I will fight for my Republican ideas that I hold near and dear. But I will stand with you tonight and send a message to the Nation and all Americans that what we saw today was not American, and what we see tonight in this body shall be what we do in America, and that is to transfer power in a peaceful way.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. REED. I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding and for standing with me and with all of us.

TOM REED is my co-chair of the Problem Solvers Caucus. He is a Republican, and I am a Democrat. When it comes to policy views, we often disagree. But at the end of the day, we are united as Americans. My good friend, like me, always puts country first.

Today, a group of lawless thugs sought to upend the Constitution and the peaceful transition of power because they didn't like the outcome of the Presidential election. So, they tried to nullify it using improvised explosives, shattering windows, breaking down doors, injuring law enforcement, and even tearing down the American flag that rises above this beacon of democracy.

But their attempt to obstruct democracy failed. Their insurrection was foiled. The American people and the greatest democracy the world has ever known won.

Abraham Lincoln, who served in this very body, famously said: ''A house divided against itself cannot stand.'' That is why, for the sake of this country, we must stand together, united, and celebrate a peaceful transition of power.

In 14 days, President-elect Biden will be sworn in. And despite all of our differences, I have faith that, for the American people, we will come together, Democrats and Republicans, committed to unity, civility, and truth. We will recognize our higher purpose to help America through these dark days.

That is the only way we will beat COVID, rebuild our economy, and stand up to threats at home and abroad.

Working together as Democrats and Republicans, I know our best days will always be ahead of us.

Mr. REED. Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to always search their conscience and their souls. I respect my Republican colleagues and my Democratic colleagues, but today, let us pause and remember what happened here today. Let us pause that our tenure in this Congress will far surpass the time that we stay here. And let us pause and cast our votes today recognizing that what we do here today will set the course of this institution for years to come.

This institution, Madam Speaker, shall not fail because the United States of America shall forever be the beacon of hope, the inspiration to all.

May God bless our great country.

Mr. ZELDIN. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from New York is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ZELDIN. Madam Speaker, my constitutional oath is sacred, and I have a duty to speak out about confirmed evidence-filled issues with the administration of the 2020 Presidential election in certain battleground States.

Signature verification, ballot observation, voter roll integrity, voter ID requirements, and ballot collection protections were weakened on top of the millions of mailboxes that were flooded with unrequested mail-in ballots.

Many of my constituents have been outraged and demanding that I voice their objections here today.

This debate is necessary because rogue election officials, secretaries of state, and courts circumvented State election laws. They made massive changes to how their State's election would be run. These acts, among other issues, were unlawful and unconstitutional.

Congress has the duty to defend the Constitution and any powers of State legislatures that were usurped.

Some claim today's objections set new precedent by challenging State electors. That claim, of course, ignores that Democrats have objected every time a Republican Presidential candidate has won an election over the past generation. If you don't have any observations today, that is your call, but don't lecture about precedent.

Over the past 4 years, Democrats boycotted President Trump's inauguration and State of the Union Addresses, pushed the Trump-Russia collusion conspiracies and investigations and knowingly lied about it, voted to impeach the President before even knowing what to impeach him for, and then actually passed Articles of Impeachment before Senate Democrats voted to remove him from office.

Today's debate is necessary, especially because of the insistence that everything President Trump and his supporters say about the 2020 election is evidence-free. That is simply not true.

No one can honestly claim it is evidence-free. When I say that, in Arizona, courts unilaterally extended the legislatively set deadline to register to vote.

□ 2200

The Arizona State Senate issued subpoenas post-election to get information from the Maricopa County board on various election matters, but the board and the courts refused to help at all to let the State senate complete its constitutional duties.

In Pennsylvania, where State legislators wrote us about their powers being usurped, the Democrat majority on the State supreme court changed signature, signature matching and postal marking requirements. The date to submit mail-in ballots was extended contradictory to the date set by State law.

The State legislature expanded no-excuse mail-in balloting without a constitutional amendment. Constitutions apply to the acts of all branches of government.

The issue was magnified by the voter rolls being so inaccurate that more voters submitted ballots than there were registered voters. Signature authentication rules for absentee and mail-in ballots were weakened by the Democrat secretary of the Commonwealth without authorization. Ballot defects were allowed to be cured in some counties but not others. There were poll watchers denied the ability to closely observe ballot counting operations.

In Georgia, the secretary of state unilaterally entered into a settlement agreement with the Democratic Party, changing statutory requirements for confirming voter identity. Challenging defective signatures was made far more difficult, and the settlement even required election officials to consider issuing training materials drafted by an expert retained by the Democratic Party.

In Wisconsin, election officials assisted voters on how to circumvent the State's voter ID laws and signature verification laws, while also placing unmanned drop boxes in locations picked to boost Democrat turnout. The Democracy in the Park event in Wisconsin had over 17,000 ballots transferred that shouldn't have been.

These are all facts and certainly not ''evidence free.''

Americans deserve nothing less than full faith and confidence in their elections and a guarantee that their vote—their voice—counts and that their concerns are being heard. That is why we need to have this debate today, whether you like it or not.

This isn't about us. This is about our Constitution, our elections. This is about our people and our Republic.

Mr. GALLEGO. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Arizona is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GALLEGO. Madam Speaker, I am the proud son of immigrants. Growing up, I heard stories about parties,

politicians, and Presidents invalidating elections when the people took power for themselves. That is why, when I joined the Marine Corps, the most sacred part of my oath was to protect the Constitution of the United States.

I never thought I would have to do that on the floor of Congress, but here we are. The people have spoken, and the power of the people, the Constitution, will be preserved.

Madam Speaker, I left my youth, I left my sanity, I left it all in Iraq for this country because there is this one precious idea that we all had, that we all believed: that this country was going to protect everyone's individual rights, that you were going to be able to vote, that you were going to be able to preserve democracy and pass it on as a legacy, as an inheritance to every American.

But today—today—there was treason in this House. Today, there were traitors in this House.

So I am not asking my Republican colleagues to help me and stop this objection to Arizona; I am asking you to get off all these objections. It is time for you to save your soul. It is time for you to save your country.

That man at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue will forget you. He will use you and he will dump you to the side, but what will be left will be the stain—the stain—on democracy that you are engaging in right now.

Listen to yourselves. I consider most of you very smart, believe it or not, but the idea that we would rig an election for the President but not preserve the congressional seats for all of our friends that we just lost in the last election is absurd.

The idea that we would help Vice President Biden win but wouldn't make sure that we got enough Senators in the Senate for us to pass a full agenda is absurd.

The idea that there was somehow nefarious border registration in Arizona that tipped the scale when, during that same time of border registration, there were more registered voters that were Republicans than Democrats is absurd.

You are better than this. Many of you did serve, many of you have never served, but there is an opportunity and a time for courage. I hope you never have to face fire or bullets or bombs for your country, but right now—right now—this country is asking you to be better. Right now, this country is asking you to show courage.

That man will leave. Your soul will stay with you for the rest of your life.

You owe it to democracy. You owe it to the hundreds and thousands of men and women that have sacrificed their life.

You know better. You are better. Be the good American. Be the American you want. Preserve this democracy; reject this movement; and stop this terrorism that is happening from the White House.

The SPEAKER. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise to speak in favor of the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from North Carolina is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, it has been quite a day. And in contrast to the gentleman's comments just now, I couldn't get over this text that I received from the mayor of Charlotte, Vi Lyles, about 30 minutes ago. She is a progressive Democrat, a political opponent for years, a tremendous and graceful person. She said:

> Representative Bishop, I hope you are safe and well. It must have been a day of anguish for the world to see our Capitol buildings under siege. I know you have a long night ahead and want you to know I was thinking about you, your family, and staff.
>
> God bless.
>
> Vi.

Back home, the generosity of spirit still exists.

And I understand the sharp words and feelings on the other side tonight, but there are also good people back home, and I have heard from many, many, many of them.

News would suggest there are millions of Americans—that is a big number—millions, tens of millions, who believe something went awry in this election. And they aren't dumb. They aren't mindless. They don't believe things simply because the President says them. There were problems.

I know that Joe Biden will be President, but I don't know that it hurts or would hurt any of us to have the generosity of spirit to continue to reflect on what might be better or what might seriously have gone wrong here, even if you reject the notion that the result was wrong.

I would like to offer a slightly different perspective, a distinct perspective. Perhaps it will be rejected. I think if I were sitting on the other side of the aisle, it would be very difficult for me to listen to tonight, but you all have heard it said, and it certainly is true, that many executive branch officials around the Nation departed from State legislatures' enacted laws.

I know it is less understood how this came to pass.

It was not a spontaneous, independent decisionmaking, but it resulted, I would argue, from a coordinated, nationwide partisan plan. And the fact and scope of the plan really isn't disputed.

If you go to democracydocket.com, it is the website of Marc Elias, the national Democratic election lawyer who appeared in hundreds of cases across the country in the course of the election year.

This plan was not a response to COVID, by the way. It preexisted that. And his website shows that as well. He explained that in January of 2020.

It was a chaos strategy, a plan to flood State and Federal courts with hundreds of simultaneous election year lawsuits aimed at displacing State legislative control.

Now, as I have seen it, only the most experienced and independent judges appear to have recognized what was afoot. In the fourth circuit, dissenting judges Wilkinson and Agee said this: ''Let's understand the strategy that is being deployed here . . . Our country is now plagued with a proliferation of preelection litigation.'' And as they put it, 385 election year cases to that point on October 20, and they referred to the website healthyelections.org to verify that.

''Around the country,'' they wrote, ''courts are changing the rules of the upcoming elections at the last minute. It makes the promise of the Constitution's Elections and Electors Clauses into a farce.''

This was a political operation masquerading as a judicial one. And in keeping with that, it featured gross breaches of litigation ethics: forum shopping, repetitive suits after losses, and collusive settlements with cooperating Democratic officials of State and local governments.

That is what led to officials changing the rules in State after State, mainly through consent orders, or the preliminary, unreviewed decisions of State and Federal trial judges inclined by partisanship or having limited experience with the Electoral Clause.

In turn, the displacement of rules set by State legislatures led to chaotic conditions on the ground, about which so many Americans are angry and disheartened.

I think we can do better. I think that strategy was unwise, and I think, particularly in light of what has happened here today, we should.

Mr. O'HALLERAN. Madam Speaker, I rise tonight in opposition to the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Arizona is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. O'HALLERAN. Madam Speaker, as a nation, we have endured trying times and overcome many challenges, and now we face an unprecedented effort to ignore the will of the American people and the people of Arizona. Given the facts and the unprecedented events of tonight, this effort must be finished, and America can be united again. That is going to take leadership.

We are all leaders.

We are elected to be leaders. And if we are going to do that, we have to do it from respect to others, the idea that truth is important, that factual content is important, that we are going to tell the American people what is going on in this country and not what we hope they hear from a 30-second sound bite.

I used to be a homicide investigator. My job was to follow the facts, develop a case, make decisions and recommendations based on where those facts led me. Following the process means that decisions cannot be made on rumors and innuendos alone.

I am proud to say that Arizona has used mail-in voting for over two decades. Both Republicans and Democrats

have long been proud of how our State has administered elections.

In 2020, over 65 percent of eligible Arizonans voted, a record number. Our Republican Governor, Republican attorney general, Democratic secretary of state, and our State's election administrators and volunteers worked with integrity to administer a fair election.

We saw turnout increases in both Republican and Democratic areas, and, in fact, more Republicans registered in this election than any other party. I am proud that many of our Tribal, rural, and underserved communities voted in record numbers, all during a pandemic. In 2020, Arizonans made their voices heard.

The fact is, multiple Federal and State judges, agencies, and State elected officials concluded the winner was Joe Biden.

In Arizona, this process was administered and overseen by officials from both parties. Election officials conducted random, hand-counted audits of many precincts that confirmed there were no errors that would change the result of the election.

The fact is that the Republican chairman of Maricopa County, the largest Republican county in the State, the biggest population county, stated: ''More than 2 million ballots were cast in Maricopa County, and there is no evidence of fraud or misconduct or malfunction.''

He concluded: ''No matter how you voted, this election was administered with integrity, transparency, and in accordance with State laws.''

The fact is, the President, his campaign, and several Republican-led groups filed eight election lawsuits, all of which were dismissed. The Arizona Supreme Court, a body where all justices have been appointed by Republican Governors, unanimously dismissed the case.

□ 2215

The justices found that the party had ''failed to present any evidence of 'misconduct,' or 'illegal votes' . . . let alone establish any degree of fraud or a significant error rate that would undermine the certainty of the election results.''

After these judicial rulings, the Governor said: ''I trust our election system. There's integrity in our election system.''

The fact is, Joe Biden is the certified winner of Arizona's 11 electoral votes. Arizona's elected and appointed officials from both parties followed the facts and came to this conclusion. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

To my colleagues across the aisle, I know we may disagree on who we want as President, but what we personally want is not what matters here. Rather, the people's influence, as reflected in the certified electoral college results, is what matters. Facts matter.

Undermining faith in our election process by attempting to mislead the American public only serves to weaken us and make us vulnerable to foreign actors who do us harm. For the good of our country, this must stop. Now is the time to come together to preserve our democracy and to protect our national security.

I know my constituents are looking to Congress to move past its divisions, find common ground, and pass legislation to improve the lives of struggling families. We must stay focused on fighting the pandemic. We must work to ensure all Americans can be vaccinated as soon as possible so we can save American lives, safely reopen schools, get people back to work, and visit loved ones again. I urge my colleagues to follow this.

Mr. GAETZ. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GAETZ. Madam Speaker, one of the first things we did when the House convened today was to join together to extend our grace and our kindness and our concern for a colleague who has experienced just an insurmountable amount of grief with his family. And I want all of our fellow Americans watching to know that we did that because we care about each other and we don't want bad things to happen to each other, and our heart hurts when they do.

Now, I am sure there are plenty of folks over there who don't like me too much and there are few of them that I don't care for too much. But if anybody had been hurt today, it would have been even more of a catastrophe than we already saw, and I think that is an important point for the country.

Another important point for the country is that this morning, President Trump explicitly called for demonstrations and protests to be peaceful. He was far more—you can moan and groan, but he was far more explicit about his calls for peace than some of the BLM and leftwing rioters were this summer when we saw violence sweep across this Nation.

Now, we came here today to debate, to follow regular order, to offer an objection, to follow a process that is expressly contemplated in our Constitution; and for doing that, we got called a bunch of seditious traitors.

Now, not since 1985 has a Republican President been sworn in absent some Democrat effort to object to the electors; but when we do it, it is the new violation of all norms. And when those things are said, people get angry.

Now, I know there are many countries where political violence may be necessary, but America is not one such country.

Madam Speaker, it was wrong when people vandalized and defaced your home. It was wrong when thugs went to Senator HAWLEY's home. And I don't know if the reports are true, but The Washington Times has just reported some pretty compelling evidence from a facial recognition company showing that some of the people who breached the Capitol today were not Trump supporters. They were masquerading as Trump supporters, and, in fact, were members of the violent terrorist group antifa.

Now, we should seek to build America up, not tear her down and destroy her. And I am sure glad that, at least for one day, I didn't hear my Democrat colleagues calling to defund the police.

Now, I appreciate all the talk of coming together, but let us not pretend that our colleagues on the left have been free of some antidemocratic impulses. Just because we signed on to legal briefs and asked courts to resolve disputes, there were some on the left who said that we should not even be seated in the body, that we ought to be prosecuted, maybe even jailed. Those arguments anger people.

But people do understand the concepts of basic fairness, and no competition, contest, or election can be deemed fair if the participants are subject to different rules.

Baseball teams that cheat and steal signs should be stripped of their championships. Russian Olympians who cheat and use steroids should be stripped of their medals. And States that do not run clean elections should be stripped of their electors.

This fraud was systemic; it was repeated; it was the same system; and, I dare say, it was effective. We saw circumstances where, when Democrat operatives couldn't get the outcomes they wanted in State legislatures, when they couldn't get the job done there, they went and pressured and litigated and usurped the Constitution with extra-constitutional action of some officials in some States. They fraudulently laundered ballots, votes, voter registration forms, and then they limited review.

In 2016, Democrats found out that they couldn't beat Donald Trump at the ballot box with voters who actually show up, so they turned to impeachment and the witness box. And when that failed, they ran to the mailbox, where this election saw an unprecedented amount of votes that could not be authenticated with true ID, with true signature match, and with true confidence for the American people.

Our Article III courts have failed by not holding evidentiary hearings to weigh the evidence. We should not join in that failure. We should vindicate the rights of States. We should vindicate the subpoenas in Arizona that have been issued to get a hold of these voting machines, and we should reject these electors.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentlewoman from Colorado is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to yield my time to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA), the dean of the Arizona delegation.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Colorado for yielding time.

I will be very brief, Madam Speaker. There is really nothing left to say. This challenge brought by Members of this House, Republican Members from this House from Arizona and a Senator from Texas, the whole discussion today, this challenge to the 11 electoral votes that are designated for President Biden and Vice President Harris, the discussion today proves there is no merit to denying those electoral votes. There is no legal standing. The courts have proven that in Arizona time and time again. There is no precedent. There was no constitutional violation.

But we are here today, Madam Speaker, because of one man and those who are desperate to please him.

So what do we have to show for this process today? Fear, a lockdown, violence, and, regrettably and sadly, death, arrests, present and real danger, threats, an assault on our institution, this House, this Congress, and the very democracy that we practice here.

And to what end? What did we accomplish?

The reality is that the challenges will be defeated. Come January 20, President Biden and Vice President Harris will be the President and Vice President of the United States.

So what have we accomplished? To further divide this Nation? To continue to fan the same rhetoric of division and us versus them? To paralyze and dismantle our democracy? Is that what we attempted to accomplish today?

The mob that attacked this institution, I hold no Member specifically responsible for that madness that was around us, but we do share a responsibility, my friends, to end it. It is past time to accept reality, to reaffirm our democracy and move on.

I would urge my colleagues from Arizona who filed this challenge to withdraw their challenge to this, to Arizona and to the electors that have been chosen to give their 11 votes to the winners in that election.

But if that doesn't happen, then I would urge my colleagues to reject this challenge and defend all voters, defend the voters of Arizona and that democracy that we practice daily in the representation of our constituents. That is what is at stake today.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, on Sunday, every Member in this Chamber took an oath to uphold the Constitution, and there is only one vote tonight for those who took that oath, and that vote is to reject this challenge.

The SPEAKER. All time for debate has expired.

The question is, Shall the objection to the Arizona electoral college vote count submitted by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GOSAR) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) be agreed to.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 121, nays 303, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 10]

YEAS—121

Aderholt
Allen
Arrington
Babin
Baird
Banks
Bergman
Bice (OK)
Biggs
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Brooks
Budd
Burchett
Burgess
Calvert
Cammack
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cawthorn
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Cole
Crawford
Davidson
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Duncan
Dunn
Estes
Fallon
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fleischmann
Franklin, C. Scott
Fulcher
Gaetz
Garcia (CA)
Gibbs
Gimenez
Gohmert
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Guest
Hagedorn
Harris
Harshbarger
Hartzler
Hern
Herrell
Hice (GA)
Higgins (LA)
Hudson
Issa
Jackson
Jacobs (NY)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Jordan
Joyce (PA)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
LaMalfa
Lamborn
LaTurner
Lesko
Long
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Malliotakis
Mann
Mast
McCarthy
McClain
Miller (IL)
Miller (WV)
Moore (AL)
Mullin
Nehls
Norman
Nunes
Obernolte
Palazzo
Palmer
Perry
Pfluger
Posey
Reschenthaler
Rice (SC)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Rosendale
Rouzer
Rutherford
Scalise
Sessions
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Steube
Tiffany
Timmons
Van Drew
Walberg
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Wright
Zeldin

NAYS—303

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Amodei
Armstrong
Auchincloss
Axne
Bacon
Balderson
Barr
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bentz
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bourdeaux
Bowman
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brown
Brownley
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Bush
Bustos
Butterfield
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Cartwright
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Comer
Connolly
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crenshaw
Crist
Crow
Cuellar
Curtis
Davids (KS)
Davis, Danny K.
Davis, Rodney
Dean
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Delgado
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Emmer
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Evans
Feenstra
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fletcher
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel, Lois
Fudge
Gallagher
Gallego
Garamendi
Garbarino
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Golden
Gomez
Gonzales, Tony
Gonzalez (OH)
Gonzalez, Vicente
Gottheimer
Graves (LA)
Green, Al (TX)
Grijalva
Grothman
Guthrie
Haaland
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Herrera Beutler
Higgins (NY)
Hill
Himes
Hinson
Hollingsworth
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyer
Huffman
Huizenga
Jackson Lee
Jacobs (CA)
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (SD)
Johnson (TX)
Jones
Joyce (OH)
Kahele
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Keller
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (NJ)
Kind
Kinzinger
Kirkpatrick
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Kustoff
LaHood
Lamb
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Leger Fernandez
Levin (CA)
Levin (MI)
Lieu
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Luria
Lynch
Mace
Malinowski
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Manning
Massie
Matsui
McBath
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McNerney
Meeks
Meijer
Meng
Meuser
Mfume
Miller-Meeks
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (UT)
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moulton
Mrvan
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (NC)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Newhouse
Newman
Norcross
O'Halleran
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Owens
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Pence
Perlmutter
Peters
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Porter
Pressley
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Reed
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rodgers (WA)
Ross
Roy
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schrier
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Simpson
Sires
Slotkin
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Soto
Spanberger
Spartz
Speier
Stanton
Stauber
Stefanik
Steil
Stevens
Stewart
Stivers
Strickland
Suozzi
Swalwell
Takano
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Titus
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Turner
Underwood
Upton
Van Duyne
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Wagner
Waltz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Wexton
Wild
Williams (GA)
Wilson (FL)
Wittman
Womack
Yarmuth
Young

NOT VOTING—7

Bilirakis
Brady
Granger
Hastings
Kim (CA)
Steel
Tlaib

□ 2308

Messrs. MOONEY, WITTMAN, VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas, YOUNG, and GROTHMAN changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Messrs. JOHNSON of Ohio, RESCHENTHALER, and Mrs. WALORSKI changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the objection was not agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mrs. KIM of California. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall No. 10.

The SPEAKER. The Clerk will now notify the Senate of the action of the House, informing that body that the House is now ready to proceed in joint session with the further counting of the electoral vote for the President and the Vice President.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. To remind both sides of the aisle, during in the joint session, there are 11 House Republicans, 11 House Democrats, 11 House Senate Democrats, 11 Senate Republicans. 44 Members on the floor. Please view the proceedings from your offices. Thank you.

This is not a suggestion. That is a direction, in the interest of good example to the public of how serious we take the coronavirus threat and the need for social distancing.

Please, my colleagues, if you are not participating in the next part of this, please return to your offices.

I wish to remind Members that we have to reduce the number of Members on the floor to the gallery to witness the proceedings from there, in a relative number. So first come, first serve.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Secretary of the Senate shall inform the House of Representatives that the Senate is ready to proceed in joint session with the further counting of the electoral votes for President and Vice President.

At 11:35 p.m., the Sergeant at Arms, Paul D. Irving, announced the Vice President and the Senate of the United States.

The Senate entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, headed by the Vice President and the Secretary of the Senate, the Members and officers of the House rising to receive them.

The Vice President took his seat as the Presiding Officer of the joint convention of the two Houses, the Speaker of the House occupying the chair on his left. Senators took seats to the right of the rostrum as prescribed by law.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The joint session of Congress to count the electoral vote will resume. The tellers will take their chairs.

The two Houses retired to consider separately and decide upon the vote of the State of Arizona, to which an objection has been filed.

The Secretary of the Senate will report the action of the Senate.

The Secretary of the Senate read the order of the Senate, as follows:

Ordered, That the Senate by a vote of 6 ayes to 93 nays rejects the objection to the electoral votes cast in the State of Arizona for Joseph R. Biden, Jr., for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Clerk of the House will report the action of the House.

The Clerk of the House read the order of the House, as follows:

Ordered, That the House of Representatives rejects the objection to the electoral vote of the State of Arizona.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Pursuant to the law, chapter 1 of title 3, United States Code, because the two Houses have not sustained the objection, the original certificate submitted by the State of Arizona will be counted as provided therein.

The tellers will now record and announce the vote of the State of Arkansas for President and Vice President in accordance with the action of the two Houses.

This certificate from Arkansas, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State, and purports to be a return from the State, and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of that State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Arkansas seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 6 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 6 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Arkansas that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from California, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of California seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 55 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 55 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of California that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Colorado, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State, and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Senator BLUNT. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Colorado seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 9 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 9 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Colorado that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Connecticut, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Connecticut seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 7 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 7 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Connecticut that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

□ 2345

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Delaware, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Delaware seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 3 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 3 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Delaware that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from the District of Columbia, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from the District that purports to be a return from the District and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the District purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Senator BLUNT. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the District of Columbia seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 3 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 3 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the District of Columbia that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Florida, the

Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Florida seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 29 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 29 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Florida that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Georgia, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Georgia seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 16 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 16 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. For what purpose does the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. HICE) rise?

Mr. HICE of Georgia. Mr. President, myself, members of the Georgia delegation, and some 74 of my Republican colleagues and I object to the electoral vote from the State of Georgia on the grounds that the election conducted on November 3 was faulty and fraudulent due to unilateral actions by the secretary of state to unlawfully change the State's election process without approval from the General Assembly and thereby setting the stage for an unprecedented amount of fraud and irregularities. I have signed the objection myself.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Sections 15 and 17 of title 3, United States Code, require that any objection be presented in writing and signed by a Member of the House of Representatives and a Senator.

Is the objection in writing and signed by a Member and a Senator?

Mr. HICE of Georgia. Mr. President, prior to the actions and events of today, we did, but following the events of today, it appears that some Senators have withdrawn their objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. In that case, the objection cannot be entertained.

This certificate from Hawaii, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Hawaii seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 4 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 4 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Hawaii that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Idaho, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Senator BLUNT. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Idaho seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 4 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 4 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Idaho that the teller has certified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Illinois, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Illinois seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 20 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 20 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Illinois that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Indiana, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Indiana seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 11 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 11 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Indiana that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Iowa, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Iowa seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 6 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 6 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Iowa that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Kansas, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Senator BLUNT. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Kansas seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 6 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 6 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Kansas that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from the Commonwealth of Kentucky, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the Commonwealth of Kentucky seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J.

Trump of the State of Florida received 8 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 8 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the Commonwealth of Kentucky that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Louisiana, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Louisiana seems to be regular in form and authentic, and appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 8 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 8 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Louisiana that the teller has verified to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Maine, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Maine seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 3 votes for President, and Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 1 vote for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 3 votes for Vice President, and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 1 vote for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Maine that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Maryland, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Senator BLUNT. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Maryland seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 10 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 10 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Maryland that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Massachusetts, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. President, the certificate of electoral vote of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 11 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 11 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Michigan, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Michigan seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 16 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 16 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. For what reason does the gentlewoman from Georgia (Mrs. GREENE) rise?

Mrs. GREENE of Georgia. Mr. President, I, along with 70 of my Republican colleagues, object to the counting of the electoral votes for the State of Michigan on the grounds that the error rate exceeds the FEC rate allowed at 0.0008 percent, and that the people who signed affidavits at risk of perjury, their voices have not been heard in a court of law.

□ 0000

The VICE PRESIDENT. Sections 15 and 17 of title 3 of the U.S. Code, require that any objection be presented in writing and signed by a Member of the House of Representatives and a Senator.

Is the objection in writing and signed by a Member and a Senator?

Mrs. GREENE of Georgia. The objection is in writing, not signed by a Senator.

The VICE PRESIDENT. In that case, the objection cannot be entertained.

Are there any further objections to counting the certificate of the vote from the State of Michigan that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing no further objections, this certificate from Minnesota, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority of the State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Minnesota seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 10 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 10 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of the vote from the State of Minnesota that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Mississippi, the Parliamentarians have advised, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority of the State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Mississippi seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 6 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 6 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of the vote from the State of Mississippi that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Missouri, the Parliamentarians have advised, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority of the State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Senator BLUNT. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Missouri seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 10 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 10 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of the vote from the State of Missouri that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Montana, the Parliamentarians have advised, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority of the State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Montana seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump from the State of Florida received 3 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE from the State of Indiana received 3 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of the vote from the State of Montana that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Nebraska, the Parliamentarians have advised, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority of the State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Nebraska seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 4 votes for President; and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 1 vote for President; and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 4 votes for Vice President; and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 1 vote for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote from the State of Nebraska that the teller has verified is regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Nevada, the Parliamentarians have advised, is the only certificate of vote from the State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority from the State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Nevada seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 4 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 6 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. For what purpose does the gentleman from Alabama rise?

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. President, I and 55 other Members of the United States House of Representatives object to the electoral vote for the State of Nevada in order to protect the lawful votes of Nevada and all other American citizens.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Sections 15 and 17 of title 3 of the United States Code, require that any objection be presented in writing and signed by a Member of the House of Representatives and a Senator.

Is the objection in writing and signed by a Member and a Senator?

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. President, it is in writing, but, unfortunately, no United States Senator has joined in this effort.

The VICE PRESIDENT. In that case, the objection cannot be entertained.

Are there any further objections to counting the certificate of vote from the State of Nevada that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. This certificate from New Hampshire, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of electoral vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority of the State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Senator BLUNT. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of New Hampshire seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 4 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 4 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of New Hampshire that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. This certificate from New Jersey, the Parliamentarians have advised, is the only certificate of vote from the State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority in the State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of New Jersey seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 14 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 14 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of the vote from the State of New Jersey that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. This certificate from New Mexico, the Parliamentarians have advised, is the only certificate of vote from the State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority of the State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of New Mexico seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 5 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 5 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of the vote from the State of New Mexico that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from New York, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from the State that purports to be a return from the State and has annexed to it a certificate of an authority from the State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of New York seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 29 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 29 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of the vote from the State of New York that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from North Carolina, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from the State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

□ 0010

Senator BLUNT. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of North Carolina seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 15 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 15 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of North Carolina that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from North Dakota, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State, and purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of North Dakota seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 3 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 3 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of North Dakota that the teller has verified as regular and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, the certificate from Ohio, the Parliamentarians have advised, is the only certificate of vote from that State, and purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority of the State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Ohio seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 18 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 18 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Ohio that the teller has verified is regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Oklahoma, the Parliamentarians have advised, is the only certificate of vote from that State, and purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority of the State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Oklahoma seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 7 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 7 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Oklahoma that the teller has verified to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Oregon, the Parliamentarians have advised, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has a certificate of authority from the State annexed to it to appoint and ascertain electors.

Senator BLUNT. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Oregon seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 7 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 7 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Oregon that the teller has verified as regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Parliamentarians have advised, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of the State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 20 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 20 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. For what purpose does the gentleman from Pennsylvania rise?

Mr. PERRY. Mr. President, sadly, but resolutely, I object to the electoral votes of my beloved Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on the grounds of multiple constitutional infractions that they were not under all of the known circumstances regularly given; and on this occasion, I have a written objection signed by a Senator and 80 Members of the House of Representatives.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Is the objection in writing and signed by a Senator?

Mr. PERRY. Yes, Mr. Vice President, it is.

The VICE PRESIDENT. An objection presented in writing and signed by both a Representative and a Senator complies with the law, chapter 1 of title 3, United States Code.

The Clerk will report the objection.

The Clerk read the objection as follows:

JANUARY 7, 2021.

We, a United States Senator and Members of the House of Representatives, object to the counting of the electoral votes of the State of Pennsylvania on the ground that they were not, under all of the known circumstances, regularly given.

JOSH HAWLEY,
United States Senator.
SCOTT PERRY,
Member of Congress.

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Mo Brooks AL–5, Mike Kelly PA–16, John Joyce PA–13, Fred Keller PA–12, Scott Perry PA–10, Glenn Thompson PA–15, Jim Jordan OH–4, Dan Meuser PA–9, Clay Higgins LA–3, Tom Rice SC–7, Yvette Herrell NM–2, Alexander Mooney WV–2, Andy Biggs AZ–5, John W. Rose TN–6, W. Greg Steube FL–17, Madison Cawthorn NC–11, Bill Posey FL–8, Jeff Duncan SC–3, Brian Babin TX–36, Louie Gohmert TX–1.

Brian J. Mast FL–18, Warren Davidson OH–8, Andy Harris MD–1, Doug Lamborn CO–5, Kat Cammack FL–3, Tracey Mann KS–1, Bob Good VA–5, Adrian Smith NE–3, Billy Long MO–7, Jack Bergman MI–1, Michael Cloud TX–27, Byron Donalds FL–19, Rick Crawford AR–1, Roger Williams TX–25, Bob Gibbs OH–7, Russ Fulcher ID–1, Richard Hudson NC–8, Ted Budd NC–13, Barry Moore AL–2, Lee Zeldin NY–1.

Jake LaTurner KS–2, David Rouzer NC–7, Jason Smith MO–8, Lauren Boebert CO–3, Paul A. Gosar AZ–4, Chuck Fleischmann TN–3, Tim Burchett TN–2, Chris Jacobs NY–27, Bill Johnson OH–6, Andrew S. Clyde GA–9, Lance Gooden TX–5, Randy Feenstra IA–4, Mary E. Miller IL–15, Diana Harshbarger TN–1, Mark E. Green TN–7, Ron Estes KS–4, Neal Dunn FL–2, Ronny Jackson TX–13, Elise Stefanik NY–21, Ralph Norman SC–5.

Joe Wilson SC–2, Vicky Hartzler MO–4, Scott DesJarlais TN–4, Marjorie Taylor Greene GA–14, Doug LaMalfa CA–1, Jeff Van Drew NJ–2, Ben Cline VA–6, Michael D. Rogers AL–3, Markwayne Mullin OK–2, Jeff Duncan SC–3, Pat Fallon TX–4, Brad R. Wenstrup OH–2, August Pfluger TX–11, Rob Wittman VA–1, Scott Franklin FL–15, David Kustoff TN–8, Sam Graves MO–6, Matt Gaetz FL–1, Randy K. Weber TX–14.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there further objections to the certificate from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Chair hears none.

The two Houses will withdraw from joint session. Each House will deliberate separately on the pending objection and report its decision back to the joint session.

The Senate will now retire to its Chamber.

The Senate retired to its Chamber.

□ 0020

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution 1 and section 17 of title 3, United States Code, when the two Houses withdraw from the joint session to count the electoral vote for separate consideration of objection, a Representative may speak to the objection for 5 minutes and not more than once. Debate shall not exceed 2 hours, after which the Chair shall put the question, Shall the objection be agreed to?

The Clerk will report the objection made in the joint session.

The Clerk read the objection as follows:

JANUARY 7, 2021.

We, a United States Senator and Members of the House of Representatives, object to the counting of the electoral votes of the State of Pennsylvania on the ground that they were not, under all of the known circumstances, regularly given.

JOSH HAWLEY,
United States Senator.
SCOTT PERRY,
Member of Congress.

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Mo Brooks AL–5, Mike Kelly PA–16, John Joyce PA–13, Fred Keller PA–12, Scott Perry

PA–10, Glenn Thompson PA–15, Jim Jordan OH–4, Dan Meuser PA–9, Clay Higgins LA–3, Tom Rice SC–7, Yvette Herrell NM–2, Alexander Mooney WV–2, Andy Biggs AZ–5, John W. Rose TN–6, W. Greg Steube FL–17, Madison Cawthorn NC–11, Bill Posey FL–8, Jeff Duncan SC–3, Brian Babin TX–36, Louie Gohmert TX–1.

Brian J. Mast FL–18, Warren Davidson OH–8, Andy Harris MD–1, Doug Lamborn CO–5, Kat Cammack FL–3, Tracey Mann KS–1, Bob Good VA–5, Adrian Smith NE–3, Billy Long MO–7, Jack Bergman MI–1, Michael Cloud TX–27. Byron Donalds FL–19, Rick Crawford AR–1, Roger Williams TX–25, Bob Gibbs OH–7, Russ Fulcher ID–1, Richard Hudson NC–8, Ted Budd NC–13, Barry Moore AL–2, Lee Zeldin NY–1.

Jake LaTurner KS–2, David Rouzer NC–7, Jason Smith MO–8, Lauren Boebert CO–3, Paul A. Gosar AZ–4, Chuck Fleischmann TN–3, Tim Burchett TN–2, Chris Jacobs NY–27, Bill Johnson OH–6, Andrew S. Clyde GA–9, Lance Gooden TX–5, Randy Feenstra IA–4, Mary E. Miller IL–15, Diana Harshbarger TN–1, Mark E. Green TN–7, Ron Estes KS–4, Neal Dunn FL–2, Ronny Jackson TX–13, Elise Stefanik NY–21, Ralph Norman SC–5.

Joe Wilson SC–2, Vicky Hartzler MO–4, Scott DesJarlais TN–4, Marjorie Taylor Greene GA–14, Doug LaMalfa CA–1, Jeff Van Drew NJ–2, Ben Cline VA–6, Michael D. Rogers AL–3, Markwayne Mullin OK–2, Pat Fallon TX–4, Brad R. Wenstrup OH–2, August Pfluger TX–11, Rob Wittman VA–1, Scott Franklin FL–15, David Kustoff TN–8, Sam Graves MO–6, Matt Gaetz FL–1, Randy K. Weber TX–14.

The SPEAKER. The Chair will endeavor to alternate recognition between Members speaking in support of the objection and Members speaking in opposition to the objection.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PERRY. Madam Speaker, this is a somber day for the defense of the Constitution. You see, the Constitution is just a piece of paper. It cannot defend itself. That is why our leaders swear an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution, and that is what I am doing here this evening.

The Constitution states: ''The times, places, and manner of holding elections . . . shall be prescribed . . . by the legislature''—not the courts, not the Governor, not the secretary of state or other bureaucrats or elected officials, the legislature.

In Pennsylvania, the supreme court unilaterally extended the deadline for ballots to 3 days after the election. They actually wanted 10. The supreme court is not the legislature. The supreme court mandated un-postmarked ballots to be received, destroying the validity of all the votes that were cast timely.

The supreme court action defied the law, the legislature, and the will of the people.

The supreme court authorized the use of drop boxes, where ballot harvesting could occur. The legislature never authorized that form of voting, and the court had absolutely no right to do so.

Responding to the secretary of state, Kathy Boockvar, the supreme court ruled that mail-in ballots need not authenticate signatures.

Once again, the court not only defied the Constitution and the will of the people, but by so doing, they created a separate class of voters, thereby violating the Equal Protection Clause prescribed in the Constitution.

How can we have two legally separate classes of voters? Yet, the court made it so, not the legislature.

The Constitution doesn't mention the court when determining the time, place, and manner of elections because they are not authorized to make those decisions. Yet, they did it.

And the U.S. Supreme Court has refused to hear the case, denying the evidence and denying the demands for justice from the people of Pennsylvania and America.

These aren't my opinions. These aren't partisan viewpoints. These are irrefutable facts.

Six days before the election, guidance emailed from the secretary of state required that the counties shall not pre-canvass or canvass any mail-in or civilian absentee ballots received between 8 o'clock Tuesday and 5 o'clock Friday and that they must be kept separately. That was 6 days before the election.

Madam Speaker, 2 days before the election, counties received new guidance from the secretary of state, informing counties that they shall canvass segregated absentee and mail-in ballots as soon as possible upon receipt.

The secretary of state is not elected by the people. She is not a member of the legislature. Yet, she, and she alone, determined the time and manner of elections. That was unconstitutional.

In defiance of a U.S. Supreme Court order that all ballots received after election day be segregated, the secretary of state knew, once they were canvassed, that is opened and commingled with all the other ballots, they would be counted with all the rest.

And what is the remedy for this defiance, for this lawbreaking? So far, the court has decided there is no remedy. There is no penalty for this lawlessness, this dilution of lawfully cast votes, this defiance of the Constitution—no remedy. When the State legislature requested the Governor to convene a special session to address the unanswered questions and try to provide a remedy, he refused.

When votes are accepted under unconstitutional means without fair and equal protection for all, the only result can be an illegitimate outcome—illegitimate.

The voters did not create this mess, but the will of the people is absolutely being subverted by the deliberate and willful actions of individuals defying their oath, the law, and the Constitution.

In Pennsylvania, we use the Statewide Uniform Registry of Electors, or SURE, system as the basis of determining who can vote. Unfortunately, a recent attempted audit by the Democrat State auditor general concluded that he was unable to establish with any degree of reasonable assurance that the SURE system is secure and that Pennsylvania voter registration records are complete and accurate.

That is what we are relying on. That right there. This is the very same system used to certify the election in the contest for President of the United States. This is the very same system that the State used to certify the 2020 election, even though its figures do not match more than half of Pennsylvania's 67 counties.

To this day, right now, while we stand here, how can this election be certified using a system that after 2 months still displays that over 205,000 more votes were cast in Pennsylvania than people who voted in the November election? Let me say that again: 205,000 more votes than voters.

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Colorado is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, to my colleague from Pennsylvania, I will say this: I carry the same Constitution that you do. And the Constitution, sir, does not allow you, me, or any Member of this body to substitute our judgment for that of the American people. It does not allow us to disregard the will of the American people. Because under this Constitution, under our Constitution, Congress doesn't choose the President. The American people do. And they have chosen in resounding numbers, as every single Member of this body well understands.

Madam Speaker, I have been at a loss to explain what happened today, but there is a statement that I found that largely summarized my thoughts on the matter.

''The scenes of mayhem unfolding at the seat of our Nation's government'' are a ''sickening and heartbreaking sight. This is how election results are disputed in a banana republic, not our democratic Republic. I am appalled by the reckless behavior of some political leaders since the election and by the lack of respect shown today for our institutions, our traditions, and our law enforcement. The violent assault on the Capitol, and the disruption of a constitutionally mandated meeting of Congress, was undertaken by people whose passions have been inflamed by falsehoods and false hopes. Insurrection could do grave damage to our Nation and our reputation.

''In the United States of America, it is the fundamental responsibility of every patriotic citizen to support the rule of law. To those who are disappointed in the results of the election: Our country is more important than the politics of the moment.''

□ 0030

Those are not my words. Those are the words of former Republican President George W. Bush.

To my colleagues, it is after midnight tonight. It has been a long day

for our country, a long day for our Republic.

Let us dispense with this. Let's do the right thing. Let's honor our oath. Let's certify the results, and let's get back to the work of the American people.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN).

Ms. LOFGREN. Madam Speaker, our duty today is significant but straightforward. We must count the votes of the electors as cast in the electoral college and announce the results.

As discussed, our roles and responsibilities are established by the Constitution and Federal law, and they are clear. The facts before us are also clear. Pennsylvania submitted one slate of electors, as chosen by the voters of the State. The slate was certified according to State law. Now those lawful results must be counted and announced.

Despite disinformation and any number of false claims that you may have heard, including here today, as former Attorney General Barr said: ''We have not seen fraud on a scale that could have effected a different outcome in the election.''

This is not simply a conclusory statement. The results of the election have been litigated. The record is clear: The lawsuits challenging the election results failed. They failed because there is simply no evidence to support these baseless claims.

Now, it is one thing to tweet a belief, quite another to provide actual evidence. These cases failed because there is no evidence. Judges ruled in the lawsuits that the 2020 election was sound.

It should come as no surprise that Republican officeholders have recognized the election results as legitimate and accurately determined in an election that was conducted safely, securely, and with integrity.

We all take an oath to support and defend the Constitution. As we near the end of the task before us, let's remember the beginning of the Constitution. Before Article II and the 12th Amendment, which spell out the electoral college, and before Article I, which creates Congress, the Constitution begins with the preamble. The preamble is short and bold: ''We the people.''

The people spoke in historic numbers. Their votes have been counted. Their choice is clear. It is time, as the law requires, to announce the state of the people's vote.

The violence and disorder inflicted on our democracy by seditious rioters today is an indication of why adherence to our Constitution is so vital.

I urge all of us to stand up for law, for democracy, for our Constitution, and to stand up for America and reject this objection.

Mr. MEUSER. Madam Speaker, I rise to support the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MEUSER. Madam Speaker, a day that was intended to debate the importance of election integrity and the rule of law tragically became a day that will be a black mark in our Nation's history. Nevertheless, the work of this House must go on, as America will go on.

We must all sincerely thank the Capitol Police and Metro Police for their selfless actions today, putting their safety and lives on the line to protect this House. The lawlessness and violence of today must be condemned, just as all violent protests must be condemned.

Nevertheless, the fact remains, a large number of Pennsylvanians are enormously frustrated with actions taken by elected and appointed officials in Pennsylvania, which have led to a high level of distrust for this past election.

We have the United States Constitution, which is the reason we have been and will continue to be a great country and a country of laws.

The U.S. Constitution is unambiguous, Madam Speaker, in declaring that State legislatures are the entity with the authority to set election procedures and to enact any changes to election law. Article I, Section 4, Clause 1 states: ''The times, places, and manner of holding elections . . . shall be prescribed in each State by the legislature thereof.''

The authority of election procedures lies with the State legislature, period.

In Pennsylvania, this authority was indisputably usurped by the Pennsylvania Governor's office, by the Pennsylvania secretary of state, and by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

These unlawful actions include, but are not limited to, accepting ballots past 8 p.m. on election day; inconsistent application of verified signature requirements for in-person ballots versus mail-in ballots; authorizing the curing of mail-in ballots with less than 24 hours' notice, leading to inconsistent preparedness between counties; and authorizing the use of unsecured drop boxes, which is not permitted in statute.

If such unlawful actions are to be accepted, what do we have to look forward to next year? The Pennsylvania secretary of state allowing online voting because it may be raining in Philadelphia? It was a free-for-all.

Madam Speaker, it was back in 2005 when then-Minority Leader PELOSI, while leading 31 Democrats as they objected to the Presidential elector certification, as they did in the last three Presidential elections when a Republican won, stated quite well, actually:

The Members of Congress have brought this challenge and are speaking up for their aggrieved constituents, many of whom have been disenfranchised in this process. This is their only opportunity to have this debate while the country is listening, and it is appropriate to do so.

Thank you for those words, Madam Speaker. They were appropriate then, as they are now.

If there is an American ideal that all citizens, regardless of party affiliation, can agree upon, it is that we must have election integrity. We should not certify these electors, which were derived by unlawful actions and a result of inaccurate vote tallies.

Madam Speaker, I yield the remainder of my time to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. JOYCE).

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the objection.

Tonight, my heart is heavy as we consider the dark acts that transpired in this Chamber today. But, Madam Speaker, the American people can be assured that violent and irrational attacks on this body cannot derail the constitutional responsibility that lies in front of us.

This has always been about upholding the law. It has always been about protecting government of, by, and for the people. Preserving the rule of law is more important than ever.

We must acknowledge that unconstitutional acts unduly impacted the Presidential election in Pennsylvania. Contrary to law, the supreme court extended the deadline for mail-in ballots for 3 days beyond the election day. Contrary to law, the secretary of the Commonwealth discarded mail-in ballot signature verification safeguards. These leaders took advantage of a deadly pandemic and seized the State legislature's rightful authority.

I took an oath to uphold the law and defend the Constitution. I pledged to protect free and fair elections. I cannot, in good faith, certify electors that were selected under an unlawful process.

I will object to the electoral college certification to protect the will of Pennsylvania voters, to uphold the law, to restore trust in our electoral system, and, ultimately, to save our Constitution.

At Gettysburg, which is in my district, President Abraham Lincoln spoke about the great task of ensuring government by, of, and for the people shall not perish from the Earth.

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, nearly 7 million Pennsylvanians showed up to vote in the 2020 elections. They cast their votes for Democrats and Republicans up and down the ballot, including the entire U.S. House delegation, the entire State house, half of the State senate, and other State and local races.

Since the election, there have been allegations of widespread election fraud in Pennsylvania; but, remarkably, the 20 suits filed by the Trump campaign, Pennsylvania Republicans, and others challenging the results in Pennsylvania have never claimed that there was voter fraud.

□ 0040

Perhaps that is because attorneys could lose their licenses when they make unsubstantiated claims in court. That is where the rubber really meets the road.

So if these lawsuits didn't claim election fraud, what did they claim?

Most of the legal challenges to the Presidential election in Pennsylvania question relatively small numbers of ballots that were allegedly tainted by technical violations. Even assuming that all of these ballots had been cast for Joe Biden, throwing them out wouldn't have changed the result of the election.

Now, one exception is the lawsuit filed by one of our colleagues from Pennsylvania, Kelly v. Commonwealth, which would have thrown out all the mail-in votes cast in the 2020 general election on the grounds that Act 77, the State law allowing those votes, was unconstitutional. That suit would have disenfranchised 2½ million Pennsylvanians. Let's let that sink in, 2½ million Pennsylvanians would have had their votes nullified.

Now, I want to provide my colleagues with some background about the State law at the heart of this challenge. In 2019, the Republican-controlled State legislature approved Act 77, a bipartisan bill to reform the State's election laws, which instituted no-excuse mail balloting. Act 77 was supported almost unanimously by Republicans in the State House and State Senate. In fact, it was unanimous in the State Senate and all but two Republicans in the State House.

Moreover, once this Act was passed, Act 77 had a 120-day period where challenges could be filed against the Act if people thought it was unconstitutional. Well, 4 months went by, nobody files a challenge. On June 3, Pennsylvania had their primary under this new system. Nobody challenged the primary election. It was only challenged in November, when Republicans didn't get the result they wanted at the top of the ticket. Not surprisingly, this case was dismissed by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court was denied.

Another exception is Texas v. Pennsylvania. They asked the court to reject the results of the Pennsylvania Presidential contest in Pennsylvania and several other States, disenfranchising tens of millions of the voters. Seven Republican members of the Pennsylvania U.S. House delegation signed the U.S. House Republican brief in support of Texas v. Pennsylvania.

While I feel compelled to point out to my colleagues that the same voters who sent them to the 117th Congress cast their votes for the President by marking the very same ballots, which were read by the very same ballot scanners and monitored by the very same election workers. Yet our colleagues who signed the brief only want to invalidate the Presidential votes. This is illogical and inconsistent, colleagues, and I am pleased to note that the Supreme Court rejected it as well.

The fact is, the election has received unprecedented scrutiny in the courts. I believe it is irresponsible and undemocratic to argue today that the U.S. Congress ought to relitigate the 2020 Presidential election and second-guess the will of the voters in multiple States, the decisions of numerous State and Federal courts, including the Supreme Court, and the counts and recounts conducted by State election officials.

There were 20 lawsuits filed in Pennsylvania challenging aspects of the Presidential election. In 19 of them you got laughed out of court. The one case you won affected roughly 100 votes. Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS won by over 80,000.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise to support the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise this evening with a heavy heart. The violence that occurred today at the U.S. Capitol was senseless, destructive, and counter to our American values.

This past Sunday, each Member of this body took an oath to uphold the United States Constitution. And while the path of least resistance, particularly following today's events, would be to remain silent, my oath to uphold the Constitution does not permit me to maintain silence.

While systemic voter fraud was not something proven, we witnessed a systemic failure in the application of Pennsylvania's voting law when it comes to the 2020 general election.

In late 2019, the Commonwealth revisited and modernized its election law with the bipartisan Act 77. Granted, in late 2019, the Commonwealth's legislature did not have the foresight to anticipate how COVID–19 would present challenges to voting. Despite that, it is not up to the Governor, the secretary of the Commonwealth, nor the State supreme court to unilaterally create law.

The election abuses to Pennsylvania Act 77 taken by the Pennsylvania executive branch and upheld by the Pennsylvania judicial branch were clearly unconstitutional and had an obvious, if not major, impact on the 2020 election, particularly when it comes to the citizens' faith in the electoral process.

Irregularities in Pennsylvania included: Uneven application of the law; ballot curing; ignoring signature validation requirements; using unsecured drop boxes; accepting ballots beyond the deadlines; and interfering with certified poll watcher access, among others.

These actions were taken by the Commonwealth's Governor and secretary of state where the Pennsylvania Supreme Court circumvented the authority of the State legislature. Furthermore, the chief law officer of the Commonwealth sat idly while this process unfolded.

Now, I joined many of my colleagues in Pennsylvania requesting the legislators in Harrisburg conduct an investigation and audit to ensure such negligence will be prevented in future elections.

I have serious concerns about how these irregularities in the application of the Commonwealth's election laws will play in future elections. Only with equal application of law will the voters of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have certainty in their election processes.

Now, I remain committed to ensuring the voters receive an electoral system they deserve and where equal application of law is guaranteed. If our election integrity is compromised, we have failed the very voters who have sent us here to defend the Constitution.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HARRIS).

Mr. HARRIS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

The oath I took is very simple. Madam Speaker, you administered it. It is to support and defend the Constitution.

Now, as you walk back to the office buildings, you will walk by that wall that has when the various States accepted that Constitution. Remember, when a State accepts the Constitution, it agrees to accept every part of the Constitution. It doesn't get to pick and choose.

Pennsylvania was there when it was written. They were so enthusiastic about the Constitution, they approved it in 1787.

My State, Maryland, is a little further down the wall, 1788. They were there when it was written.

The clause that gave the legislature the power over the elections was there when they accepted it. It has been there since. How dare the judicial branch or the executive branch of that State usurp the legislative authority. That is a clear violation of the Constitution.

Now, we heard there is no evidence.

Evidence?

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court unilaterally extended the deadline to receive absentee and mail-in ballots.

Does anybody contest that over here? Does it say the legislature did that?

No, it doesn't. It says the court did it.

That is a violation. That is what the Texas lawsuit was all about. We disadvantage other States when States like Pennsylvania, the executive branch and judicial branch, cheat on the Constitution; and that is what they did here.

But there is more evidence. But wait, there is more. The Democrat secretary of the Commonwealth eroded integrity by dismissing signature authentication on a ballot.

Does anyone here believe the Pennsylvania legislature would have agreed

to create a separate system for mail-in ballots and in-person ballots? That if you mail it in, you don't need a signature? But if you vote in person, you do and it has to be authenticated?

Of course not. The legislature clearly wouldn't have agreed to that. But that didn't stop the usurpation of constitutional authority.

Madam Chair, I vigorously support this objection, and I include in the RECORD the objection to counting the electoral votes for the State of Arizona additional signers.

OBJECTION TO COUNTING THE ELECTORAL VOTES FOR THE STATE OF ARIZONA

ADDITIONAL SIGNERS

Jeff Duncan SC–3
Matt Gaetz FL–1

□ 0050

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, tonight, we will not be picking the President, for the people did that on November 3. Rather, tonight, in this House, we will decide whether American democracy survives. Let us be under no illusion. These are the stakes. If this objection succeeds and the will of 7 million Pennsylvania voters is cast aside, it will be the end of our representative democracy.

Now, there is no reasonable debate about what happened in this election in Pennsylvania. Seven million Pennsylvanians voted. Joe Biden won by over 81,000 votes. This was certified in 67 counties by bipartisan local-elected officials, including Republicans. And every single court, whether the judge is a Democrat or a Republican, has reaffirmed this outcome.

The objectors, however, claim we do not know the will of the people because the election in Pennsylvania was somehow conducted corruptly. Much of their objection centers around the State law passed in 2019 known as Act 77 that gives voters the option of expanded mail-in voting. Objectors are alleging that this law was somehow a brilliant plot by Democrats to disadvantage Republicans and rig elections. This is laughable.

Here are the facts. Act 77 was a Republican-led effort in a Republican-controlled legislature. Literally, every single Republican in the Pennsylvania Senate voted for it. And in the statehouse, the vote among Republicans was 105–2.

Here is what the Republican speaker of the Pennsylvania House had to say about Act 77: This bill does not benefit one party or the other or any one candidate or single election. It serves to preserve the integrity of every election and lift the voice of every voter in the Commonwealth.

So there is no question as to the facts surrounding this election. They are as clear as they are overwhelming. The only question that remains is this: Will this House reaffirm our fidelity to our democracy, or will we end it?

I must concede, Madam Speaker, I have been naive about one subject. I always just assumed our democracy would naturally endure, almost as if it was predestined, I never even questioned it until the last several years.

Two centuries ago, one of our Founding Fathers cautioned against this notion. John Adams wrote, ''Remember, democracy never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts, and murders itself. There was never a democracy yet that did not commit suicide.''

I now realize the wisdom of his words. Never again will I take for granted our democracy. It must be jealously defended by every generation. Always.

But, Madam Speaker, despite the alarm, I feel that our democracy has been brought to this breaking point, as we have seen today. Nonetheless, I still maintain hope.

Growing up in Philadelphia, raised in an immigrant family, I was often brought down to visit the historic sights. Every summer, without fail, we would spend a day seeing Independence Hall, Congress Hall, the Liberty Bell.

It was at Independence Hall where our Nation was declared free and our Constitution born. At the Constitutional Convention, the oldest and most widely accomplished delegate was Benjamin Franklin, one of our greatest Founding Fathers and my city's greatest citizen.

On the final day, as the last delegates were signing the Constitution, Franklin pointed to the painted Sun on the back of the Convention chair. Observing the painters had found it difficult to distinguish a rising Sun from a setting Sun, Franklin went on to say:

> I have often, during the course of this session, looked at that Sun without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting. But now, at length, I have the happiness to know it is a rising Sun.

Madam Speaker, on a day like today, when a mob has stormed the Capitol, and some Members are threatening the core of our democracy, it can be hard to tell whether for American democracy the Sun is rising or setting. But I maintain my faith that tonight, by an overwhelming bipartisan majority in Congress, we will uphold the will of ''We the People,'' and our democracy will live.

Mrs. GREENE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise to support the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentlewoman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. GREENE of Georgia. I would like to point out that all the cases that have been thrown out have been thrown out on standing, not the evidence of voter fraud. I would also like to point out the same people who, for 4 years, have failed to find a shred of evidence to convict President Trump of Russian collusion are the same people trying to discredit hardworking American poll watchers who are risking perjury by signing affidavits confirming massive voter fraud in multiple States.

The same fake news who took the word of Christine Blasey Ford against Justice Kavanaugh, who her own friends denied happened, also dismissed the sworn under penalty of perjury accounts from people who witnessed the election fraud.

The same fact-checkers who told you that Dominion machines weren't connected to the internet and couldn't be hacked are the same people telling you that there has been no voter fraud and no violations of election law. But it has been proven that these machines are connected and that they can be hacked.

We have heard repeatedly argued that objecting to these ballots is unconstitutional and violates the rights of State legislatures. They would rather us affirm fraud and pass the buck back to States rather than following the process Madison, Hamilton, Jefferson, and the Framers of the Constitution designed.

When States fail to do their job, we are the last line of defense. Congress is here for this exact situation. We are here to be the fail-safe when States refuse to protect the people's votes.

By objecting today, we are telling the thousands of witnesses who signed affidavits that we have their back, and we will not allow local officials who violate their own election laws to steal this election from those who lawfully voted.

I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. NORMAN).

Mr. NORMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to support the foundation of our democracy, the Constitution of the United States of America. This document is the fabric and the solid foundation of a nation we call America, which has been a beacon of hope and a shining city on the hill for over 230 years.

The words of our Constitution, as spelled out in Article II, Section 1, are very clear when it comes to our elections: mandating, not suggesting, not implying, but mandating that State legislatures, not secretaries of State, not State commissions, not county officials, not Governors, but State legislators prescribe the time, place, and manner of holding elections.

This mandate was not followed in the great State of Pennsylvania. If we allow this fraud to go on—in a football analogy, the moving of the goalpost after the ball has been kicked and in the air—the preview of coming attractions will be future elections that do not adhere to honest and open voting by ''We the People'' and the loss of our great Republic.

As a lady told me not long ago, don't spit in my face and tell me it is raining. This is exactly what has happened to the American people in this election. In the words of Winston Churchill, when Great Britain was under siege by Germany, he said: There will be a

time when doing your best is not good enough. We must do what is required.

And we must do what is required to save this great Republic.

Ms. WILD. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition.

The SPEAKER. The gentlewoman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WILD. Madam Speaker, as terrifying as today was here in the people's House, it was, thankfully, fairly short in duration. In contrast, the pain and fear that so many Americans are experiencing this year has been long and continuous to this very moment.

Rather than pitting Americans against Americans, as we are here, we should be working to ensure rapid distribution of vaccines and adequate relief to Americans who are struggling economically because of this horrific pandemic. But we are not doing that. Instead, we have witnessed a stunning assault on our democracy itself.

This challenge is not an act of patriotism. The position of the objectors is completely incompatible with patriotism.

Our country is defined by her great people, and our democracy is defined above all else by our Constitution, a Constitution that these individuals want to ignore because they have decided that their judgment, the judgment of a small minority of partisan elites, should somehow override that of the more than 155 million Americans who participated in this election. That, my friends, is not democracy.

□ 0100

We should all remember this country's founding was a rejection of monarchy, a rejection of the notion that any one person could be all-powerful. Our commitment to self-determination is what gave rise to our Declaration of Independence and our Constitution. It is why our Founders made the choice to build a country anchored in respect for the rule of law rather than one tied to the whims of men. It is why we have free and fair elections that allow us to vote out those who hold office.

I am proud to join the vast majority of my colleagues in both Chambers, Republicans and Democrats alike, in making it clear that our democracy is bigger than any of us.

Let's be clear: Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS won a victory of 306 electoral votes in the electoral college, the same margin that President Trump won by in 2016 when he called it a landslide.

Nearly 7 million of my fellow Pennsylvanians braved this devastating pandemic and economic crisis to cast their ballots, culminating in a total turnout of more than 70 percent, the highest in the history of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. And nationwide, we saw record-breaking turnout.

Both in Pennsylvania and nationally, the President's efforts to overturn the election results in the courts failed resoundingly, with many of the strongest rebukes coming from judges the President himself appointed.

In fact, contrary to the assertion of my colleague from Georgia across the aisle, not a single lawsuit in Pennsylvania alleged fraud. The gentlewoman may not be aware of this, but allegations of fraud require specificity and detail, and no lawyer could risk his or her license to make such false claims.

I am heartened that several of the country's leading Republicans, including Senate Republican Majority Leader MCCONNELL, Senator MITT ROMNEY, and former Republican Speaker of the House Paul Ryan, have spoken out against this political stunt.

Senator ROMNEY said: ''The egregious ploy to reject electors may enhance the political ambition of some, but dangerously threatens our democratic Republic.''

And as former Republican Representative Charlie Dent from my district said, the claim by the President of voter fraud in our State ''was simply reprehensible; the truth is that he suppressed his own vote by discouraging mail-in voting.''

And as Pennsylvania State Senator Gene Yaw, also a Republican, has said: ''My question is, if the mail-in voting of Act 77 was so bad, why did The Trump Organization send out a mail-in ballot application to every registered Republican in the State?''

Today, I am thinking of all of the people who took the time to do their civic duty and vote, many standing in long lines or painstakingly researching how to vote by mail correctly.

We reject these disgraceful attacks on the voters of Pennsylvania and this attempt to throw out their votes.

To those in this Chamber who may cynically believe that stoking the forces of disinformation and division may be worth a short-term benefit to their political careers, I would urge serious self-reflection.

Our democracy is one of the most precious resources of the American people, protected against enormous odds and at great sacrifice by each generation of servicemembers and everyday citizens who put their lives on the line to build a freer and more equitable nation. They deserve better than what is happening in this Chamber today.

Mr. SMUCKER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMUCKER. Madam Speaker, I would like to start by making two basic points:

Number one, individual States who administer elections must ensure that they are conducted fairly, uniformly, and in accordance with the law; and

Number two, every American wants to be, and deserves to be, confident that our elections are secure and that all eligible legal votes are counted accurately and in a transparent manner.

And I will say this. In my district in Lancaster and York Counties, I think that occurred. I am very proud of my county election officials, who upheld the Pennsylvania Constitution and followed the letter of the law; but, unfortunately, that sentiment is not shared across the Commonwealth.

Today, my objection is not about voter fraud; it is grounded on unconstitutional measures taken by bureaucrats and partisan justices in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that have unlawfully changed how this election was carried out. This potentially changed the outcome and certainly caused millions of our States' voters to question the election results. Other speakers have outlined this issue.

In brief, the Pennsylvania State Legislature, in 2019, passed a bipartisan election law reform bill, and then the partisan Pennsylvania Supreme Court took it upon themselves to rewrite that law just 7 weeks before the election. They unlawfully legislated from the bench and made substantive changes to the law, including allowing for unsecured drop boxes and ordering that ballots received after the election be counted, among other things.

The Pennsylvania Secretary of State took it even further. Her unilateral, unconstitutional changes resulted in counties treating ballots differently so that some voters had the opportunity to change mail-in ballots to correct deficiencies, while in other counties, their ballots simply were not counted.

As Members of Congress, we serve as a voice for our constituents. This is the one time I have a voice in this process, and I cannot simply look away when tens of thousands of my constituents have real and legitimate concerns about how this election was conducted in Pennsylvania.

In fact, I think an inadequate response to those concerns by Pennsylvania officials is one of the major problems. Simple measures like audits should be routine and random and supported by both parties, and I believe they are critical for restoring faith in Pennsylvania's elections moving forward.

The bottom line for my constituents is that Pennsylvania's officials, at all levels, failed to conduct a uniform and legal election, and for that reason, they inappropriately and unlawfully certified the State's electors.

Madam Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLER), my colleague.

Mr. KELLER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SMUCKER) for yielding.

Madam Speaker, the violence that occurred in the Capitol today was shameful, unacceptable, and un-American. We are a nation of laws, not lawlessness, and we will never give in to the mob.

Thank you to the men and women of our Capitol Police and other law enforcement agencies who heroically defended this building.

The criminal behavior we witnessed today does not erase the facts before us.

I am objecting to the certification of Pennsylvania's electoral votes because Governor Tom Wolf, Secretary of State Kathy Boockvar, and the Pennsylvania Supreme Court violated the State legislature's clear constitutional authority to set election proceedings.

Under the Pennsylvania Constitution, only the General Assembly has the power to set election law.

Additionally, Article II of the U.S. Constitution explicitly grants State legislatures, not the Governor acting alone and not the courts, the explicit power to determine the manner of appointing Presidential electors.

Pennsylvania's court unlawfully extended the deadline to receive absentee and mail-in ballots. Governor Wolf's administration dismissed signature authentication procedures for absentee and mail-in ballots, allowed for the uneven administration of the election across counties, and unilaterally changed Pennsylvania's election code without the State legislature's consent.

The Constitution is clear and the facts are indisputable.

This past weekend, each Member of this body stood in this Chamber and swore an oath to protect and defend our Constitution. I intend to fulfill my constitutional oath which the people of Pennsylvania have entrusted in me. My objection is grounded in the Constitution and rule of law.

If we allow the Governor to violate the constitutional rights of the General Assembly, what is stopping him from violating the constitutional rights of the 12.8 million Pennsylvanians our State legislators were elected to represent?

Mr. EVANS. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. EVANS. Madam Speaker, I represent the Third District of Pennsylvania, which includes part of Philadelphia, the birthplace of America. It was in Philadelphia that the Constitution of the United States was written and signed, the very Constitution that we are all sworn to uphold as Members of the House of Representatives.

We are elected to serve our constituents, and it is our job to represent them and their interests in Congress.

Yesterday, I spoke to the son of the late Dick Thornburgh, who is a two-time Republican Governor of Pennsylvania and was Attorney General under President Ronald Reagan and President Bush. His son stressed to me that his father would have wanted the rule of law to prevail regardless of the political outcome, because he cared more about the safeguarding of democracy than partisanship.

In addition, Al Schmidt, who was a Republican commissioner of elections, said, when Philadelphia certified its results on November 23: ''I'm proud that the birthplace of our Republic held the most transparent and secure election in the history of Philadelphia.''

Instead of using this time to dispute the results of our fair and lawful election, we should be spending this time making sure vaccines are quickly given to essential workers and our most vulnerable communities, that people are getting housing.

We should look at rental assistance. We should ensure that that is available.

Small businesses, the engines of our economy, should be getting needed grants and loans.

That should be our focus.

Hospitals desperately need support and help. We should be paying attention to the needs of hospitals.

We are in the middle of a pandemic where hundreds of thousands of people are dying, and we are in a recession that is putting millions of Americans at risk of hunger, homelessness, or both. It is time we start legislating for the people.

One last person I want to mention is our junior Senator, Senator TOOMEY. There are very few things that he and I agree on, but he has stated very clearly that Joe Biden has won this election. He has stood up on the Senate floor and he has stated that.

So it needs to be very clear that the late Governor Thornburgh; Albert Schmidt, the commissioner; and our current junior Senator all have one thing in common: democracy first, partisanship second. Let's keep that in mind.

Ms. HERRELL. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the objection.

The SPEAKER. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Mexico for 5 minutes.

Ms. HERRELL. Madam Speaker, this is not how I imagined my first speech in the House of Representatives or my first week to be in Washington.

The violence that occurred in this building yesterday is reprehensible and inexcusable. I am appalled by anyone who assaults our Nation's law enforcement officers.

I swore an oath on Sunday to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. We are here today delayed, but not deterred, to debate a constitutional question and follow a constitutional process.

The Constitution gives State legislators, not State executives or judges, the sole authority to determine how their State selects Presidential electors.

Nobody disputes that in Pennsylvania, as well as in other States, rules and regulations were changed by executive fiat or judicial edict.

These changes were significant and irregular. They included changes to vote-by-mail deadlines, identity verification requirements, and other ballot handling practices.

In Pennsylvania specifically, the Democrat Secretary of the Commonwealth and the Democrat-controlled Pennsylvania Supreme Court usurped the constitutional authority of the State legislature.

□ 0110

Together, they exceeded their authority by extending the deadline for absentee ballots and by waiving signature requirements for those ballots.

In their haste to make these changes, the secretary and the court created two different and unequal standards for voters. Pennsylvanians who chose to vote in person still had to have their signatures verified at their polling place, but those who chose to vote by mail did not. How is this process fair?

This objection is about Pennsylvania, but it affects every State. As a State Representative of New Mexico, Pennsylvania's unconstitutional actions disenfranchised my constituents and the constituents of my colleagues. It is my duty to give my constituents a voice. Signing these objections raises their concerns to the fullest extent my office allows.

I, again, condemn in the strongest terms the violence that took place here yesterday. We have many issues to solve, including reforms to restore all Americans' faith in the fairness of our elections. I look forward to those serious civil and peaceful debates.

Madam Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN).

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, this process we are going through today isn't about personalities. This isn't about Joe Biden or Donald Trump. As hard as some try to paint it that way, let me say that names and personalities don't matter. This is, gravely, about the Constitution of the United States.

Almost 20 years ago, after the attacks on 9/11, Americans were persuaded to give up some of their constitutional liberties. Using the justification of that global crisis, the terrorist attacks on that fateful day, America saw the erosion of their liberties for the safety and security many felt they may receive through the USA PATRIOT Act and other resulting processes too many felt would keep us safe from another attack here on our shore.

This year, using the justification of the global pandemic, COVID–19, we once again saw our Nation's Constitution violated. You see, the Constitution is clear in Article II, Madam Speaker, that the power and duty to set the manner of national elections rests solely with the State legislatures.

That power doesn't rest with us. That power didn't rest in the hands of unelected county election officials, secretaries of state, or a supreme court but, rather, in the hands of the State legislatures, which pass laws setting the manner of elections held in their States.

This year, using the extraordinary circumstance of the COVID–19 pandemic, we witnessed these duly passed laws circumvented and usurped time and again, not by having the laws changed in the respective State legislative bodies, but those laws arbitrarily

and unilaterally changed by county clerks; secretaries of state; and, in this case of Pennsylvania, an elected supreme court, which is supposed to interpret the law, not make law.

When those nonlegislative entities change the laws without getting the general assemblies to change the law, in my opinion, the resulting ballots cast, either by mail or in person, those ballots were illegal under the law.

Illegal ballots should not be counted. Therefore, the resulting electoral votes should be considered invalid.

What bothers me is that so many of you are okay with that, that so many Americans, because their person won, you are okay with the manner in which that victory was gained.

It is politics. Look, I get it. But we didn't swear an oath to play politics. We swore an oath to the United States Constitution. As George Washington said: The Constitution is the guide which I will never abandon.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentlewoman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Madam Speaker, first, I do want to acknowledge the devastating events of the last 12 hours and to express my deep appreciation for those who have worked to secure this building and safeguard our democracy. On behalf of my colleagues, we are all grateful for your service.

I ran for this office on a platform of civility and decency, and many of my colleagues and constituents know that I am a third-generation veteran, and I grew up in a military household.

□ 0120

Madam Speaker, what you may not know, though, is that I grew up in a divided household. Throughout my childhood, one parent voted Democrat and the other Republican. In my purple household, I learned that duty to country was far more important than party allegiance. With each election, my father would say: ''And when the election is done, we salute smartly and we carry on.''

Now I live in and I serve in a community that has a lot in common with the home that I grew up in. It, too, is a purple place that honors civility and decency. Pennsylvania's Sixth District is, in many ways, a microcosm of the Commonwealth and of our Nation. Our voter registration in Chester County is 40–40–20, R, D, and I. Voters across my district commonly split their ticket, some voting for President-elect Biden while also voting down the ballot for Republicans for our State legislature.

What some of my colleagues are arguing today is that those very ballots are illegitimate. My colleagues cannot honestly believe that. In fact, just this week they joined me on the House floor to be sworn in to this hallowed body, and they trusted that the votes cast in their favor were legitimate. And they are right. If those votes counted, then so too must the votes for President-elect Biden.

We have also heard today concerns about mail-in ballots. I am not a lawyer, but I am an engineer and, therefore, a student of numbers. It wasn't just Democrats who voted by mail. It was not a free-for-all, as it was described earlier. Madam Speaker, 600,000 Republicans in Pennsylvania across the State voted by mail. By questioning the election results, you are telling those Pennsylvanians that the hours they spent in line to cast their ballot or the trip they took to the post office in the middle of a pandemic just didn't matter.

Alan Novak is a man who served as the chair of the Republican Party in Pennsylvania for nearly a decade. I will say that again. The Chair of the Republican Party of Pennsylvania for a decade is one of those voters I am talking about in Pennsylvania. He lives in my district, and he split his ticket. He voted for me as his Member of Congress and also for President Trump. And he eloquently said:

> What makes America great, exceptional, and enduring is our commitment to our government of laws, our orderly constitutional process that settles our election disputes, and our peaceful transfer of power with respect and civility. It is easy when it is pretty and the outcome is not controversial. But when it is not pretty and there is controversy, then it is even more important that we respect, honor, and abide by our revered and tested process for the orderly transfer of power. Perhaps that may be all that we can agree on, and it is the need for grace, respect, and civility.

So I ask my colleagues across the aisle: Are you willing to disenfranchise people like Mr. Novak and the more than 400,000 people in Pennsylvania's Sixth District?

Perhaps some of the independent and pragmatic spirit that is so prevalent among voters in my community comes from the history of the place that we call home. Many Americans have visited Philadelphia and our historic sites, but very few make it out to my community, which is the home of Valley Forge. Here, General George Washington led the Continental Army to winter quarters. The war had not been going well for our young soldiers, and that winter was harder still. It was bitterly cold, and food shortages and smallpox were abundant. Many people died.

We remember what happened there because it was a test of our endurance, a demonstration of devotion to mission and to our country over ourselves. Coming out of that awful winter experience, our troops emerged better trained, united, and ultimately victorious. In those harsh, dark times, they found their common ground and their fortitude.

Just like then, it is in these trying moments when we learn who our leaders truly are. They are the ones who don't just represent the people or give orders or ready us for a fight. They are those who educate and who speak truth. They inspire confidence and unity rather than sowing division and strife. There is a striking parallel between our nascent country and what they endured in Valley Forge and what we are enduring right now: A hard winter of division, illness running rampant, and an uncertain future.

Today, our country's resolve is being tested, and I know that we will pass this test together and be made stronger. We now have the opportunity and the responsibility to do that tonight by upholding the will of the people, by voting to certify the results of this electoral college and by moving forward with a servant heart and a common resolve to preserve this great experiment that is the United States of America.

Mr. BABIN. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BABIN. It is with great pride and a profound sense of responsibility that I object to the 2020 election in the State of Pennsylvania.

I am very proud to stand alongside fellow patriots who have pushed back against a fraudulent and criminal election process—a process that was the antithesis to the very rule of law that governs these United States.

At the same time, standing here tonight is surreal because this is a critical juncture that will undoubtedly determine the survivability of this great Republic.

Our free and fair election process—and by extension, the people's trust in its legitimacy—is what has separated us as a nation. A process that we have shared with the world, its moral force. A process that now, sadly, has been bastardized by those more interested in the maintenance of power than they are in the free and open voice of the American people.

If I remember correctly, Democrats were calling for transparency in 2000 and 2004, when George W. Bush was elected; and again in 2016, when President Trump took office.

Where are you now?

I ask this, Madam Speaker: What do you have to lose by having a thorough investigation to determine the validity of these votes?

Why not encourage an investigation to relieve the concerns of half of the people in this country?

If you are so convinced that Biden was elected legitimately, what do you have to fear?

If there was no fraud, simply show us the proof. Investigate it. Validate it. This isn't about one candidate versus another. This is about upholding the principles that are indispensable to the existence of the democratic Republic that we are so fortunate to call home.

I have no doubt that there was widespread election fraud this past November, and I am not alone. I stand here today speaking for 75 million Americans whose voice was unconstitutionally silenced.

To you, the silenced, I say this: I will continue to fight for you. You have been heard. For more than 240 years, tyranny has sought to extinguish the light of freedom.

As Ronald Reagan said before: Freedom is a fragile thing, and it is never more than one generation away from extinction.

The Constitution and the Bible on which it stands is stronger than the cheap tyrannical tactics of those who seek to destroy it.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD).

Mr. BUDD. Madam Speaker, mob violence is not representative of our country or of this building. The American people—at least the ones who are still up watching right now—have seen this body return to a peaceful debate. And that is the American way. So let's get back to that debate and let's talk for a moment about Pennsylvania.

For decades, absentee voting was reserved for members of the military and citizens who are medically or physically unable to get to the polls. But in 2019, Pennsylvania dramatically increased the amount of ballots that would be cast in the Presidential election through expanded, no-excuse, mail-in voting.

On September 17, Pennsylvania's Democrat-controlled Supreme Court violated the Constitution by extending the deadline to receive mail-in ballots. Article II states that legislatures, not the courts, determine the time, manner, and place of their States' elections. But Pennsylvania's high court directed the State officials to assume that non-postmarked ballots were received on time without any evidence that they were sent before election day.

On October 23, while early voting was already underway, the State supreme court ruled that election officials did not have to authenticate signatures for mail-in ballots.

To sum it up, Pennsylvania officials illegally did three critical things:

One, they radically expanded vote by mail for virtually any reason.

Two, they removed restrictions when a ballot can be sent in.

Three, they removed signature verification on those very ballots.

Just this week, the Pennsylvania Senate pleaded with Members of this body to delay certification until the Supreme Court resolves these disputes. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania violated their own constitution. They violated the U.S. Constitution. They opened the door for thousands of unverifiable ballots.

Because they failed to guarantee the integrity of their votes, I cannot consent to accepting Pennsylvania's electoral votes.

□ 0130

Ms. DEAN. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the challenge.

The SPEAKER. The gentlewoman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DEAN. Madam Speaker, this is a sad day for America—a day of shame, a day of ignominy, an attack on this Capitol, an attack on our country.

Madam Speaker, our words matter. Mobs, thugs, insurrectionists, domestic terrorists attacked our government with the aim of attacking our free and fair elections.

Make no mistake, these terrorists came armed, armed with false flags; armed with hate; armed with weapons; and, tragically, armed with lies force-fed to them by those at the highest level of government, including some from the legislative and, yes, the executive branches. Incited by the one at the highest level of government, they attacked people, property, this Capitol, this cathedral of democracy.

Words matter. In his last words to our Nation and to all of us here, our dear colleague, John Lewis, wrote last July: ''Democracy is not a state. It is an act.'' And each generation has an obligation to preserve its institutions.

Democracy is a series of acts, acts by you and by me, by citizens, one building upon the other and another—not acts that we have heard and seen and suffered today, words and acts to incite violence, acts that tear at the very fabric of our democracy.

Madam Speaker, yet, I have hope. We, too, are armed. We are armed with the facts. We are armed with the truth. We are armed with the love of our country. We are armed with our sworn oaths. And we are armed with our precious Constitution.

We have faced tyranny and insurrection before. We are here tonight to herald to America and to the world: We will defend our democracy, and we will endure.

Madam Speaker, when I came into work this morning, as I was preparing to come to the floor, I read Tom Friedman's op-ed, which began with the words from the Gospel of Mark: For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world but lose his soul?

For what shall it profit any man.

Madam Speaker, I urge my Republican colleagues to have the courage to uphold their oath, courage like that of Congresswoman Margaret Chase Smith, a lifelong Republican and the first in her party to speak out against McCarthyism. Putting duty over fear, she said: ''I do not want to see the Republican Party ride to political victory on the Four Horsemen of Calumny—Fear, Ignorance, Bigotry, and Smear. Surely, we Republicans are not that desperate for victory.''

Madam Speaker, for today, we have seen the cost of victory by such means. It shook the very walls of this building. Our colleagues know there is no truth to this challenge.

For what shall it profit a man.

Madam Speaker, it has been my solemn honor to participate in this sad day. I pray for our country.

Mrs. CAMMACK. Madam Speaker, I rise to support the objection of the electoral certification of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The SPEAKER. The gentlewoman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CAMMACK. Madam Speaker, as a new Representative here, I did not envision my first speech on the House floor to be this, here tonight, but rather, a tribute to our first responders and frontline workers who have been a shining light in an otherwise tough year for us all.

After the events tonight, I am especially grateful for our men and women who put service above self, confronting lawlessness and danger while protecting this very Chamber, its Members, and our constitutional Republic.

As a Member of the people's House, and the wife of a first responder, thank you to our law enforcement here today. But, especially, after tonight's unacceptable breach of the people's House, I am furthermore resolved in the fact that we, as representatives of the people, must take a stand for every American's right to a free and fair election as guaranteed by the Constitution.

Article I, Section 4, Clause 1 of the Constitution explicitly rests the time and manner of our elections in the hands of our State legislatures. However, State law in the 2020 election was modified or circumvented without approval of the State legislature. These actions are in clear violation of the Constitution, specifically Article II, Section 1, Clause 2, which grants State legislatures the sole authority to establish how State Presidential electors are appointed.

These changes, along with other election irregularities throughout the 2020 election, require me, as a Member of this body, to object to the certification of these electoral votes, just as my colleagues across the aisle have objected to every Republican Presidential election over the last 20 years.

Tonight, as we undertake the very serious responsibility of debating these State electoral certifications, I urge my colleagues to listen earnestly and with an open mind, remembering that just 3 days ago, we swore an oath to the United States Constitution, not a political party.

Our constituents are counting on us. Our country is counting on us. Our children are counting on us, and we cannot let them down.

Madam Speaker, in December, 25 of my freshman colleagues and I sent you a letter imploring you to investigate these election irregularities. To date, we have not received a response. That brings us to today.

My colleagues across the aisle have repeatedly invoked our Founding Father, Benjamin Franklin, who famously said: We have a republic, if we can keep it.

I say, let's keep it.

Madam Speaker, it is with that sentiment in mind that I ask my colleagues to defend the power vested in this legislative branch by the U.S. Constitution and reject the certification of the electoral votes of the State in question. It is our responsibility to have

courage in the face of adversity and bring integrity back to this process.

Madam Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from the great State of Texas (Mr. ARRINGTON).

Mr. ARRINGTON. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from the great State of Florida (Mrs. CAMMACK), my friend.

Madam Speaker, as Americans, we believe governments receive their just powers from the consent of the governed. That sacred transaction can only happen legitimately in a free and fair election.

Election integrity is the very lifeblood of our unrivaled system of self-government. The law and the Constitution gave Congress not only the authority but, I believe, the responsibility to serve as the last check on the integrity of our Presidential elections. We either believe, according to statute, that every elector was ''lawfully certified'' and ''regularly given,'' or we don't.

States certainly have broad delegated powers to administer Federal elections, but they still must operate within the bounds of the Constitution.

Despite receiving numerous petitions—to the detriment of the country, I might add—the Supreme Court failed to answer the most important question of the 2020 election: Can entities outside of the State legislatures make election law?

The plain language of Article II of the Constitution answers the question unequivocally no.

The decisions made today in these Chambers are of the utmost consequence, and the horrible precedent that will be established if we don't act will have lasting impact on our beloved Republic.

Madam Speaker, this proceeding is not just about the integrity of this election. It is about ensuring the integrity of all future elections.

I take no pleasure or pride in making my objection today, nor do I wish for any State electors to be disqualified. However, based on the law, the Constitution, and my conscience, I cannot support certifying votes from any State that violated the Constitution.

Madam Speaker, this decision is not about loyalty to a President. It is about my fidelity to the Constitution and the oath that I swore.

Mr. LAMB. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAMB. Madam Speaker, I came here tonight prepared to talk about the place I represent and how well the Democratic and Republican county officials ran our election. I wanted to point out that in my home county of Allegheny County, in the place they were counting the votes, there were 31 video cameras—31—in the same place, just showing people counting votes, every single one of them on paper, with representatives from both campaigns watching.

Madam Speaker, I wanted to point out to all these great lovers and supporters of the Pennsylvania legislature that it was the Republican Pennsylvania legislature that passed a Republican bill that they all voted for and supported that set up the system under which we just ran the election, and that the reason the President lost was because he was not as popular as other Republicans in our State. He got fewer votes than all of them.

Madam Speaker, I wanted to lay out all this evidence because I thought it was a sign of respect for my colleagues and for all the Americans out there who don't know who to trust. I was raised on that. I was raised on that respect, which makes this a hard speech for me to give. Because to do this with any kind of honesty means admitting and declaring in this House that these objections don't deserve an ounce of respect—not an ounce.

□ 0140

A woman died out there tonight, and you are making these objections.

Let's be clear about what happened in this Chamber today. Invaders came in for the first time since the War of 1812. They desecrated these Halls and this Chamber and practically every inch of ground where we work. For the most part, they walked in here free. A lot of them walked out free. There wasn't a person watching at home who didn't know why that was—because of the way that they look.

My point, Madam Speaker, is this: Enough has been done here already to try to strip this Congress of its dignity, and these objectors don't need to do anymore.

We know that that attack today didn't materialize out of nowhere. It was inspired by lies, the same lies that you are hearing in this room tonight. And the Members who are repeating those lies should be ashamed of themselves. Their constituents should be ashamed of them.

We know what is going to happen as soon as I walk away, what has happened all night tonight, what will continue to happen. They will take these same symbols, these same concepts, smuggle them into their arguments, and make the same arguments. I want people at home, anyone who is still watching, to know that these arguments are not for them; they are for you.

None of the evidence we wanted to discuss here tonight will change their opinions or what they are about to say. But you need to know that is not the end. It is not as if there is nothing we can do because of that. And if there was, I don't think this Nation would have made it to almost 250 years.

The fact is, Madam Speaker, that at the end of the day, people—

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. GRIFFITH. Madam Speaker, point of order.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman will state his point of order.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Yes, ma'am. The point of order would be that the gentleman said that there were lies on this floor here today, looking over in this direction. I ask that those words be taken down.

We may have a disagreement on matters, but—

The SPEAKER.

The gentleman's demand is not timely.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania will proceed.

Mr. LAMB. Madam Speaker, the fact is, at the end of the day, it hurts. It hurts them; it hurts this country. It hurts all of us. But the fact is that the people have made this country work by not giving in.

Go ahead. Shout it out.

One last thing to say, Madam Speaker. And I thank you for your patience. All people need to know tonight, Madam Speaker—

Madam Speaker, the truth hurts. But the fact is this: We want this government to work more than they want it to fail.

After everything that has happened today, we want that more than ever. Know that. Know that, the people watching at home. We want this government to work. We will make it work. They will not make it fail.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. PERRY. Madam Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. PERRY. When is the appropriate time to ask that the words be stricken, be taken down?

The SPEAKER. Immediately after the words are uttered.

For what purpose does the gentleman from Louisiana seek recognition?

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, my, my, my. Let us take a deep breath, shall we?

Madam Speaker, the cornerstone of the strength of our American Republic is not only the peaceful transition of power; it is the peaceful transition of a lawful power. It is within the parameters of our oath, indeed, is our duty to inquire if we suspect that perhaps our elections have been compromised.

Much has been said about what we do not know. What we do not know calls for investigation.

What we do know is that, in the disputed States, Governors, secretaries of state, or local election commissions acted in violation of the Election Clause of the U.S. Constitution, wherein State legislatures are granted the sole authority to determine how Presidential electors are appointed. It is that simple. State executive officials usurped the constitutionally vested authority of State legislatures within several of the sovereign States.

Now, why we are involved in Congress? Because the Founders gave us a

narrow role. If we suspect that an election was compromised in a sovereign State, then we have a role in the seating of those electors and the counting.

America is not a confederacy of States. We are a union of States. We are a representative republic. Therefore, each sovereign State has a deep obligation to follow the writ of its own election law during a Federal election.

We would not be having this conversation if our objections were solely rested upon the elections of sovereign State Governors or State senators and representatives. It is a Federal election for the President and Vice President of the United States. We certainly have a role, and we should investigate and support that role.

Madam Speaker, America is an anointed nation, born of imperfect men driven by perfect intent. May we be worthy of what it is to be an American, what it is to be a representative of the American people.

May I ask, may we seek the quiet whisper of God's own voice within us. And I ask my colleagues to consider supporting this objection.

I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. VAN DREW).

Mr. VAN DREW. Madam Speaker, before I start, something I didn't plan on saying. This is a debate. It is a discussion. Everybody has a right to an opinion. That is American. Because someone doesn't agree with your view or your ideas does not mean that they are liars. It means they have a different view, a different opinion.

And I think, for God's sake, as people watch this or see it or hear it, they expect more from us than that. We can disagree at a certain level. There is nothing worse than moral pomposity.

You know, today was an amazing and terrible day. But one thing that we do know is that our law enforcement protected lives, and they protected and preserved our democracy. I watched firsthand, as I always have, just as I do back home in south Jersey, these brave men and women put their lives on the line to defend all of us.

May God bless the woman who lost her life today, and may God bless what will always be the greatest Nation in the history of the world: the United States of America.

At the core of our country's greatness is our democratic system of government. Without faith in the integrity of our elections, Americans will not have faith in our democracy.

The United States of America is the international embodiment of freedom and opportunity, the shining city on a hill. Free and fair elections have always been a hallmark of America's greatness.

After this past Presidential election, approximately 60 million Americans have serious doubts about the outcome. That is a number that we cannot ignore.

□ 0150

Ms. SCANLON. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentlewoman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SCANLON. Madam Speaker, I started this day disheartened that our colleagues were going to drag us through this cynical political charade of objecting to duly certified electoral college votes, but I was ready and eager to defend Pennsylvania's elections and the will of Pennsylvania's voters.

Never did I expect to be answering calls from family and friends concerned for my safety or to have to barricade myself in an office. But most important of all, never did I expect to see our Capitol overrun by armed insurrectionists intent on disrupting our government at the urging of the President.

What happened here today has made me heart-sick for our country, but it only strengthens my resolve to uphold the rule of law and to protect the decision of Pennsylvania's voters.

Earlier this week, we raised our hands and swore an oath to bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of the United States. But, today, those who are blocking the counting of electors from Pennsylvania are showing that their allegiance lies not to the Constitution or to their constituents, and many would argue not even to the Republican Party, but to their own political fortunes and the outgoing President.

Pennsylvania's voters, not Members of Congress, are tasked with choosing Pennsylvania's Presidential electors, and particularly not congressmen from other States. The people have spoken, and Pennsylvania certified our electors. We must respect our oath here by rejecting this unfounded objection to Pennsylvania's electoral votes, and not substitute Congress' judgment for that of the people of Pennsylvania.

Legal challenges to elections are serious matters, and that is why there is a place to consider those challenges: In courtrooms before impartial judges.

And Pennsylvania's legal process has worked. The pseudo-legal arguments that are being raised by the objectors here today are not new. Over the past 2 months, the President and his allies have filed more than 20 lawsuits to challenge the Pennsylvania election. Those challenges have been rejected in Federal courts, State courts, appellate courts, and the United States Supreme Court. Challenges have been rejected by judges who are registered Democrats, Republicans, Independents, and who have been appointed by Democratic and Republican Presidents.

And why did they lose all those cases?

As Third Circuit Judge Bibas, a Trump appointee, wrote, ''Free, fair elections are the lifeblood of our democracy. Charges of unfairness are serious. But calling an election unfair does not make it so. Charges require specific allegations and then proof. We have neither here.''

What the Court said points to an important distinction about when and how claims of election misconduct are made. It is easy to make wild claims of election fraud on cable television or Twitter, but those claims are not facts. And while there may be no immediate consequences for misleading the public with such statements, there is certainly a penalty for misleading the courts.

A lawyer faces fines, jail, and loss of his or her license for making frivolous or false claims. The lawyers for the Trump campaign never alleged widespread fraud or illegal voting had impacted Pennsylvania's elections because those claims are false.

When our colleagues indulge in this political theatre and endorse fringe conspiracy theories, they may think there are no consequences because they know that this time the majorities of the House and Senate will overrule them. But as the entire world saw today, their baseless claims of election fraud do have consequences. They undermine faith and respect for our elections and our government. They chip away at the foundation of our constitutional Republic and they take a sledgehammer to the peaceful transfer of power. It is our job to respect the rule of law and reject this political charade.

Finally, I want to offer my deepest respect to our Republican colleagues in both the House and the Senate who have withstood intense political pressure, and today honor their oath in the rule of law by rejecting these unfounded objections.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in favor of the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas. Madam Speaker, I would first like to say to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who said we should be ashamed over here, I am not ashamed, and neither are my colleagues over here. We are actually proud of what we are doing and what we are standing for. So I hope the RECORD will show that.

Yesterday's cowardly attack on our American democracy was a horrible act. While Congress attempted to execute their constitutional duty to debate and vote on this certification of the electoral college, violence interrupted the proceedings in an attempt to stop the democratic process.

Those who committed these acts are domestic terrorists and should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. And I thank the Capitol Police and all of the law enforcement organizations that pushed back against this mob.

I can't help but be reminded of the bravery during the baseball shooting on myself and my Republican colleagues in June of 2017. I thank God every day for their presence.

The American people deserve full transparency in the electoral process, with confidence that any irregularities and inconsistencies in that process will be fully investigated.

As a former Texas secretary of state, I know the electoral process well. And

above all, I know what the courts, the executive branch, and the elections officials can and cannot do without approval of the State legislature. During my tenure, I knew that my authority was confined to the powers the legislature provided me. If States fail to abide by the Constitution and follow their owns laws, it calls into question whether the votes in Texas, or any other State, are fairly represented.

And now, as a duly elected Member of Congress, the Constitution outlines my rights to speak and voice my constituents' concerns with my vote. It is pivotal that we have free and fair elections in our representative democracy and, more importantly, that we trust in the results of those elections.

In no way is voicing an objection an attempt to overturn an election. And when this process is complete and all objections have been heard, I acknowledge that we will have a peaceful transfer of power on January 20.

Faith in our system must be restored and Americans must be confident that their vote matters, and only lawful votes will be counted. This is a sad day in our Nation's history, but a solemn reminder that our country will not falter and will not fail. In God we trust.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. CAWTHORN).

Mr. CAWTHORN. Madam Speaker, as I said in my convention speech, I want a new generation of Americans to be radicals—to be radicals for freedom and for liberty, but not radicals for violence. I am bitterly disappointed by the protest that happened yesterday. The actions of a violent few were cowardly and pathetic, and I am not afraid to call it out.

The Republican Party is a party of limited government. It is the big tent party. It is not the party of destruction.

Madam Speaker, the oath I took just days ago demand that I speak out in defense not of one President or another, but in defense of a hallowed document that has safeguarded this Republic for over 200 years. The Constitution grants power solely to State legislatures to determine how elections are carried out. When other officials who are not vested with constitutional authority usurp their role and grind the Constitution under their heel, I must object.

□ 0200

Our Nation is a nation of resilience. In Valley Forge, George Washington prayed for a republic to be formed from the ashes of a monarchy. At Gettysburg, Americans gave their lives to defend a very simple idea, that the American democracy that had been earned with the blood of their forefathers would not perish due to internal division.

Then, on the islands of Iwo Jima and Okinawa, American servicemen gave their lives to defend this Nation's freedom from fascism.

What unites each and every generation of Americans is the idea that those who submit themselves to the authority of government ought to have a voice in that same government.

We are Americans here in this Chamber and in this country. But what does it really mean to be an American? It means believing in the rule of law. It means speaking up in defense of our founding principles and in defense of the Constitution.

Being an American means that you are proud of your country but that you never beat your chest. And being an American means that sometimes you must stand alone while others sit.

Now, obviously, I can't stand, but trust me, if I could stand, I would stand in defense of our Constitution today.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I completely agree with my colleague Representative DWIGHT EVANS, and I remind this Chamber that Pennsylvania is the cradle of American democracy.

We can't claim to be the birthplace of American democracy. That would be a disservice to James Otis, Jr., who, in 1761, stood up in a Massachusetts courtroom and argued against the King's writs of assistance.

But Pennsylvania is the cradle of democracy. It is where we hosted the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the American Constitution.

It was Pennsylvanians who immediately went to battle to defend this idea of democracy. They went right after Bunker Hill to the Siege of Boston. American riflemen were instrumental at the transformational Battles of Trenton and Saratoga in victory. And it is Independence Hall where these documents got signed, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

You heard my colleagues. You heard Representative HOULAHAN talking about the privations at Valley Forge, all in support of creating democracy.

You heard Representative BRENDAN F. BOYLE quoting John Adams, that democracy only dies by suicide.

You heard Representative DEAN quoting John Lewis, our hero, who said: Democracy is not a state. It is an act.

You heard Representative WILD talking about this stunning assault on our democracy.

If it seems like we get a little prickly in Pennsylvania about assaulting democracy, you are right. We do. Pennsylvania is the cradle of democracy.

You heard how foolish and empty these challenges are. Representative LAMB said it: 31 cameras filming the place where the count was happening, resulting in thousands of hours of videotape—you can see it on YouTube—proving there was no fraud.

You heard Representatives MICHAEL F. DOYLE and BRENDAN F. BOYLE talking about Act 77, how the Republicans in Pennsylvania were falling all over themselves to pass this law for mail-in voting because they thought it would help them.

You heard Representative SCANLON explaining why there were no allegations of fraud made in court because a lawyer going into court and lying to the court gets his or her ticket to practice law punched. They can be disbarred.

Politicians can say anything on cable TV, but they have to be darn careful when they are in court. So all these big TV talkers never alleged fraud in court.

Let me tell you about one court case. It was a case where they brought on their best legal talent. It was a case where they drew as a judge a staunch, principled, conservative Republican, Judge Matthew Brann. He called this case ''strained legal arguments without merit'' and ''speculative accusations.'' He called it ''like Frankenstein's monster,'' a ''haphazardly stitched together'' case.

Judge Brann said he ''has no authority to take away the right to vote of even a single person, let alone millions of citizens.''

On appeal Judge Bibas, a Trump appointee writing for the Third Circuit, agreed. He said: ''Calling an election unfair does not make it so. Charges require specific allegations and then proof. We have neither here.''

So, we have judges—dozens and dozens of them, Federal judges, State judges, Democrats, Republicans—turning away these challenges. All they ever wanted was evidence.

Here is the number-one rule when you go to court: Don't forget to bring the evidence with you.

This objection, in all seriousness, reflects the most profound disrespect to our American judiciary. We Pennsylvanians understand democracy. It was in Pennsylvania that our Founders signed the Constitution, and Article II makes it plain as day: We elect our President. We don't have a king.

If you can undo a Presidential election simply by alleging that something was amiss, then we don't have a democracy at all. We have something else entirely.

And if we vote to sustain this objection, we are not upholding our Constitution at all. We are doing something else entirely.

Let's vote ''no'' on this objection.

Mr. DAVIDSON. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Ohio is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIDSON. Madam Speaker, every one of us swore an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, both foreign and domestic. I swore that oath in uniform, and the first part of that oath is the same as what we swear here in Congress.

The last time we needed to defend our Constitution against a domestic

enemy, we fought a civil war. And at the conclusion of that Civil War we passed the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments that make clear that no State is so sovereign that they can deprive their citizens of equal protection of the laws.

When it comes to elections, that means one person gets one vote. It doesn't mean that other citizens can dilute the votes of other citizens and deprive them of equal protection. And it doesn't mean that a State can do that by law or by practice.

So whether the law was changed and made it such that there is no way to provide equal protection—one person, one vote—or the practice was corrupted, it cannot stand. Frankly, lastly, it must guarantee that there is a proof that it was equal protection under the law.

None of that happened in a number of States. The people of America, tens of millions of them who came out to vote, have been unheard by this body and by far too many courts. We need to show them the respect they are due by the Constitution of the United States of America, the Constitution that we fought to sustain to end the era of Jim Crow to pass civil rights legislation, the Voting Rights Act, the Civil Rights Act, and so many other pieces of jurisprudence.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DAVIDSON. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman needs to maintain his position and control of the time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this objection and to give voice to the 249,386 men and women of Ohio's Sixth Congressional District who have had their voices silenced by the rogue political actors in Pennsylvania who unilaterally and unconstitutionally altered voting methods to benefit the Democratic candidate for President.

Secretaries of state and State supreme courts cannot simply ignore the rules governing elections set forth in the Constitution. They cannot choose to usurp their state legislatures to achieve a partisan end, Constitution be damned.

Madam Speaker, this is a sad day for America. We have seen too many sad days like this recently: assaults on courthouses, police stations, and now the U.S. Capitol. People who disagree with the results of police work and court decisions are wrong to respond violently. And people who disagree with the results of an election are also wrong to respond with violence. Thank you to the Capitol Police and all the law enforcement involved for protecting the people's House today.

Madam Speaker, some may question our motives for raising these objections, but other than the Bible, our Constitution is the most sacred document known to man because it created the most free and prosperous nation in human history.

□ 0210

2021 has the chance to be remembered for when the leaders of a deeply divided America came together to defend that sacred document and to ensure that the integrity of future Presidential elections is ensured. It is imperative we take this opportunity. The future of our Republic depends on it.

Benjamin Franklin, in the summer of 1787, during the heated debate to create our sacred Constitution, said these famous words: ''I have lived long, sir, a long time . . . and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth . . . that God governs in the affairs of men.

''And, if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writing that 'Except the Lord build it, they labor in vain that build it.' ''

Madam Speaker, I pray that we would turn to the God Almighty that ordained our Nation into being to help us in our time of need.

Mr. KINZINGER. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Illinois is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINZINGER. Madam Speaker, as a student of foreign policy, if somebody described to me the actions that we saw, I would have assumed we were in a failed nation or a banana republic. Storming past police, some carrying the flag of the Confederacy, the mob breached this House.

But there is good news: The democracy held today.

For the last few years, misinformation and fear has been fed into people for profit and power, and for too many years, leaders around the country said nothing and sometimes echoed those messages because of the belief that winning, no matter the cost, was worth everything.

Today, we saw the result of ignoring these warning signs.

People look to Washington to give hope. Instead, we simply amplify fears.

People look to us for expertise on what can and can't be possible. Sometimes it is easier to say what makes people feel good instead of the hard facts.

Today, some Members of Congress argue that we can unilaterally pick the next President, that with our glorious wisdom, armed with Twitter, we know better than the American people. Some have shown that, if conspiracies are repeated enough, they become facts and they aren't disputed.

Even here in this Chamber after the events today, some speeches have been shockingly tone-deaf. I have seen people applaud cheap political lines that are embarrassing.

Power and cultural fights have divided us so much that they are the ultimate goal now, and sometimes the oath we swear to uphold feels like a prop.

People have been lied to by too many for too long.

So here is the truth: Joe Biden won this election, the effort will fail, and everybody knows it.

For some out there, this isn't about making a statement for the betterment of our country; it is about avoiding the pain of leveling with the people and telling them the truth: the emperor has no clothes.

I know many are disappointed in the result, but what legacy are we leaving? Have our kids seen the day where Ronald Reagan and Tip O'Neill had a beer over their differences, or have they learned that to lead, you must tweet, and sometimes all in caps, because now this is Hollywood, fame is the ultimate goal?

But the first step that we can take to restore this is to reject the charade, and what happens next is up to us.

We get threatened with primaries; we worry about the political implications. But our names will long be forgotten; the legacy of now will exist.

The bottom line: If we ask men and women to be willing to give their lives for this Nation and we talk about their service with tears in our eyes, shouldn't we be willing to give up our jobs to uphold that Constitution?

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER).

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Madam Speaker, is this a country, is this an America that we want to give to our children, a country of lawlessness, of might makes right, of mob rule?

Previous generations of Americans have laid down their lives to answer ''no'' to that question. I do not want to be the first generation of Americans so selfish as to answer ''yes.'' Nothing is more important to me than preserving this constitutional Republic as a Representative.

Article II of the Constitution states: ''Each State shall appoint, in such manner as the legislature thereof may direct, a number of electors,'' meaning that it is the duty of the State legislatures to select their electors in a manner they stipulate. It is right here.

The Founders of our Republic did not want to federalize elections, which is why they reserved the selection of electors to the State legislatures.

Historically, when Congress intervened in the electoral process, it was in the Civil War. It was when States were sending multiple slates of electors. But that is not the case today.

Of the six States actively being contested, five have Republican legislatures; five are controlled by one party; five have the authority to get together and to vote to change the elector that they sent to us.

How many of the six did? Not one.

Pennsylvania did not get together and vote as a body and send us a new slate of electors. They did not send us a bill or a resolution citing injustice at the State level.

None of them.

Are they cowards? Do they not know the Constitution? Have they not read

it, like you and I? Or are they merely passing the buck?

Here is the reality. Look, I believe this was not a fraud-free election. I believe that there were problems in Pennsylvania and in Georgia. But the Constitution gives us the right to fix that at the State level, not throw out the electoral college. We do not want to absolve the responsibility of the people in those States to hold their own lawmakers accountable.

I, as a Washington State Congresswoman, don't know better than the people in Pennsylvania and Georgia.

Folks, we can't vote to undermine the electoral college today. We have to uphold it.

Mr. POSEY. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the objection.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POSEY. Madam Speaker, as you have heard from both sides of the aisle over and over and over today and tonight, Members of Congress take an oath to protect and defend the Constitution.

Clearly, the Constitution says State legislatures make voting laws, period, end of subject. And, clearly, in Pennsylvania and some other States, nonlegislators changed those voting laws.

No matter who wins or who loses, those are violations of the Constitution whether you, me, or anyone else likes it or not.

As Congressman DAVIDSON pointed out, over a dozen FBI agents were immediately dispatched to fully investigate Bubba Wallace's garage door. But, sadly, the FBI never responded to my request to investigate massive voting irregularity accusations, like the video footage from Georgia that we all wished we didn't see.

Neither has the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of State, the Postal Inspector General, the Director of National Intelligence, the CIA, and, saddest of all, the U.S. Department of Justice.

The right to vote is not only a constitutional right, it is also a civil right, and we must protect it. Running a fair and transparent election is not something America should run away from. It is something we must live up to.

Every eligible American has a right to have their vote counted and the right to feel confident that his or her vote was counted, not neutralized by an illegal vote.

□ 0220

Otherwise, I fear our Republic is doomed. That is why I implore you to support a full investigation.

Madam Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the fine gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, this has been an interesting day. And I know we want to debate this, and we brought up all kinds of things, all kinds of points of history and what happened and where it happened and all the rest of this, and we are very, very grateful to the Capitol Police and all those who came in to protect us.

But the real debate right now about Pennsylvania is Pennsylvania's Act 77. Was it constitutional or was it unconstitutional? All the rest of the trimmings you can set aside and just decide: Was it constitutional or unconstitutional?

Act 77 changed Pennsylvania's voting law and Pennsylvania's Constitution.

Now, Pennsylvania could change that law, but it is done through an amendment to the constitution. It is not just done because somebody would like to see that done.

We had a mail ballot that was available. It was an absentee ballot. We did not have a no-excuse ballot.

What did Pennsylvania have to do to get to the point where they would have a no-excuse mail-in ballot?

Number one, in two successive sessions of the Pennsylvania Legislature, that had to be passed in that legislation, one session after the other. If it passed both times, then it had to be published in every one of the 67 counties of Pennsylvania, twice. When that was finished, it then had to go before the Pennsylvania voters to decide whether they wanted the constitution amended.

Pennsylvania did the first one. They actually did take a vote, and it was overwhelming. But then they scrapped it, and they put it in an omnibus bill. That is an unconstitutional change. You cannot do it. It is that simple.

So I love the idea about Washington crossing the Delaware. I love the idea about Washington going through a terrible winter.

I hate the idea of what we had to go through today. But if oaths don't matter, and we have all taken them, and if the Constitution doesn't matter, why do we even do it? Why go through this charade that somehow we are really close friends, except when it comes to the really important things?

We have driven this country apart through the people's House, and we wonder what happened?

The biggest loss on November 3 was not by Donald Trump; it was the faith and trust that the American people lost in this voting system because we have allowed it to happen. It is unconstitutional.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, 80 years ago today, Franklin Roosevelt delivered his third inaugural address. ''Every realist knows,'' he said, ''that the democratic way of life at this moment is being directly assailed in every part of the world—assailed either by arms, or by the secret spreading of poisonous propaganda by those who would seek to destroy unity and promote discord in nations still at peace.''

Today, the principal threat to our democracy comes from a different but also poisonous propaganda of those who seek to destroy our unity and promote discord.

According to this propaganda, America cannot conduct a free or fair election. Our elections are rigged and doomed.

According to this propaganda, the voters can no longer decide who shall be President. The Congress must decide for them.

At a time when our Nation faces an unprecedented health crisis, with thousands dying every day, with Americans struggling to put food on the table and keep a roof over their head, who are we to say that the man America chose to lead us out of this calamity shall not take office?

The coronavirus will claim more American lives than all of the casualties in World War II. To meet that moment will require unity, not discord; will require an abiding faith in our country, in our democracy, in our government's ability to function and provide for the needs of its citizens.

The Members of this body cannot continue to challenge the merits of an election that was fairly conducted and overwhelmingly won by Joe Biden. It must stop.

Look at the damage that was wrought in this House today, to this country today. Is that not enough?

Roosevelt said: ''This Nation has placed its destiny in the hands and heads and hearts of its millions of free men and women. . . . Our strength,'' he concluded ''is our unity of purpose.''

Let us unite once again in defense of the greatest hope of freedom-loving people around the world, this precious democracy.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN).

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, the baseless attack on Pennsylvania and its electors brought to mind, for me, the great Tom Paine, the champion of popular democracy, who came over to America to fight with us in the Revolution against the king. He lived in Philadelphia, where he wrote ''Common Sense'' and ''The Age of Reason.'' And Paine said: In the monarchies, the king is the law; but in the democracies, the law will be king.

When you think about it, the peaceful transfer of power is the central condition of maintaining democracy under the rule of law. That is why the famous election of 1801 was such a big deal.

When John Adams relinquished the Presidency to his passionate adversary and lifelong friend Thomas Jefferson, it was the first peaceful transition of power between democracies in a democratic republic in the history of the world.

And he said, as he rode back to Massachusetts from Washington, Adams said that he did this because we are a government of laws and not of men. We will betray this principle if we trade a government of laws for a government of men or, even worse, a single man, or an impressionable and dangerous mob

intent on violent sedition and insurrection against our beloved democratic Republic.

Here is Abraham Lincoln right before the war. At what point, then, is the approach of danger to be expected? I would answer, if it ever reaches us, it must spring up amongst us. It cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot, we must, ourselves, be its author and its finisher.

Madam Speaker, my family suffered an unspeakable trauma on New Year's Eve a week ago. But mine was not the only family to suffer such terrible pain in 2020. Hundreds of thousands of families in America are still mourning their family members. Many families represented in the Congress are still mourning their family members who have been taken away from us by COVID–19, by the opioid crisis, by cancer, by gun violence, by the rising fatalities associated with the crisis in mental and emotional health.

Enough, my beloved colleagues. It is time for America to heal. It is time for our families and communities to come together. Let us stop pouring salt in the wounds of America for no reason at all. Let us start healing our beloved land and our wonderful people.

The SPEAKER. All time for debate has expired.

The question is, Shall the objection submitted by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) and the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY) be agreed to.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Members are reminded to vote when their group is called and to leave the Chamber after they have voted.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 138, nays 282, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 11]

YEAS—138

Aderholt
Allen
Arrington
Babin
Baird
Banks
Bentz
Bergman
Bice (OK)
Biggs
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Brooks
Budd
Burchett
Burgess
Calvert
Cammack
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cawthorn
Chabot
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Cole
Crawford
Davidson
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Duncan
Dunn
Estes
Fallon
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fleischmann
Foxx
Franklin, C. Scott
Fulcher
Gaetz
Garcia (CA)
Gibbs
Gimenez
Gohmert
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Guest
Hagedorn
Harris
Harshbarger
Hartzler
Hern
Herrell
Hice (GA)
Higgins (LA)
Hudson
Issa
Jackson
Jacobs (NY)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Jordan
Joyce (PA)
Keller
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kustoff
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lesko
Long
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Malliotakis
Mann
Mast
McCarthy
McClain
Meuser
Miller (IL)
Miller (WV)
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Mullin
Murphy (NC)
Nehls
Norman
Nunes
Obernolte
Owens
Palazzo
Palmer
Pence
Perry
Pfluger
Posey
Reschenthaler
Rice (SC)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Rosendale
Rouzer
Rutherford
Scalise
Schweikert
Sessions
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smucker
Stefanik
Steube
Stewart
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Walberg
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wright
Zeldin

NAYS—282

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Amodei
Armstrong
Auchincloss
Axne
Bacon
Balderson
Barr
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bourdeaux
Bowman
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brown
Brownley
Buchanan
Bucshon
Bush
Bustos
Butterfield
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Cartwright
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Cheney
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Comer
Connolly
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Craig
Crenshaw
Crist
Crow
Cuellar
Curtis
Davids (KS)
Davis, Danny K.
Davis, Rodney
Dean
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Delgado
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Emmer
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Evans
Feenstra
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fletcher
Fortenberry
Foster
Frankel, Lois
Fudge
Gallagher
Gallego
Garamendi
Garbarino
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Golden
Gomez
Gonzales, Tony
Gonzalez (OH)
Gonzalez, Vicente
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Grijalva
Grothman
Guthrie
Haaland
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Herrera Beutler
Higgins (NY)
Hill
Himes
Hinson
Hollingsworth
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyer
Huffman
Huizenga
Jackson Lee
Jacobs (CA)
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (SD)
Johnson (TX)
Jones
Kahele
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (CA)
Kim (NJ)
Kind
Kinzinger
Kirkpatrick
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
LaHood
Lamb
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Leger Fernandez
Levin (CA)
Levin (MI)
Lieu
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Luria
Lynch
Mace
Malinowski
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Manning
Massie
Matsui
McBath
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McNerney
Meeks
Meijer
Meng
Mfume
Miller-Meeks
Moolenaar
Moore (UT)
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moulton
Mrvan
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Newhouse
Newman
Norcross
O'Halleran
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Porter
Pressley
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Reed
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rodgers (WA)
Ross
Roy
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schrier
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Simpson
Sires
Slotkin
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Soto
Spanberger
Spartz
Speier
Stanton
Stauber
Steil
Stevens
Stivers
Strickland
Suozzi
Swalwell
Takano
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Turner
Underwood
Upton
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Wagner
Waltz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Wexton
Wild
Williams (GA)
Wilson (FL)
Womack
Yarmuth
Young

NOT VOTING—11

Bilirakis
Brady
Buck
Granger
Hastings
Joyce (OH)
LaTurner
Scott, David
Steel
Tlaib
Trone

□ 0308

Ms. CLARKE of New York changed her vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the objection was not agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

The SPEAKER. The Clerk will now notify the Senate of the action of the House, informing that body that the House is now ready to proceed in joint session with the further counting of the electoral vote for the President and Vice President.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Secretary of the Senate shall inform the House of Representatives that the Senate is ready to proceed in joint session with the further counting of the electoral votes for President and Vice President.

(By unanimous consent, Mr. HOYER was allowed to speak out of order.)

HONORING SHUWANZA GOFF

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, this would not be the time I would have chosen, but it may be the last time that we are in session before the new administration comes in.

We are losing an extraordinary young woman who has been with me for over a decade and who is our floor leader, our floor director. All of you know her. Her name is Shuwanza Goff, and she has been with me for a significant period of time.

Shuwanza is a wonderful person. And the problem with having wonderful, talented, good staff is that at an administration change, they steal your people. It is just a terrible thing that happens. Two of my staff, Shuwanza Goff and Mariel Saez, will be going to the administration as well, and I have asked the administration to please do not take any more of my people.

But Shuwanza Goff has just been extraordinary. Those of you who have dealt with her understand how bright she is.

That is the bad news, Madam Speaker, that they have taken her. But the good news is, she is going to be the administration's representative to the House of Representatives, so we are going to see a lot of Shuwanza. I am sure she will be talking to both of us on both sides of the aisle and urging us to vote one way or the other or getting us information or doing all sorts of things that we might ask her to do and that she would want to do for us.

I want to say, Madam Speaker, and I know you share my view, those of us who have had an opportunity to work closely with Shuwanza, I love Shuwanza Goff. She is just a wonderful spirit. She is smart. She knows the rules. She knows the floor. I think Mr. MCCARTHY's and Mr. SCALISE's staffs would say the same thing if I had given them any notice that we were going to do this, but I thought we had some time.

Shuwanza, I really do want to thank you, and we wish you the best of luck. We know you are not going far. I know we are going to see a lot of you, but we wish you great success in everything you do.

I tell my staff, Madam Speaker, that they can go off the payroll, but they cannot go off the staff.

God bless, Shuwanza, and good luck.

□ 0322

At 3:22 a.m., the Sergeant at Arms, Paul D. Irving, announced the Vice President and the Senate of the United States.

The Senate entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, headed by the Vice President and the Secretary of the Senate, the Members and officers of the House rising to receive them.

The Vice President took his seat as the Presiding Officer of the joint convention of the two Houses, the Speaker of the House occupying the chair on his left. Senators took seats to the right of the rostrum as prescribed by law.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The joint session of Congress to count the electoral vote will resume. The tellers will take their chairs.

The two Houses retired to consider separately and decide upon the vote of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, to which an objection has been filed.

The Secretary of the Senate will report the action of the Senate.

The Secretary of the Senate read the order of the Senate, as follows:

Ordered, That the Senate by a vote of 7 ayes to 92 nays rejects the objection to the electoral votes cast in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for Joseph R. Biden, Jr., for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Clerk of the House will report the action of the House.

The Clerk of the House read the order of the House, as follows:

Ordered, That the House of Representatives rejects the objection to the electoral vote of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Pursuant to the law, chapter 1 of title 3, United States Code, because the two Houses have not sustained the objection, the original certificate submitted by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will be counted as provided therein.

The tellers will now record and announce the vote of the State of Rhode Island for President and Vice President in accordance with the action of the two Houses.

This certificate from Rhode Island, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of that State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Rhode Island seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 4 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 4 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of Rhode Island that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from South Carolina, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of that State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of South Carolina seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 9 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 9 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of South Carolina that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from South Dakota, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate from an authority of that State purporting to appoint and ascertain electors.

Senator BLUNT. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of South Dakota seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 3 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 3 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of vote of the State of South Dakota that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

□ 0330

The VICE PRESIDENT. This certificate from Tennessee, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of electoral vote from the State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority of that State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Tennessee seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 11 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 11 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of the vote of the State of Tennessee that the teller has verified as regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Texas, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from the State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority of that State that purports to appoint or ascertain electors.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Texas seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 38 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 38 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of the vote of the State of Texas that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Utah, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority from the State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of ILLINOIS. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Utah seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 6 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 6 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of the vote of the State of Utah

that the teller has verified to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Vermont, the Parliamentarians have advised me, is the only certificate of vote from the State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority from that State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Senator BLUNT. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Vermont seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 3 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 3 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of the vote of the State of Vermont that the teller has verified as regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Parliamentarians have advised, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority from that same State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the Commonwealth of Virginia seems to be in regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 13 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 13 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of the vote of the Commonwealth of Virginia that the teller has verified as appearing regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Washington, the Parliamentarians have advised, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has a certificate of an authority from the same State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Washington seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 12 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 12 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of the vote of the State of Washington that the teller has verified and appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from West Virginia, the Parliamentarians have advised, is the only certificate of vote from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority from the State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of ILLINOIS. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of West Virginia seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 5 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 5 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting the certificate of the vote for the State of West Virginia that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, this certificate from Wisconsin, the Parliamentarians have advised, is the only certificate from that State that purports to be a return from the State and that has annexed to it a certificate of an authority from the State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Wisconsin seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware received 10 votes for President and KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California received 10 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. For what purpose does the gentleman from Texas rise?

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. President, I object to the electoral votes of the State of Wisconsin because 71 House Members, all of who condemn violence as we witnessed today, are firmly committed to the resolution of disagreements in civil, lawful, peaceful institutions with full and fair debate, free of violence. And though not a single court has allowed an evidentiary hearing to listen to the significant body of evidence of fraud, and though some seize on the court's failure to misrepresent that no court would listen to the evidence as saying evidence did not exist; while Democrat leaders in Milwaukee illegally and unconstitutionally created more than 200 illegal polling places; tens of thousands of votes were changed by workers, despite election workers' objections, plus so many other illegalities to fraudulently create a 20,000-vote lead, we object, along with a Senator who now has withdrawn his objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Sections 15 and 17 of title 3 of the United States Code require that any objection be presented in writing, signed by a Member of the House of Representatives and a Senator.

Is the objection in writing and signed by a Member and a Senator?

Mr. GOHMERT. It is in writing. It is signed by a Member, but it is not signed and objected to by a Senator, Mr. President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. In that case, the objection cannot be entertained.

This certificate from Wyoming, the Parliamentarians have advised, is the only certificate of vote from that State and purports to be a return from the State and has annexed to it the certificate of an authority from the same State purporting to appoint or ascertain electors.

Senator BLUNT. Mr. President, the certificate of the electoral vote of the State of Wyoming seems to be regular in form and authentic, and it appears therefrom that Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida received 3 votes for President and MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana received 3 votes for Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any objections to counting a certificate of the vote of the State of Wyoming that the teller has verified appears to be regular in form and authentic?

There was no objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Hearing none, the Chair advises Members of Congress the certificates having been read, the tellers will ascertain and deliver the result to the President of the Senate.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. The undersigned, ROY BLUNT and AMY KLOBUCHAR, tellers on the part of the Senate; ZOE LOFGREN and RODNEY DAVIS, tellers on the part of the House of Representatives, report the following as the result of the ascertainment and counting of the electoral votes for President and Vice President of the United States for the term beginning on the 20th day of January, 2021. The report we make is that Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS will be the President and the Vice President, according to the ballots that have been given to us.

The tellers delivered to the President of the Senate the following statement of results:

JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS FOR THE COUNTING OF THE ELECTORAL VOTES FOR PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES—OFFICIAL TALLY

The undersigned, ROY BLUNT and AMY KLOBUCHAR tellers on the part of the Senate, ZOE LOFGREN and RODNEY DAVIS tellers on the part of the House of Representatives, report the following as the result of the ascertainment and counting of the electoral vote for President and Vice President of the United States for the term beginning on the twentieth day of January, two thousand and twenty one.

Electoral votes of each State	For President		For Vice President	
	Joseph R. Biden, Jr.	Donald J. Trump	Kamala D. Harris	Michael R. Pence
Alabama—9	.....	9	.....	9
Alaska—3	.....	3	.....	3
Arizona—11	11	.....	11	.....
Arkansas—6	.....	6	.....	6

Electoral votes of each State	For President		For Vice President	
	Joseph R. Biden, Jr.	Donald J. Trump	Kamala D. Harris	Michael R. Pence
California—55	55		55	
Colorado—9	9		9	
Connecticut—7	7		7	
Delaware—3	3		3	
District of Columbia—3	3		3	
Florida—29		29		29
Georgia—16	16		16	
Hawaii—4	4		4	
Idaho—4		4		4
Illinois—20	20		20	
Indiana—11		11		11
Iowa—6		6		6
Kansas—6		6		6
Kentucky—8		8		8
Louisiana—8		8		8
Maine—4	3	1	3	1
Maryland—10	10		10	
Massachusetts—11	11		11	
Michigan—16	16		16	
Minnesota—10	10		10	
Mississippi—6		6		6
Missouri—10		10		10
Montana—3		3		3
Nebraska—5	1	4	1	4
Nevada—6	6		6	
New Hampshire—4	4		4	
New Jersey—14	14		14	
New Mexico—5	5		5	
New York—29	29		29	
North Carolina—15		15		15
North Dakota—3		3		3
Ohio—18		18		18
Oklahoma—7		7		7
Oregon—7	7		7	
Pennsylvania—20	20		20	
Rhode Island—4	4		4	
South Carolina—9		9		9
South Dakota—3		3		3
Tennessee—11		11		11
Texas—38		38		38
Utah—6		6		6
Vermont—3	3		3	
Virginia—13	13		13	
Washington—12	12		12	
West Virginia—5		5		5
Wisconsin—10	10		10	
Wyoming—3		3		3
Total—538	306	232	306	232

ROY BLUNT,
AMY KLOBUCHAR,
Tellers on the part of the Senate.
ZOE LOFGREN,
RODNEY DAVIS,
Tellers on the part of the House of Representatives.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The state of the vote for President of the United States, as delivered to the President of the Senate, is as follows:

The whole number of electors appointed to vote for President of the United States is 538. Within that whole number, a majority is 270.

The votes for President of the United States are as follows:

Joseph R. Biden, Jr., of the State of Delaware has received 306 votes.

Donald J. Trump of the State of Florida has received 232 votes.

The whole number of electors appointed to vote for Vice President of the United States is 538. Within that whole number, a majority is 270.

The votes for Vice President of the United States are as follows:

KAMALA D. HARRIS of the State of California has received 306 votes.

MICHAEL R. PENCE of the State of Indiana has received 232 votes.

This announcement of the state of the vote by the President of the Senate shall be deemed a sufficient declaration of the persons elected President and Vice President of the United States, each for the term beginning on the 20th day of January, 2021, and shall be entered, together with the list of the votes, on the Journals of the Senate and House of Representatives.

The Chair now recognizes for the purpose of a closing prayer the 62nd Chaplain of the United States Senate, Chaplain Barry C. Black.

□ 0340

Chaplain BLACK. Lord of our lives and sovereign of our beloved Nation, we deplore the desecration of the United States Capitol Building, the shedding of innocent blood, the loss of life, and the quagmire of dysfunction that threaten our democracy.

These tragedies have reminded us that words matter and that the power of life and death is in the tongue. We have been warned that eternal vigilance continues to be freedom's price.

Lord, You have helped us remember that we need to see in each other a common humanity that reflects Your image. You have strengthened our resolve to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies domestic, as well as foreign.

Use us to bring healing and unity to a hurting and divided Nation and world. Thank You for what You have blessed our lawmakers to accomplish in spite of threats to liberty.

Bless and keep us. Drive far from us all wrong desires, incline our hearts to do Your will, and guide our feet on the path of peace. And God bless America.

We pray in Your sovereign name.

Amen.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The purpose of the joint session having concluded, pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution 1, 117th Congress, the Chair declares the joint session dissolved.

(Thereupon, at 3 o'clock and 44 minutes a.m., the joint session of the two Houses of Congress was dissolved.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. JACKSON LEE). Pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution 1, the electoral vote will be spread at large upon the Journal.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 5(a)(1)(B) of House Resolution 8, the House stands adjourned until 11 a.m. on Monday, January 11, 2021.

Thereupon (at 3 o'clock and 48 minutes a.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, January 11, 2021, at 11 a.m.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. CLOUD (for himself, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. STEUBE, Mr. DAVIDSON, Mr. BERGMAN, Mr. PALMER, Mr. RUTHERFORD, and Mr. BAIRD):

H.R. 217. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enforce the licensure requirement for medical providers of the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. PFLUGER (for himself, Mr. TONY GONZALES of Texas, Mrs. BICE of Oklahoma, Mr. JACKSON, Ms. HERRELL, Mr. BABIN, Mr. ROY, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. FALLON, and Mr. ARRINGTON):

H.R. 218. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture from issuing moratoriums on issuing new oil and gas leases and drill permits on certain Federal lands; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DOGGETT:

H.R. 219. A bill to amend the Trade Act of 1974 to exclude from eligibility for the generalized system of preferences any country that fails to effectively enforce its environmental laws or meet its international environmental obligations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. EMMER (for himself and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois):

H.R. 220. A bill to make supplemental appropriations to carry out farm stress programs, provide for expedited additional support under the farm and ranch stress assistance network, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Ms. ESHOO:

H.R. 221. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to modify the oath of office taken by individuals in the civil service or uniformed services, and of other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

By Ms. ESHOO (for herself and Mr. MCEACHIN):

H.R. 222. A bill to treat the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November in the same manner as any legal public holiday for purposes of Federal employment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

By Mr. ESPAILLAT (for himself and Mr. SIRES):

H.R. 223. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to reimburse

qualified health care providers for the costs of purchasing, leasing, installing, and operating qualified equipment for cold storage of COVID-19 vaccines; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. GARCIA of Texas (for herself, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. BABIN, Mr. VELA, Ms. JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. ROY, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. TAYLOR, Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas, and Mr. GREEN of Texas):

H.R. 224. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 5302 Galveston Road in Houston, Texas, as the ''Vanessa Guillén Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

By Mr. GRIFFITH:

H.R. 225. A bill to amend chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code, to more comprehensively address the interstate transportation of firearms or ammunition; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GRIFFITH:

H.R. 226. A bill to direct the United States Postal Service to designate a single, unique ZIP Code for Fairlawn, Virginia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

By Mr. HASTINGS (for himself and Mrs. HAYES):

H.R. 227. A bill to provide dedicated funding for the national infrastructure investment program and the capital investment grant program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LAMALFA:

H.R. 228. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2141 Ferry Street in Anderson, California, as the ''Norma Comnick Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

By Mr. RUIZ:

H.R. 229. A bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to prohibit a candidate for election for Federal office from using amounts contributed to the candidate's campaign to make payments to vendors owned or controlled by the candidate or by an immediate family member of the candidate; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. RUIZ:

H.R. 230. A bill to prohibit the use of funds provided for the official travel expenses of Members of Congress and other officers and employees of the legislative branch for airline accommodations which are not coach-class accommodations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. RUIZ:

H.R. 231. A bill to prevent the enrichment of certain Government officers and employees or their families through Federal funds or contracting, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

By Mr. RUIZ:

H.R. 232. A bill to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to require the President, Vice President, and Cabinet-level officers to release their tax returns, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. STEIL (for himself and Ms. DEAN):

H.R. 233. A bill to amend the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 to include financial criminal activities associated with the facilitation of severe forms of trafficking in persons within the factors considered as indicia of serious and sustained efforts to eliminate severe forms of trafficking in persons, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. TAKANO:

H.R. 234. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to treat certain individuals who served in Vietnam as a member of the armed forces of the Republic of Korea as a veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States for purposes of the provision of health care by the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ (for herself, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. MENG, Mr. NADLER, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. JEFFRIES, Miss RICE of New York, and Mr. SUOZZI):

H.R. 235. A bill to authorize additional monies to the Public Housing Capital Fund of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. DOGGETT (for himself and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey):

H. Res. 20. A resolution expressing support for the goals and ideals of ''National Hydrocephalus Awareness Month''; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. CLOUD:

H.R. 217.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 17

''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.''

By Mr. PFLUGER:

H.R. 218.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. DOGGETT:

H.R. 219.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States of America. The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. EMMER:

H.R. 220.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Ms. ESHOO:

H.R. 221.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 of article VI of the Constitution.

In McCulloch v. Maryland, 17 U.S. 316 (1819), the Supreme Court stated, ''Yet he would be charged with insanity who should contend that the legislature might not superadd to the oath directed by the Constitution such other oath of office as its wisdom might suggest.''

By Ms. ESHOO:

H.R. 222.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 4 of the Constitution

By Mr. ESPAILLAT:

H.R. 223.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article One of the United States Constitution, section 8, clause 18:

The Congress shall have Power—To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof

By Ms. GARCIA of Texas:

H.R. 224.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 7: [The Congress shall have Power . . .] To establish Post Offices and post Roads

By Mr. GRIFFITH:

H.R. 225.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GRIFFITH:

H.R. 226.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 7 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HASTINGS:

H.R. 227.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. LaMALFA:

H.R. 228.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. RUIZ:

H.R. 229.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution, to provide for the general welfare and make all laws necessary and proper to carry out the powers of Congress.

By Mr. RUIZ:

H.R. 230.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution, to provide for the general welfare and make all laws necessary and proper to carry out the powers of Congress.

By Mr. RUIZ:

H.R. 231.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution, to provide for the general welfare and make all laws necessary and proper to carry out the powers of Congress.

By Mr. RUIZ:

H.R. 232.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution, to provide for the general welfare and make all laws necessary and proper to carry out the powers of Congress.

By Mr. STEIL:

H.R. 233.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. TAKANO:

H.R. 234.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

H.R. 235.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

The Congress shall have Power to . . . provide for the . . . general Welfare of the United States; . . .

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 24: Mr. BURGESS.

H.R. 28: Mr. BALDERSON, Mr. BANKS, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. COLE, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mrs. HINSON, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. LATTA, Mr. MCHENRY, Mrs. RODGERS of Washington, Mr. PFLUGER, Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. WRIGHT, and Mr. STAUBER.

H.R. 40: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. TORRES of New York, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 51: Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 82: Mr. KINZINGER, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, and Mr. BURGESS.

H.R. 97: Ms. WILD, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. EVANS, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. LIEU, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. ESCOBAR, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. RASKIN, Ms. BASS, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. TRONE, Mr. RUSH, Mr. POCAN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. TONKO, Ms. SCANLON, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. MENG, Mr. COOPER, Ms. LOFGREN, Mrs. TRAHAN, Ms. CHU, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. BEYER, Mr. MALINOWSKI, Ms. DEAN, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. LEVIN of Michigan.

H.R. 173: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. SUOZZI, Ms. NORTON, and Ms. GARCIA of Texas.

H.J. Res. 12: Mr. HERN, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. WRIGHT, Mr. FULCHER, Mr. DONALDS, Mr. BURCHETT, and Mrs. WAGNER.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 117th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 167 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2021 No. 4

Senate

The Senate met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, have compassion on us with Your unfailing love. As our lawmakers prepare to formally certify the votes cast by the electoral college, be present with them. Guide our legislators with Your wisdom and truth as they seek to meet the requirements of the U.S. Constitution. Lord, inspire them to seize this opportunity to demonstrate to the Nation and world how the democratic process can be done properly and in an orderly manner. Help them to remember that history is a faithful stenographer, and so are You.

We pray in Your sovereign Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE SENATE

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following letter from the Secretary of the Senate, which was ordered to lie on the table:

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: On Tuesday, January 5, 2021, the President of the United States sent by messenger the attached sealed envelope addressed to the President of the Senate dated January 5, 2021, said to contain a message regarding additional steps addressing the threat posed by applications and other software developed or controlled by Chinese companies. The Senate not being in session on the day which the President delivered this message, I accepted the message at 5:00 p.m., and I now present to you the President's message, with the accompanying papers, for disposition by the Senate.

Respectfully,

JULIE A. ADAMS,
Secretary of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 11

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk that is due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 11) to provide for an exception to a limitation against appointment of persons as Secretary of Defense within seven years of relief from active duty as a regular commissioned officer of the Armed Forces.

Mr. GRASSLEY. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I would object to its further reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 13

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 13) to establish an advisory committee to make recommendations on improvements to the security, integrity, and administration of Federal elections.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will receive its second reading on the next legislative day.

JOINT SESSION OF THE TWO HOUSES—COUNTING OF ELECTORAL BALLOTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the provisions of S. Con. Res. 1, the Senate will now proceed as a body to the Hall of the House of Representatives for the counting of the electoral ballots.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:51 p.m., preceded by the Secretary of the Senate, Julie E. Adams, and the Deputy Sergeant at Arms, Jennifer Hemingway, proceeded to the Hall of the House of Representatives for the purpose of counting electoral ballots.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Pursuant to S. Con. Res. 1 and section 17, title III, U.S. Code, when the two Houses withdraw from the joint session to count the electoral vote for separate consideration of an objection, a Senator may speak to the objection for 5 minutes and not more than once. Debate shall not exceed 2 hours, after which the Chair will put the question: Shall the objection be sustained?

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Printed on recycled paper.

The clerk will report the objection made in the joint session.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Objection from Representative GOSAR from Arizona and Senator CRUZ and others, ''We, a Member of the House of Representatives and a United States Senator, object to the counting of the electoral votes of the State of Arizona on the ground that they were not, under all of the known circumstances, regularly given.''

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader is recognized.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the majority leader and the Democratic leader be allowed to speak and that following their remarks, the majority leader and the Democratic leader each control up to 1 hour of debate time and be authorized to yield up to 5 minutes of that time to any Senator seeking recognition. Further, I ask unanimous consent that the Senators be permitted to insert statements into the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

CHALLENGE TO THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, we are debating a step that has never been taken in American history: whether Congress should overrule the voters and overturn a Presidential election.

I have served 36 years in the Senate. This will be the most important vote I have ever cast.

President Trump claims the election was stolen. The assertions range from specific local allegations, to constitutional arguments, to sweeping conspiracy theories. I supported the President's right to use the legal system. Dozens of lawsuits received hearings in courtrooms all across our country, but over and over, courts rejected these claims, including all-star judges whom the President himself nominated.

Every election, we know, features some illegality and irregularity, and, of course, that is unacceptable.

I support strong State-led voting reforms. Last year's bizarre pandemic procedures must not become the new norm. But, my colleagues, nothing before us proves illegality anywhere near the massive scale—the massive scale that would have tipped the entire election, nor can public doubt alone justify a radical break when the doubt itself was incited without any evidence.

The Constitution gives us here in Congress a limited role. We cannot simply declare ourselves a national board of elections on steroids. The voters, the courts, and the States have all spoken. They have all spoken. If we overrule them, it would damage our Republic forever.

This election actually was not unusually close. Just in recent history, 1976, 2000, and 2004 were all closer than this one. The electoral college margin is almost identical to what it was in 2016. If this election were overturned by mere allegations from the losing side, our democracy would enter a death spiral. We would never see the whole Nation accept an election again. Every 4 years would be a scramble for power at any cost. The electoral college, which most of us on this side been have defending for years, would cease to exist, leaving many of our States with no real say at all in choosing a President.

The effects would go even beyond the elections themselves. Self-government, my colleagues, requires a shared commitment to the truth and a shared respect for the ground rules of our system. We cannot keep drifting apart into two separate tribes with a separate set of facts and separate realities with nothing in common except our hostility toward each other and mistrust for the few national institutions that we all still share.

Every time—every time in the last 30 years that Democrats have lost a Presidential race, they have tried a challenge just like this—after 2000, after 2004, and after 2016. After 2004, a Senator joined and forced the same debate. And, believe it or not, Democrats like Harry Reid, DICK DURBIN, and Hillary Clinton praised—praised and applauded the stunt. Republicans condemned those baseless efforts back then, and we just spent 4 years condemning Democrats' shameful attacks on the validity of President Trump's own election. So there can be no double standard. The media that is outraged today spent 4 years aiding and abetting the Democrats' attacks on our institutions after they lost.

But we must not imitate and escalate what we repudiate. Our duty is to govern for the public good. The United States Senate has a higher calling than an endless spiral of partisan vengeance.

Congress will either overrule the voters, the States, and the courts for the first time ever or honor the people's decision. We will either guarantee Democrats' delegitimizing efforts after 2016 became a permanent new routine for both sides or declare that our Nation deserves a lot better than this. We will either hasten down a poisonous path where only the winners of elections actually accept the results or show we can still muster the patriotic courage that our forebears showed not only in victory but in defeat.

The Framers built the Senate to stop short-term passions from boiling over and melting the foundations of our Republic. So I believe protecting our constitutional order requires respecting the limits of our own power. It would be unfair and wrong to disenfranchise American voters and overrule the courts and the States on this extraordinarily thin basis, and I will not pretend such a vote would be a harmless protest gesture while relying on others to do the right thing. I will vote to respect the people's decision and defend our system of government as we know it.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Democratic leader is recognized.

CHALLENGE TO THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. Vice President, as prescribed by the Constitution and the laws of the Nation, the purpose of this joint session is for tellers, appointed on a bipartisan basis by the two Houses, to read to the Congress the results of an election that has already happened. We are here to receive an announcement of a vote that has already been certified by every State in the Union and confirmed by the courts many times—many times over. We are here to watch the current Vice President open envelopes and receive the news of a verdict that has already been rendered. It is a solemn and august occasion, no doubt, but it is a formality.

The Congress does not determine the outcome of elections; the people do. The Congress is not endowed with the power to administer elections; our States are given that power.

By the end of the proceedings today, there will be confirmed once again something that is well known and well settled: The American people elected Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS to be the next President and Vice President of the United States. Yet a number of our colleagues have organized an effort to undermine and object to that free and fair election. They are in the minority. They will lose; they know that. They have no evidence of widespread voter fraud upon which to base their objections. That is because there is none. There is none, not brought before any of the courts successfully.

They know that President Trump and his allies have suffered a defeat in court after court across the country, losing no fewer than 62 legal challenges. And, I might add, many Republican-appointed judges—some appointed by President Trump—rendered those decisions.

They know—you all know—that Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS are going to be sworn in as President and Vice President of the United States on January 20, but they are going to object to the counting of the vote anyway, and in the process, they will embarrass themselves, they will embarrass their party, and worst of all, they will embarrass their country.

This insurrection was fortunately discouraged by the leadership of the majority party, but it was not quelled.

It is a very sad comment on our times that merely accepting the results of an election is considered an act of political courage. Sadder and more dangerous still is the fact that an element of the Republican Party believes their political viability hinges on the endorsement of an attempted coup, that anyone—much less an elected official—would be willing to tarnish our democracy in order to burnish their personal political fortunes.

Over the course of the afternoon and however far into the evening this band of Republic objectors wants to take us, Senators of good will from both sides of the aisle will explain why these challenges must be dismissed. The Senators from States whose electoral votes are being challenged will explain how the allegations of fraud are baseless. And a substantial bipartisan majority must vote to put down these objections and defend the sanctity of our elections and indeed—and indeed—our great and grand democracy because that is what we are talking about today: the health of power democracy, this wonderful, beautiful, grand democracy where the peaceful passing of the torch is extolled by schoolchildren in the second grade but not by some here.

As we speak, half of our voters are being conditioned by the outgoing President to believe that when his party loses an election, the results must not be legitimate.

As we speak, the eyes of the world are on this Chamber, questioning whether America is still the shining example of democracy, the shining city on the Hill.

What message will we send today to our people, to the world that has so looked up to us for centuries? What message will we send to fledgling democracies who study our Constitution, mirror our laws and traditions in the hopes that they, too, can build a country ruled by the consent of the governed?

What message will we send to those countries where democratic values are under assault and look to us to see if those values are still worth fighting for?

What message will we send to every dark corner of the world where human rights are betrayed, elections are stolen, human dignity denied?

What will we show those people? Will we show those people that there is a better way to ensure liberty and opportunity of humankind?

Sadly, a small band of Republican objectors may darken the view of our democracy today, but a larger group of Senators and House Members from both sides of the aisle can send a message, too; that democracy beats deep in the hearts of our citizens and our elected representatives; that we are a country of laws and of not men; that our traditions are not so easily discarded, even by our President; that facts matter; that truth matters; that while democracy allows free speech and free expression, even if that expression is antidemocratic, there will always, always be—praise God—a far broader and stronger coalition ready to push back and defend everything we hold dear.

We can send that message today by voting in large and overwhelming numbers to defeat these objections. My colleagues, we each swore an oath just 3 days ago that we would defend and support the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that we would bear true faith and allegiance to the same.

We swore that we took this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion, and that we could well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office we were about to enter, so help us God.

The precise words of that oath were shortly written after the Civil War, when the idea of true faith and allegiance to this country and its Constitution took on enormous meaning. Let those words ring in the ears of every Senator today. Let us do our duty to support and defend the Constitution of the United States, so help us God.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I yield up to 5 minutes to the Senator from Texas, Senator CRUZ.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, we gather together at a moment of great division, at a moment of great passion. We have seen and, no doubt, will continue to see a great deal of moralizing from both sides of the aisle, but I would urge to both sides perhaps a bit less certitude and a bit more recognition that we are gathered at a time when democracy is in crisis.

Recent polling shows that 39 percent of Americans believe the election that just occurred ''was rigged.'' You may not agree with that assessment, but it is, nonetheless, a reality for nearly half the country.

I would note it is not just Republicans who believe that. Thirty-one percent of Independents agree with that statement. Seventeen percent of Democrats believe the election was rigged. Even if you do not share that conviction, it is the responsibility, I believe, of this office to acknowledge that is a profound threat to this country and to the legitimacy of any administrations that will come in the future.

I want to take a moment to speak to my Democratic colleagues. I understand. Your guy is winning right now. If Democrats vote as a bloc, Joe Biden will almost certainly be certified as the next President of the United States.

I want to speak to the Republicans who are considering voting against these objections. I understand your concerns, but I urge you to pause and think: What does it say to the nearly half the country that believes this election was rigged if we vote not even to consider the claims of illegality and fraud in this election?

And I believe there is a better way. The leaders just spoke about setting aside the election. Let me be clear. I am not arguing for setting aside the result of this election. All of us are faced with two choices, both of which are lousy. One choice is vote against the objection, and tens of millions of Americans will see a vote against the objection as a statement that voter fraud doesn't matter, isn't real, and shouldn't be taken seriously. And a great many of us don't believe that.

On the other hand, most, if not all, of us believe we should not set aside the results of an election just because our candidate may not have prevailed. So I endeavored to look for door No. 3, a third option, and for that I looked to history, to the precedent of the 1876 election, the Hayes-Tilden election, where this Congress appointed an electoral commission to examine claims of voter fraud.

Five House Members, five Senators, five Supreme Court Justices examined the evidence and rendered a judgment. What I would urge of this body is that we do the same; that we appoint an electoral commission to conduct a 10-day emergency audit, consider the evidence, and resolve the claims.

For those in the Democratic aisle who say there is no evidence, they have been rejected, then you should rest in comfort. If that is the case, an electoral commission would reject those claims.

But for those who respect the voters, simply telling the voters, ''Go jump in a lake; the fact that you have deep concerns is of no moment to us,'' that jeopardizes, I believe, the legitimacy of this and subsequent elections.

The Constitution gives to Congress the responsibility this day to count the votes. The Framers knew what they were doing when they gave responsibilities to Congress. We have a responsibility, and I would urge that we follow the precedent of 1877. The Electoral Count Act explicitly allows objections such as this one for votes that were not regularly given.

Let me be clear. This objection is for the State of Arizona, but it is broader than that. It is an objection for all six of the contested States to have a credible, objective, impartial body hear the evidence and make a conclusive determination. That would benefit both sides. That would improve the legitimacy of this election.

So let me urge my colleagues: All of us take our responsibility seriously. I would urge my colleagues: Don't take, perhaps, the easy path, but, instead, act together. Astonish the viewers and act in a bipartisan sense to say we will have a credible and fair tribunal, consider the claims, consider the facts, consider the evidence, and make a conclusive determination whether and to what extent this election complied with the Constitution and with Federal law.

Mr. SCHUMER. Senator KLOBUCHAR.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I first would like to say I appreciate the words of our leader, Senator SCHUMER, as well as Senator MCCONNELL's call for a higher calling.

January 6 is not typically a day of historical significance for our country. For centuries, this day is simply the day that we receive each State's certified electoral votes, and it has come and gone without much fanfare.

In fact, this is only the third time in 120 years that the Senate has gathered to debate an objection, and as Senator CRUZ well knows, both times these objections were resoundingly defeated. The last time the vote was 74 to 1.

Why? Because Senators have long believed that they should not mess around with the will of the people. They have understood the words of our great former colleague John McCain from the State of Arizona, who once said that nothing in life is more liberating than to fight for a cause larger than yourself.

In this case, my colleagues, our cause, despite our political differences, is to preserve our American democracy, to preserve our Republic because, as someone once said long ago, it is a republic if you can keep it.

Now, I appreciate all my Democratic and Republican colleagues who have joined our ranks of coup fighters, who have stood up for our democracy, who stand tall for our Republic, and who believe in an ideal greater than ourselves, larger than our political parties. That ideal is America.

And Senator CRUZ, he knows this: On January 20, Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS will be sworn in as President and Vice President of the United States. He knows that President-Elect Biden won more votes than any President in history and more than 7 million more votes than President Trump.

Despite the unfounded conspiracy theories Senator CRUZ tells, he knows that high-ranking officials in President Trump's own Homeland Security Department have concluded that the 2020 election was ''the most secure in American history.''

If he wants to improve the numbers in his own party that he just mentioned of people believing in our elections, maybe he should start consulting with them or maybe he should start consulting with former Attorney General Barr, who said that he has found no evidence of widespread fraud in the 2020 election.

We don't have to go back to 1877, my colleagues. Senator CRUZ knows that 80 judges, including conservative judges, including judges confirmed in this Chamber, nominated by President Trump, have thrown out these lawsuits, calling them baseless, inadequate, and contrary both to the plain meaning of the constitutional text and common sense.

And he knows that all 10 living Defense Secretaries, including both of Trump's Defense Secretaries—Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, William Cohen—he knows that all of these leaders have come together to say that these scurrilous attacks on our democracy must stop and we must allow for a peaceful transition of power.

Senator SINEMA will fill you in on the specific facts as to why this election was sound and true in Arizona, but a summary: President Trump received 1,661,686 votes in the State; President-Elect Biden won 1,672,143 votes, meaning that he won the State by 10,457 votes.

On November 30, after Arizona's Republican Governor, the secretary of state, the attorney general, and the conservative chief justice of the Arizona Supreme Court certified the results of the election, the Governor actually said:

> We do elections well here in Arizona. The system is strong.

Eight postelection lawsuits brought in Arizona to challenge the results were dismissed by judges. Nine Members of the House from Arizona were elected in the same election, including four Republicans. Colleagues, I did not see Senator CRUZ over at the swearing-in at the House of Representatives last Sunday asking for an audit. He did not stop their swearing-in because there was no fraud, and he did not ask for an audit because we had a fair election.

I will end with this. My friend ROY BLUNT, my fellow Rules Committee leader, many years ago found a statue, a bust of a man at the top of a bookcase. He did research. He went to the historians. All he could find out was that no one knew who this guy was except that he was a cleric. Hence, the statue is called ''The Unknown Cleric.''

Now, at the time, our leaders thought this man important enough that they would warrant a statue for him, but today no one knows who he is. Senator BLUNT's message to schoolkids and Senators alike that visit his office, when he shows them the statue: What we do here is more important than who we are.

Senators, what matters is not our futures, not our own short-term destinies.

What matters is our democracy's destiny because I think many of us know people will not know who we are 100 years from now or 200 years from now, but what they will know is this: They will know what we did today, how we voted today. That is more important than who we are. It is a Republic, if we can keep it.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I yield up to 5 minutes to the Senator from Pennsylvania, Senator TOOMEY.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. I intend later to address the specifics of Pennsylvania if and when an objection is raised in regard to Pennsylvania.

For now, I want to address my remarks to what I think is the fundamental question being posed by the objectors, and that is, does Congress have the constitutional authority to decide which States' electoral college votes should be counted and which should not based on how well we think they ran their elections? This is what the objectors are really asking us to do—to federalize elections by rejecting electoral college votes from States whose processes they say they disapprove of and thereby having Congress select the President of the United States instead of the American people.

The answer, Mr. President, is no, there is no such authority under the Constitution. The Constitution assigns to the States the responsibility to conduct elections. It is clear in article II, section 1. It leaves courts with the responsibility to adjudicate disputes, and it assigns to Congress the ministerial function of counting ballots, except for extreme circumstances, such as when a State sends competing slates of electors to Congress, which brings me to the 1877 President.

Some objectors claim to merely want a commission to conduct an audit and then let States decide whether to send electors. Well, first, the situations are not at all analogous.

In 1877, Congress had before it two slates of electors from several States. There are no Trump electors from swing States; there are just Biden electors.

Second, legislators from the swing States—they have already spoken. They have made their decision. They have chosen not to send us alternative electors.

Third, a commission—really? It is completely impractical, and we all know it, with 14 days to go before a constitutionally mandated inauguration.

Look at it this way: If the electors are right and it is Congress's job to sit in judgment on the worthiness of the States' electoral processes, what is the criteria for acceptable electoral processes? What investigations have been conducted of these processes? What body has deemed that certain States' processes are unacceptable? What opportunities were these States given to challenge the findings? Why are the objectors objecting only to swing States that President Trump lost? What about the ones he won? I don't know—North Carolina? What about California? They have ballot harvesting, I am told. If this is all supposed to be Congress's job, you would think we would have answers to these questions and procedures in place because we would have done this every 4 years, right? But we don't because it is not our job.

If we adopt this new precedent that we sit in judgment of States' processes, then we are federalizing the election law. We would necessarily have to establish the permissible criteria and rules for the States' elections.

The ballot harvesting example—it is illegal in some States; it is encouraged

in others. Does it become mandatory or forbidden depending on who is in control of Congress? And, as the leader pointed out, it would be the end of the electoral college. The electoral college is the mechanism by which the people select the President. But if Congress gets to decide which States get to vote in the electoral college, then clearly Congress is electing the President, not the people. Whichever party controls both Houses of Congress would control the Presidency.

The public would never tolerate Congress picking the President instead of themselves, so they would abolish the electoral college, as many of our colleagues would like to do, and the end of the electoral college, of course, means the Nation will be governed by a handful of big blue States and regions that can drum up very large numbers.

Mr. President, the Constitution does not assign to Congress the responsibility to judge the worthiness of State election processes nor its adherence to its rules. That is the responsibility of the States and the courts.

Let me conclude with this. I voted for President Trump. I publicly endorsed President Trump. I campaigned for President Trump. I did not want Joe Biden to win this election. There is something more important to me than having my preferred candidate sworn in as the next President, and that is to have the American people's chosen candidate sworn in as the next President.

A fundamental defining feature of a democratic republic is the right of the people to elect their own leaders. It is now our duty. It is our responsibility to ensure that right is respected in this election and preserved for future elections. I urge you to vote against this objection.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the Senator from the great State of Arizona, Senator SINEMA.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Arizona.

Ms. SINEMA. Thank you, Mr. President.

I rise today to share the facts about Arizona's recent election and to urge my colleagues to step away from divisive political rhetoric and step towards renewing Americans' faith in our democracy.

The 2020 Arizona election was a success, not for any one party or individual but as a demonstration of the will of the voters. A record 80 percent of registered voters participated, thanks to local Arizona election officials who ensured our system worked and our laws were upheld. Arizona has offered early voting for more than 100 years, and our vote-by-mail system includes strict safeguards. All ballots include tracking mechanisms and tamper-resistant envelopes. Election staff are trained to authentic signatures. And Arizona imposes severe criminal punishments for ballot tampering.

The Arizona election produced bipartisan results in which members of both parties won races, and these results have been confirmed by stakeholders across the political spectrum.

The Republican chairman of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors said:

> No matter how you voted, this election was administered with integrity, transparency, and . . . in accordance with Arizona State laws.

The Republican speaker of the Arizona State House rejected calls for the legislature to overturn the election, saying:

> As a conservative Republican, I don't like the results of the presidential election . . . but I cannot and will not entertain a suggestion that we violate current law to change the outcome.

Eight challenges contesting the Arizona election were brought to Federal and State courts. All eight were withdrawn or dismissed, including a unanimous ruling by the Arizona Supreme Court. The chief justice wrote:

> [The] challenge fails to present any evidence of ''misconduct,'' [or] ''illegal votes'' . . . let alone establish any degree of fraud or a sufficient error rate that would undermine the certainty of the election results.

During a recent committee hearing, I asked a simple question of the former Director of Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security: Did he find any evidence disputing the integrity or fairness of Arizona's election? His answer was simple: ''No.''

Arizona and our 15 counties should be congratulated for running a secure election. Perhaps the most heartening demonstration of Arizona's election success is Jocelyn from Phoenix. Jocelyn is 18 years old and was a first-time voter in 2020. So was Rachel from Tucson and thousand more Arizonans who for the first time exercised their constitutional right to decide their own leaders. Today's challenge to Arizona's election fails any factual analysis. More disturbingly, it seeks to rob Jocelyn and Rachel and more than 3 million Arizonans of a free, fair election.

Those of us who are trusted with elected office are first and foremost public servants. We serve our constituents. We do not seek to substitute our personal ambitions for the will of the American people. Our system allows for a continuous contest of ideas. And those voters who support the losing side of a free, fair election have not been disenfranchised; rather, they maintain just as important a voice in America's future. Leaders have a duty to serve all of our constituents, including those who voted for other candidates.

Great leaders in our history faced the choice of whether to take an action strengthening our democracy even if a different action would better serve their political ambitions. Many are revered today because they chose our Republic over their self-interests, including my personal hero, Senator John McCain. Following his Presidential loss, Senator McCain said:

> The American people have spoken . . . Senator Obama and I have . . . argued our differences, and he has prevailed. . . . Whatever our differences, we are fellow Americans.

He spoke to the nearly 60 million Americans who voted for him, saying:

> It is natural tonight to feel some disappointment, but tomorrow we must move beyond it and work together to get our country moving again.

Senator McCain was right.

Today we have serious, significant work to do beating this pandemic and reviving our economy. I urge my colleagues to follow the example of Senator John McCain and so many others, reject this meritless challenge, and uphold the will of Arizona's voters.

Thank you.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I yield up to 5 minutes to the Senator from Oklahoma, Senator LANKFORD.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, in America, we settle our differences in elections. What happens if you don't trust the election count or you are concerned that so many courts denied or dismissed cases within hours after they were given thousands of pages of evidence?

The reason we have a Congress to settle our Nation's divisions and the rules of the Senate make sure that every opinion in the Nation is heard is so issues like this can be addressed.

The constitutional crisis in our country right now is that millions of Americans are being told to sit down and shut up. Their opinions matter.

During the electoral challenge on January 6, 2005, Senator Ted Kennedy stood on this floor and said this. He said:

> I commend the many thousands of citizens in Massachusetts and other States who insisted that treating today's electoral vote count in Congress as a meaningless ritual would be an insult to our democracy unless we register our own protest against the obviously-flawed voting process that took place in so many States. We are hopeful that this major issue that goes to the heart of our democracy is now firmly implanted on the agenda for effective action by . . . Congress.

I agree. The U.S. Constitution does not allow me to assign different electors to a State, nor should it. The U.S. Constitution does not give the option to the Vice President of the United States to just unilaterally decide which States are in and out, and it should not. Each State decides its electors through its people.

A small group of Senators, including myself, have demanded that we not ignore the questions that millions of people are asking in our Nation, so we have proposed a constitutional solution. Pause the count. Get more facts to the States before January the 20th. We proposed a 15-member commission, just like what was done after the failed election of 1876. We are encouraging people to spend 10 days going through all the issues so States can have one

last opportunity to address any challenges. Then the States, as the Constitution directs, would make the final decision on their electors.

I have some colleagues who have said that a 10-day commission is not enough time, so they have counterproposed just ignoring the lingering questions.

We need to do something.

(Mr. GRASSLEY assumed the Chair.)

Mr. LANKFORD. My challenge today is not about the good people of Arizona.

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 2:13 p.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 8:06 p.m. when called to order by the Vice President of the United States.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Vice President, as President of the Senate, would like to give a brief statement with the indulgence of the Senate.

Today was a dark day in the history of the United States Capitol, but thanks to the swift efforts of U.S. Capitol Police, Federal, State, and local law enforcement, the violence was quelled, the Capitol is secured, and the people's work continues.

We condemn the violence that took place here in the strongest possible terms. We grieve the loss of life that took place in these hallowed Halls, as well as the injuries suffered by those who defended our Capitol today. And we will always be grateful to the men and women who stayed at their posts to defend this historic place.

To those who wreaked havoc in our Capitol today, you did not win. Violence never wins. Freedom wins. And this is still the People's House.

As we reconvene in this Chamber, the world will again witness the resilience and strength of our democracy, for even in the wake of unprecedented violence and vandalism at this Capitol, the elected representatives of the people of the United States have assembled again on the very same day to support and defend the Constitution of the United States.

May God bless the lost, the injured, and the heroes forged on this day. May God bless all who serve here and those who protect this place. And may God bless the United States of America.

Let's get back to work.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the majority leader and the Democratic leader be allowed to speak and that the time not count against the 2 hours of debate in relation to the objection raised on the State of Arizona.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I want to say to the American people, the United States Senate will not be intimidated.

We will not be kept out of this Chamber by thugs, mobs, or threats. We will not bow to lawlessness or intimidation.

We are back at our posts. We will discharge our duty under the Constitution and for our Nation, and we are going to do it tonight.

This afternoon, Congress began the process of honoring the will of the American people and counting the electoral college votes. We have fulfilled this solemn duty every 4 years for more than two centuries. Whether our Nation has been at war or at peace, under all manner of threats, even during an ongoing armed rebellion and the Civil War, the clockwork of our democracy has carried on.

The United States and the United States Congress have faced down much greater threats than the unhinged crowd we saw today. We have never been deterred before, and we will not be deterred today.

They tried to disrupt our democracy. They failed. They failed.

This failed attempt to obstruct the Congress, this failed insurrection, only underscores how crucial the task before us is for our Republic.

Our Nation was founded precisely so that the free choice of the American people is what shapes our self-government and determines the destiny of our Nation—not fear, not force, but the peaceful expression of the popular will.

We assembled this afternoon to count our citizens' votes and to formalize their choice of the next President. Now we are going to finish exactly what we started. We will complete this process the right way, by the book. We will follow our precedents, our laws, and our Constitution to the letter, and we will certify the winner of the 2020 Presidential election.

Criminal behavior will never dominate the United States Congress. This institution is resilient. Our democratic Republic is strong. The American people deserve nothing less.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, it is very, very difficult to put into words what has transpired today. I have never lived through or even imagined an experience like the one we have just witnessed in this Capitol. President Franklin Roosevelt set aside December 7, 1941, as a day that ''will live in infamy.'' Unfortunately, we can now add January 6, 2021, to that very short list of dates in American history that will live forever in infamy.

This temple to democracy was desecrated, its windows smashed, and our offices vandalized. The world saw America's elected officials hurriedly ushered out because they were in harm's way. The House and Senate floor were places of shelter until the evacuation was ordered, leaving rioters to stalk these hallowed Halls. Lawmakers and our staffs, average citizens who love their country and serve it every day, feared for their lives. I understand that one woman was shot and tragically lost her life. We mourn her and feel for her friends and family.

These images were projected to the world. Foreign Embassies cabled their home capitals to report on the harrowing scenes at the very heart of our democracy. This will be a stain on our country not so easily washed away—the final, terrible, indelible legacy of the 45th President of the United States and undoubtedly our worst.

I want to be very clear. Those who performed these reprehensible acts cannot be called protestors. No, these were rioters and insurrectionists, goons and thugs, domestic terrorists. They do not represent America. These were a few thousand violent extremists who tried to take over the Capitol Building and attack our democracy. They must and should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law, hopefully, by this administration; if not, certainly by the next. They should be provided no leniency.

I want to thank the many in the Capitol Hill Police and Secret Service and local police who kept us safe today and worked to clear the Capitol and return it to its rightful owners and its rightful purpose. I want to thank the leaders, Democratic and Republican, House and Senate. It was Speaker PELOSI, Leader MCCONNELL, Leader MCCARTHY, and myself who came together and decided that these thugs would not succeed and that we would finish the work that our Constitution requires us to complete in the very legislative Chambers of the House and Senate that were desecrated but we know always belong to the people and do again tonight.

But make no mistake—make no mistake, my friends—today's events did not happen spontaneously. The President who promoted the conspiracy theories that motivated these thugs, the President who exhorted them to come to our Nation's Capital egged them on. He hardly ever discourages violence and more often encourages it. This President bears a great deal of the blame.

This mob was, in good part, President Trump's doing, incited by his words and his lies. This violence, in good part, is his responsibility and his everlasting shame. Today's events certainly—certainly—would not have happened without him.

Now January 6 will go down as one of the darkest days in recent American history—a final warning to our Nation about the consequences of a demagogic President, the people who enable him, the captive media that parrot his lies, and the people who follow him as he attempts to push America to the brink of ruin.

As we reconvene tonight, let us remember, in the end, all this mob has really accomplished is to delay our

work by a few hours. We will resume our responsibilities now, and we will finish our task tonight. The House and Senate Chambers will be restored good as new and ready for legislating in short order.

The counting of the electoral votes is our sacred duty. Democracy's roots in this Nation are deep; they are strong; and they will not be undone, ever, by a group of thugs. Democracy will triumph, as it has for centuries.

So to my fellow Americans who were shocked and appalled by the images on their televisions today and who are worried about the future of this country, let me speak to you directly. The divisions in our country clearly run deep, but we are a resilient, forward-looking, and optimistic people. And we will begin the hard work of repairing this Nation tonight because here in America we do hard things. In America, we always overcome our challenges.

I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. Vice President, I yield 2 minutes to the Senator from Oklahoma, Senator LANKFORD.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Vice President, you said things more eloquently than how we say it in Oklahoma. In Oklahoma, we say something like: Why in God's name would someone think attacking law enforcement and occupying the United States Capitol is the best way to show that you are right? Why would you do that?

Rioters and thugs don't run the Capitol. We are the United States of America. We disagree on a lot of things, and we have a lot of spirited debate in this room, but we talk it out, and we honor each other, even in our disagreements. That person, that person, and that person is not my enemy. That is my fellow American. And while we disagree on things, and disagree strongly at times, we do not encourage what happened today—ever.

Now, I want to join my fellow Senators in saying thank you to the Capitol Hill Police, the law enforcement, the National Guard, the Secret Service who stood in harm's way. While we were here debating, they were pushing back. And I was literally interrupted midsentence speaking here because we were all unaware of what was happening right outside this room because of their faithfulness and because of what they have done. I want to thank them.

Ronald Reagan once said: Peace is not the absence of conflict. It is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means.

The peaceful people in my State of Oklahoma want their questions answered, but they don't want this, what happened today. They want to do the right thing, and they also want to do it the right way. They want to honor the constitutional process, but they also want to have debate about election security because they want to make sure it is right, which is why it is an important issue that still needs to be resolved.

Transparency in government just doesn't seem like a bad idea. Obviously, the Commission that we have asked for is not going to happen at this point, and I understand that. And we are headed tonight toward the certification of Joe Biden to be the President of the United States, and we will work together in this body to be able to set a peaceful example in the days ahead.

I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. The Senator from Nevada, Senator CORTEZ MASTO.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. Vice President, I know that this room is full of leaders of both parties who love this country, and many believe that for America to succeed, our politics must find common ground. That has never been clearer than today, when armed rioters stormed the U.S. Capitol, emboldened by President Trump's false and inflammatory rhetoric about the 2020 elections.

I believe that we, in this Chamber, have a special duty as leaders to work together to lower the temperature of our politics, and I hope that my colleagues, who have questioned the legitimacy of this election in Arizona and all of these other States, now see the dire and dangerous consequences of sowing doubt and uncertainty.

I also know that, as U.S. Senators, we all take solemnly the oath we swear to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. At this moment in history, I can think of nothing more patriotic than renewing our faith in the Charters of Freedom that our Founding Fathers crafted for our Republic, starting with the fundamental American principle in our Declaration of Independence that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed.

The people have spoken in this election, and our only job here today is to do what they ask. It is not to argue election security. That is not the place for what we are doing today.

Our Constitution specifically reserves to the people the right to meet in their respective States and vote for the President and Vice President. As a result, individual States oversee and implement the election process, not the Federal Government.

To guard against fraud or irregularities in the voting process, the States are required to have robust election security measures. Likewise, State legislatures have the opportunity to examine evidence of voter fraud before they certify their electoral college votes. And our courts—from district courts to the United States Supreme Court—adjudicate legal challenges and election disputes. All of those things happened after the 2020 election.

Statehouses and courts across the country took allegations of voter fraud seriously and followed the constitutional process to hear challenges to this year's election. No State found evidence of any widespread voter fraud and neither did any court ask to review the State's findings.

In Arizona, Republican Governor Doug Ducey; the Democratic secretary of state, Katie Hobbs; the Republican attorney general, Mark Brnovich; and the State supreme court chief justice, Robert Brutinel all certified the results of the election on November 30.

And we know—we have heard—Arizonans have been voting by mail for almost 30 years, and Governor Ducey has expressed confidence in the State's process numerous times. In November, he said:

> We do elections well here in Arizona. The system is strong, and that is why I have bragged on it so much.

He further stated:

> We have some of the strongest election laws in the country, laws that prioritize accountability and clearly lay out our procedures for conducting, canvassing and even contesting the results.

And they are right. Arizona has one of the most transparent election processes in the country with built-in accountability, starting with the internal auditing.

We have heard unfounded allegations that voting machines in Arizona and elsewhere somehow changed vote tallies or somehow improperly rejected ballots while claiming to accept them. These allegations all ignore the fact that Arizona counties conducted ballot audits by hand to double-check the machine counts, and these audits found no widespread fraud or irregularities.

Maricopa County, the county where more than 60 percent of the State's population resides, conducted a post-election hand count audit in the week after the election, which showed perfect, 100 percent, accuracy in the machine tabulations. So why would we need, my colleagues, to call for a 10-day emergency audit to be conducted by a legislative commission when it has already been done by the State of Arizona? What happened to State's rights?

The audit involved checking ballots for the Presidential election but also ballots for Federal and State legislative elections. The audit report shows every precinct's machine and hand count totals for each of the races audited, and for every single race in every precinct, the difference between the hand count and the machine count was zero. Maricopa's audit report stated: No discrepancies were found by the hand count audit boards.

Seeking to find any reason to contest these results, some of the State Republicans then tried to claim that Maricopa County failed to follow State law in conducting this audit by selecting voting center locations to audit instead of voting precincts. This was

wrong. And this, too, went to a court. In rejecting this claim, the State court in Arizona found that the county followed the properly issued guidance on hand audit procedures from the Arizona Secretary of State. And the court found that Maricopa County officials, therefore, could not lawfully have performed the hand count audit the way the plaintiffs wanted it done. If they had done so, they would have exposed themselves to criminal punishment.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator's 5 minutes has expired.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you, Mr. Vice President. I would close by just saying, please, my colleagues, do not disenfranchise the voters of Arizona and certify their votes tonight.

Thank you.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. Vice President, I yield up to 5 minutes to the Senator from Utah, Senator LEE.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. Vice President, from the time I prepared my remarks for today, it seems like a lifetime ago. A lot has changed in the last few hours. So I am going to deliver some of the same remarks, but it has a little bit of a different feel than it would have just a few hours ago.

My thoughts and prayers go out to the family members of those who have been injured or killed today. My heartfelt gratitude goes out to the Capitol Hill Police who valiantly defended our building and our lives.

While it is true that legitimate concerns have been raised with regard to how some of the key battleground States conducted their Presidential elections, this is not the end of the story. We each have to remember that we swore an oath to uphold, protect, and defend this document, written nearly two and a half centuries ago by wise men raised up by God for that very purpose. That document makes clear what our role is and what it isn't. It makes clear who does what when it comes to deciding Presidential elections.

You see, because in our system of government, Presidents are not directly elected. They are chosen by Presidential electors, and the Constitution makes very clear, under article II, section 1, that the States shall appoint Presidential electors according to procedures that their legislatures develop. Then comes the 12th Amendment. It explains what we are doing here today in the Capitol. It explains that the President of the Senate—the Vice President of the United States—shall open the ballots, ''and the votes shall then be counted.'' It is those words that confine, define, and constrain every scrap of authority that we have in this process.

Our job is to open and then count. Open, then count—that is it. That is all there is.

There are, of course, rare instances—instances in which multiple slates of electors can be submitted by the same State. That doesn't happen very often. It happened in 1960. It happened in 1876. Let's hope it doesn't ever happen again. In those rare moments, Congress has to make a choice. It has to decide which of the electoral votes will be counted and which will not. That did not happen here—thank heavens—and let's hope that it never does.

Many of my colleagues have raised objections or had previously stated their intent to raise objections with regard to these. I have spent an enormous time on this issue over the last few weeks. I have met with lawyers on both sides of the issue, and I have met with lawyers representing the Trump campaign, reading everything I can find about the constitutional provisions in question, and I have spent a lot of time on the phone with legislators and other leaders from the contested States. I didn't initially declare my position because I didn't yet have one.

I wanted to get the facts first, and I wanted to understand what was happening. I wanted to give the people serving in government in the contested States the opportunity to do whatever they felt they needed to do to make sure that their election was properly reflected. I spent an enormous amount of time reaching out to State government officials in those States, but in none of the contested States—no, not even one—did I discover any indication that there was any chance that any State legislature or secretary of state or Governor or Lieutenant Governor had any intention to alter the slate of electors. That being the case, our job is a very simple one.

This simply isn't how our Federal system is supposed to work. That is to say, if you have concerns with the way that an election in the Presidential race was handled in your State, the appropriate response is to approach your State legislatures, first and foremost.

These protests—hearing from those who have raised concerns—should have been focused on their State capitols, not the Nation's Capitol, because our role is narrow, our role is defined, our role is limited.

Yes, we are the election judges when it comes to Members elected to our own body. And, yes, the House of Representatives are the judges of their own races there.

We also have the authority to prescribe, as a Congress, rules governing the time, place, and manner of elections for Senators and Representatives. There is no corresponding authority with respect to Presidential elections—none whatsoever. It doesn't exist. Our job is to convene, to open the ballots, and to count them. That is it.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. The Senator from Colorado, Mr. BENNET.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Colleagues, it has been a terrible day for everybody here and for our country.

One of the things I was thinking about today is something I often think about when I am on this floor, which is that the Founders of this country, the people who wrote our Constitution, actually knew our history better than we know our history.

I was thinking about that history today, as we saw the mob riot in Washington, DC—thinking about what the Founders were thinking about when they wrote our Constitution, which was what happened to the Roman Republic when armed gangs, doing the work for politicians, prevented Rome from casting their ballots for consuls, for praetors, for senators. These were the officers in Rome, and these armed gangs ran through the streets of Rome, keeping elections from being started, keeping elections from ever being called. In the end, because of that, the Roman Republic fell, and a dictator took its place, and that was the end of the Roman Republic—or any republic, for that matter—until this beautiful Constitution was written in the United States of America.

So it is my fervent hope that the way we respond to this today, my dear colleagues, is that we give the biggest bipartisan vote we can in support of our democracy and in support of our Constitution and in rejection of what we saw today and what the Roman Republic saw in its own time.

There is a tendency around this place, I think, to always believe that we are the first people to confront something when that is seldom the case and to underappreciate what the effect of our actions will be. We need to deeply appreciate, in this moment, our obligation to the Constitution, our obligation to democracy, and our obligation to the Republic.

There are people in this Chamber who have twisted the words—twisted the words—of a statute written in the 19th century that was meant to actually settle our electoral disputes, to leave them with the States, as the Senator from Utah was saying, to give us a ministerial role, except in very rare circumstances. That is what that law is about that the Senator of Texas was talking about today. And that is the law that is leading us to be asked to overturn the judgments of 60 courts in America, many of the courts in Arizona, some of whom have howled the President's lawyers out of the courtrooms because there is no evidence of fraud.

By the way, the fact that 37 percent or 39 percent of Americans think there is evidence of fraud does not mean there is fraud. If you have turned a blind eye to a conspiracy theory, you can't now come to the floor of the Senate and say you are ignoring the people who believe that the election was stolen. Go out there and tell them the truth, which is that every single Member of this Senate knows this election

wasn't stolen and that we, just as in the Roman Republic, have a responsibility to protect the independence of the judiciary from politicians who will stop at nothing to hold on to power. There is nothing new about that either. That has been true since the first republic was founded.

So now we find ourselves in the position, just days after many Senators here swore an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution—every single Member of the House of Representatives swore the same oath, as well, and I think we have a solemn obligation and responsibility here to prove, once again, that this country is a nation of laws and not of men, and the only result that we can reach together is one that rejects the claim of the Senator from Texas and the other Members of the House and Senate who seek to overturn the decisions that have been made by the States, by the voters in these States, and by the courts.

If we follow what they have proposed, we will be the ones who will have disenfranchised every single person who cast a vote in this election, whether they voted for the President or they didn't.

I urge you to reject this, and I deeply appreciate the opportunity to serve with every single one of you.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I yield up to 5 minutes to the Senator from Georgia, Senator LOEFFLER.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Georgia.

Mrs. LOEFFLER. Mr. President, when I arrived in Washington this morning, I fully intended to object to the certification of the electoral votes. However, the events that have transpired today have forced me to reconsider, and I cannot now, in good conscience, object to the certification of these electors.

The violence, the lawlessness, and siege of the Halls of Congress are abhorrent and stand as a direct attack on the very institution my objection was intended to protect: the sanctity of the American democratic process. And I thank law enforcement for keeping us safe.

I believe that there were last-minute changes to the November 2020 election process and serious irregularities that resulted in too many Americans losing confidence not only in the integrity of our elections but in the power of the ballot as a tool of democracy. Too many Americans are frustrated at what they see as an unfair system. Nevertheless, there is no excuse for the events that took place in these Chambers today, and I pray that America never suffers such a dark day again.

Though the fate of this vote is clear, the future of the American people's faith in the core institution of this democracy remains uncertain. We as a body must turn our focus to protecting the integrity of our elections and restoring every American's faith that their voice and their vote matter.

America is a divided country with serious differences, but it is still the greatest country on Earth. There can be no disagreement that upholding democracy is the only path to preserving our Republic.

I yield the floor.

(Applause.)

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield 2½ minutes to Senator BOOKER and 2½ minutes to Senator KAINE, in reverse order.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President and my colleagues, I applaud the comments of my colleague from Georgia deeply.

My first job after school was in Macon, GA, working for a Federal judge, Lanier Anderson. I learned a lot about integrity and a lot about law from him. I also learned some sad lessons, that in the history of Georgia—and, indeed, Virginia and many States—so many people, especially people of color, had been disenfranchised over the course of our history. Our late friend, John Lewis, a Congressman from Georgia, was savagely beaten on Bloody Sunday just for marching for voting rights. That act of violence inspired this body, the U.S. Senate, to come together in March of 1965 and work to pass, in a bipartisan fashion, the Voting Rights Act.

We should be coming together today—after acts of violence—as a U.S. Senate, to affirm the votes of all who cast ballots in November. Instead, we are contemplating an unprecedented objection that would be a massive disenfranchisement of American voters.

The Georgia result was very clear: a 12,000-vote margin, 2 certifications by Republican officials, 4 separate recounts and canvases, 7 lawsuits, as in the other States. If we object to results like this, the message is so clear. We are saying to States: No matter how secure and accurate your elections are, we will gladly overthrow them if we don't like who you voted for. But, more importantly, what we will be saying—really, what we will be doing—is as the body that acted together to guarantee Americans the right to vote, we will become the agent of one of the most massive disenfranchisements in the history of this country.

So I urge all of my colleagues: Please oppose these objections.

Thank you.

I yield to my colleague from New Jersey.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. Vice President, I can only think of two times in American history that individuals laid siege to our Capitol, stormed our sacred civic spaces, and tried to upend and overrun this government. One was in the War of 1812, and the other one was today.

What is interesting about the parallel between the two is they both were waving flags to a sole sovereign, to an individual, surrendering democratic principles to the cult of personality. One was a monarch in England, and the other were the flags I saw all over our Capitol, including in the hallways and in this room, to a single person named Donald Trump.

The sad difference between these two times is one was yet another nation in the history of our country that tried to challenge the United States of America, but this time, we brought this hell upon ourselves.

My colleague from Texas said that this was a moment where there were unprecedented allegations of voter fraud. Yes, that is true. They were unprecedented when the President, before the election even happened, said: If I lose this election, then the election was rigged.

That is unprecedented. It is unprecedented that, before the night of the counting of the vote was even done, that he called it rigged. It is unprecedented that he is fanning the flames of conspiracy theory to create a smokescreen in this Nation to cover what he is trying to do, which is undermine our democratic principles.

But it is not just that. The shame of this day is it is being aided and abetted by good Americans who are falling prey, who are choosing Trump over truth, who are surrendering to the passion of lies as opposed to standing up and speaking truth to power, who are trying to fundraise off of the shame of conspiracy theories as opposed to doing the incalculably valuable, patriotic thing: to speak truth to our Nation. Our democracy is wounded, and I saw it when I saw pictures of yet another insurgency, of a flag of another group of Americans who tried to challenge our Nation. I saw the flag of the Confederacy there.

What will we do? How will we confront this shame? How will we confront this dark second time in American history? I pray that we remember a Georgian and his words. All I can say is we must, in spirit, join together like those Georgians on a bridge called the Edmund Pettus, who joined hands, who were called threats to our democracy, who were called outrageous epithets when they sought to expand our democracy, to save it, to heal it—when they joined arm in arm and said what we should say now, commit ourselves to that ideal, that together, we shall overcome.

(Applause.)

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. Vice President, I yield up to 5 minutes to the Senator from Nebraska, Mr. SASSE.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. Vice President, I want to say, before we begin, thank you for the way you have fulfilled your constitutional duties and your oath of

office today. Obviously, it hasn't been easy.

Colleagues, today has been ugly. When I came to the floor this morning, I planned to talk about the lesson of 1801 because I am kind of a history nerd, and I wanted to celebrate the glories of the peaceful transition of power across our Nation's history. It feels a little naive now to talk about ways that American civics might be something that could unite us and bring us back together.

Now, 1801 blew everybody's mind all over the world, by the way. John Adams loses to Thomas Jefferson, and Adams willingly leaves the Executive mansion and moves back to Massachusetts, and Jefferson peacefully assumes power. People all over Europe said: That must be fake news. Those must be bad reports. There is no way any Executive would ever willingly lay down power. Yet Adams, in defeat, did something glorious to give all of us a gift.

I wanted to celebrate that, and it feels a little bit harder now. This building has been desecrated. Blood has been spilled in the hallways. I was with octogenarian Members of this Chamber who needed to have troops and police stabilize them to get down the stairs at a time when a lot of our staffs were panicked and under their desks and not knowing what was going to happen to them.

It was ugly today. But you know what? It turns out that when something is ugly, talking about beauty isn't just permissible; talking about beauty is obligatory in a time like that. Why? Why would we talk about beauty after the ugliness of today? Because our kids need to know that this isn't what America is. What happened today isn't what America is.

They have been given a glorious inheritance for the 59th Presidential election. If the Vice President wasn't in the Chair and if the President pro tempore was, I would have made some joke that CHUCK GRASSLEY has voted in two-thirds of those 59 Presidential elections. He is laughing. It is not as good as ''hit deer, deer dead,'' but it still got a Grassley laugh.

I don't think we want to tell the Americans that come after us that this republic is broken, that this is just a banana republic, that our institutions can't be trusted. I don't think we want that. We don't want that in this body, and we don't want that in our hometowns. I don't think we want to tell our kids that America's best days are behind us—because it is not true. That is not who we are. America isn't Hatfields' and McCoys' blood feud forever. America is a union.

There is a lot that is broken in this country but not anything that is so big that the American people can't rebuild it, that freedom and community and entrepreneurial effort and that neighborhoods can't rebuild. Nothing that is broken is so big that we can't fix it.

Generations of our forefathers and our foremothers—probably not a word—and our ancestors have spilled blood to defend the glories of this republic. Why would they do that? Because America is the most exceptional nation in the history of the world and because the Constitution is the greatest political document that has ever been written. Most governments in the past have said might makes right, and we saw some of that hooligan nuttery today. Might makes right. No, it doesn't.

God gives us rights by nature, and government is just our shared project to secure those rights. America has always been about what we choose to do together, the way we reaffirm our constitutional system. We have some governmental tasks, and we all in this body could do better at those governmental tasks, but the heart of America is not government. The center of America is not Washington, DC.

The center of America is the neighborhoods where 330 million Americans are raising their kids and trying to put food on the table and trying to love their neighbor. That is the center of America.

We are not supposed to be the most important people in America. We are supposed to be servant leaders who try to maintain a framework for ordered liberty so that there is a structure that, back home where they live, they can get from the silver-framed structure and order to the golden apple at the center, as Washington would have said, which is the things that they build together, the places where they coach little league, the places where they invite people to synagogue or church.

Sometimes, the biggest things we do together are governmental, like kicking Hitler's ass or like going to the moon. Sometimes, there is governmental stuff. But the heart of America is about places where moms and dads are raising kids, and we are supposed to serve them by maintaining order and by rejecting violence. You can't do big things like that if you hate your neighbors. You can't do big things together as Americans if you think other Americans are the enemy.

Look, there is a lot of uncertainty about the future. I get it. There is a lot that does need to be rebuilt. But if you are angry—I want to beg you—don't let the screamers who monetize hate have the final word. Don't let needlists become your drug dealers. There are some who want to burn it all down. We met some of them today.

But they aren't going to win. Don't let them be your prophets—instead, organize, persuade, but most importantly, love your neighbor. Visit the widower down the street who is lonely and doesn't want to tell anybody that his wife died and he doesn't have a lot of friends. Shovel somebody's driveway. You can't hate somebody who just shoveled your driveway.

The heart of life is about community and neighborhood, and we are supposed to be servant leaders. The constitutional system is still the greatest order for any government ever, and it is our job to steward it and protect it.

Let's remember that today when we vote.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. The Senator from Illinois, Mr. DURBIN.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. Vice President, in March of 1861, a Springfield lawyer caught a train to Washington. His name was Abraham Lincoln. It wasn't his first trip there. He served as Congressman 15 years before and returned in the beginning of the Civil War to serve as President.

It was a different place than he knew as a Congressman. In 15 years, it had changed a lot. The Sprigg's boarding house across the street, which is now the Library of Congress, was gone. And this building was changing—big changes. They were building a dome on the Capitol. But they were also in the earliest days of war, and President Lincoln was counseled: Stop building the dome. It costs too much money. We can't spend any more time on it.

And he said: No. We are going to build that dome, and we are going to finish it. That dome and this building will be a symbol of this country that will survive this Civil War and come back strong.

So they built the dome. They won the war. And since those days, that dome and this building have been a symbol to this country, a symbol of unity and of hope.

Tours come through here—before COVID–19—by the tens of thousands. If you have ever noticed their tours, they are often shushed. People are saying: Show some respect for this building.

We know this building and the Rotunda as a place where some of the greatest American heroes of both political parties lie in state, and we go there to honor them. We know this building because we work here. We enact laws here that change America. We gather for State of the Union messages from Presidents and honor the people in the gallery.

This is a special place. This is a sacred place. But this sacred place was desecrated by a mob today, on our watch. This temple to democracy was defiled by thugs who roamed the halls and sat in that chair, Mr. Vice President, the one that you vacated at 2:15 this afternoon—sat and posed for pictures, those who were roaming around in this Chamber.

What brought this on? Did this mob spring spontaneously from America? No. This mob was invited to come to Washington on this day, by this President, for one reason: because he knew the electoral college vote was going to be counted this day. He wanted this mob to disrupt the constitutional process which we are part of. This mob was inspired by a President who cannot accept defeat.

If you wonder whether I am going too far in what I say, just read the transcript with the secretary of state from Georgia and listen to this President's wild conspiracy theories, one after the other, swatted down by that Republican-elected official and his attorney as having no basis in fact. This President begs, he coaxes, he even threatens that secretary of state to find the votes he needs. In any other venue, that would be a simple, obvious crime.

The lengths he will go to are obvious. The Texas Senator says to us: Well, many people still agree with him, you know, when it gets down to the bottom line. Many people have fallen for this Presidential position that it must have been a rigged election if I lost.

Well, I would say that after—we have lost count—57 lawsuits, 62 lawsuits—I have heard so many different numbers—after 90 different judges; after this President took his case, the best he could put together, to the highest Court in the land across the street, where he had personally chosen three Justices on the Supreme Court—and I say to the Senator from Texas that he knows much more about that Court than I do—I don't believe they let that paper that he sent up there even hit the desk before they laughed it out of the Court. And that is the best he had to offer—no evidence whatsoever of this rigged election and this fraudulence.

The Senator from Texas says: We just want to create a little commission, 10 days; we are going to audit all of the States—particularly the ones in contention here—and find out what actually occurred.

And it really draws its parallel to 1876, to Hayes and Tilden. Don't forget what that commission—that so-called political compromise—achieved. It was not just some ordinary governmental commission. It was a commission that killed reconstruction, that established Jim Crow, that—even after a civil war, which tore this Nation apart, it reenslaved African-Americans, and it was a commission that invited voter suppression we are still fighting today in America.

Let me close by saying this. The vote we are going to have here is a clear choice of whether we are going to feed the beast of ignorance or we are going to tell the truth to the American people. We saw that beast today roaming the halls. Let's not invite it back.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I yield up to 5 minutes to the Senator from Kansas, Senator MARSHALL.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Thank you, Mr. President.

Freedom of speech and the freedom to protest are provided in our Constitution. While I share the same frustration many Americans have over the Presidential election, the violence and mob rule that occurred at the U.S. Capitol today and across the country over the past year are unacceptable, and I condemn them at the highest level. Like all of us in the Chamber, I am thankful for the heroic law enforcement officers who worked feverishly to restore order so that we get back to the electoral certification process.

During my 29-year career as an obstetrician and gynecologist, too often I had to sit down with patients and give them a very bad diagnosis. It might have been a young mother of three whose three babies I delivered, now with metastatic breast cancer, or perhaps another woman with advanced cervical or ovarian cancer, all of which have very challenging prognoses. But before I sat down with each one of those patients, I carefully reviewed all the labs, their x rays, and the pathology to make sure I had the facts straight, but at the end of the day, my final recommendation was always going to be a recommendation from my heart.

I want my fellow Kansans and all Americans to know that I have given as much consideration and thought surrounding the issue of objecting to a State's electoral college votes as I did considering the treatment plan for a serious health concern, and today's decision once again is from my heart.

Mr. President, I rise today to restore integrity to our Republic, and I rise to do it knowing that many of our colleagues are all concerned for current and future generations. We must restore faith and confidence in one of our Republic's most hallowed and patriotic duties: voting.

There is no question our U.S. Constitution empowers State legislatures to execute free, legal, and fair elections. Unfortunately, in several States, the clear authority of those State legislatures to determine the rules for voting was usurped by Governors, secretaries of state, and activist courts. Our laws and Constitution should always be followed, especially in a time of crisis.

I don't rise to undo a State's legally obtained electoral college votes; rather, I rise in hopes of improving the integrity of the ballot to hold States accountable to the time-proven constitutional system of the electoral college.

This is why I urge the formation of an electoral commission to give constructive suggestions and recommendations that States can take to make our elections once again safe, free, and fair after a year of jarring irregularities.

We must and will have a peaceful transition of power.

To all my fellow Americans, I have no doubt that our Republic can grow stronger through this difficult day.

May God bless this great Republic.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The minority leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. The Senator from Illinois, Senator DUCKWORTH.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. In 2004, I packed up my rucksack, laced up my boots, and deployed to Iraq, ready to sacrifice whatever was asked of me, all because I love this Nation—willing to sacrifice my life, if needed, because I believe in the sanctity of our electoral system, which had declared George W. Bush my Commander in Chief.

I earned my wounds proudly fighting in a war I did not support on the orders of a President I did not vote for because I believed in and I still do believe in the values of our Nation; because I believe in a government of, by, and for the people, where voters—voters—choose who leads them, not the other way around.

I have spent my entire adult life defending our democracy, but I never—never—thought it would be necessary to defend it from an attempted violent overthrow in our Nation's own Capitol Building. Well, I refuse to let anyone intent on instigating chaos or inciting violence deter me from carrying out my constitutional duties.

You know, when my Army buddies and I raised our right hands, when 45,000 troops in Arizona raised their right hands and swore to protect and defend the Constitution, we did not qualify our oaths by saying that we would follow orders only when the Commander in Chief was someone whose election we were happy with.

Just like when every Senator in this Chamber was sworn into office, we didn't mutter under our breath that we discharge our duties only when it served our political interests or helped us to avoid the wrath of a petty, insecure, wannabe tin-pot dictator on the precipice of losing power and relevance. No, there is no ambiguity here—Joe Biden won the election with a record number of votes. Republican officials nationwide confirmed those results, including in Arizona, as has judge after Trump-appointed judge. Even Trump's Attorney General admitted that the U.S. Department of Justice had not found widespread fraud that would have affected the outcome.

Yet still many of my Republican colleagues are asking us to ignore all of that. With no evidence of their own, they are asking us to ignore court rulings, ignore Republican-elected officials, and even worse, ignore the will of the people across this vast, great Nation by trying to overturn this election. They are placing more trust in Reddit conspiracy theories than the Constitution, proving that appeasing Trump is more important to them than protecting the most basic tenet of our Republic—the adherence to free and fair elections.

If there is one thing I know, it is that my troops didn't sign up to defend our democracy in war zones thousands of mile away only to watch it crumble in these hallowed halls here at home. Yet that is what this effort amounts to—an attempt to subvert our democracy. In the process, it is threatening what makes America American, because in this country—in this country—the power of the people has always

mattered more than the people in power.

That is the ideal that this Nation was founded upon. That is why a few patriots threw some tea in Boston Harbor, why Washington crossed the Delaware, why suffragists were arrested a century ago, and why my friend John Lewis crossed that bridge in Selma in 1965. It is why millions spent a Tuesday in November standing in line, braving a pandemic to make their voices heard.

Listen, this administration has always had an adversarial relationship with the truth. Trump always cries conspiracy, always foments chaos whenever something doesn't go his way. But today, we here in this Chamber have the opportunity to prove that here in this country, truth matters, that right matters, that the will of the people matters more than the whims of any single powerful individual.

I have no tea to throw in Boston Harbor tonight, and I regret that I have no rucksack to pack for my country, no Black Hawk to pilot, nor am I asking for any grand gesture from my Republican colleagues. All I am asking of you is to reflect on the oaths that you have sworn, on the damage done to our Union today, and on the sacrifices made by those who have given so much to this Nation, from the servicemembers at Arizona's Fort Huachuca and Marine Corps Air Station Yuma to the marchers who bent America's moral arc a little bit more toward justice with every single step that they took, every bridge that they crossed.

Then ask yourself whether the democracy they were willing to bleed for, the country that each of us in this Chamber has sworn to defend, is worth damaging in order to protect the porcelain ego of a man who treats the Constitution as if it were little more than a yellowing piece of paper.

I think we all know the right answer.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I yield up to 5 minutes to the Senator from Kentucky, Senator PAUL.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. I wrote a speech for today. I was planning to say that I fear the chaos of establishing a precedent that Congress can overturn elections. Boy, was I right. Chaos, anarchy—the violence today was wrong and un-American.

The vote we are about to cast is incredibly important. Now more than ever, the question is, Should Congress override the certified results from the States and nullify the States' rights to conduct elections?

The vote today is not a protest; the vote today is literally to overturn elections. We have been told that this is a protest, that this is about an electoral commission. No, it is not. It is about whether to seat the electors certified by a State. It is not about an electoral commission. It is not about a protest. You can go outside if you want to protest. This is about overturning a State-certified election.

If you vote to overturn these elections, wouldn't it be the opposite of States' rights Republicans have always advocated for?

This would doom the electoral college forever. It was never intended by our Founders that Congress have the power to overturn State-certified elections. My oath to the Constitution doesn't allow me to disobey the law. I can't vote to overturn the verdict of States. Such a vote would be to overturn everything held dear by those of us who support the rights of States in this great system of federalism that was bequeathed to us by our Founders.

The electoral college was created to devolve the power of selecting Presidential electors to the States. The electoral college is, without question, an inseparable friend to those who believe that every American across our vast country deserves to be heard.

If Congress were given the power to overturn the States' elections, what terrible chaos would ensue every 4 years. Imagine the furor against the electoral college if Congress becomes a forum to overturn States' electoral college slates.

It is one thing to be angry. It is another to focus one's anger in constructive ways. That hasn't happened today, to say the least.

We simply cannot destroy the Constitution, our laws, and the electoral college in the process.

I hope, as the Nation's anger cools, we can channel that energy into essential electoral reforms at the State level. America is admired around the world for our free elections. We must—we absolutely must fix this mess and restore confidence and integrity to our elections. We must.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. The Senator from Virginia, Senator WARNER.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I think like most of us, I am still pretty reeling from what happened today. What I was going to talk about was the work I am most proud of since I have been here, with my good friend RICHARD BURR and all the members of the Intelligence Committee, about a multiyear report we did into foreign interference in our elections. Probably our top recommendation of that five-volume, bipartisan report was that any official or candidate should use restraint and caution when questioning results of our elections because when you do so, you often carry out the goals of our foreign adversaries. Use caution because, whether knowingly or unknowingly and whether that adversary is in Russia or China or Iran, their goals are pretty simple: They want to make it appear to Americans, to folks around the world, and to their own people that there is nothing special about American democracy.

I was going to try in a feeble way, maybe, to reach some of the rhetorical heights of BEN SASSE. I knew I couldn't do that, so instead—I know I am violating rules. Today is the day for violating rules. This is a photo that appears today in one of the most prominent German newspapers. You don't need to draw it up. You can draw up photos from any newspaper or any television feed anywhere across the world.

And what is this photo of? It is of thugs—thugs—in the Halls of this Capitol, diminishing everything we say we believe in, in this democracy.

When you look at those images, realize that those images are priceless for our adversaries. I am willing, tonight, in an overwhelming way, to take a small step, in a bipartisan way, to start restoring that trust of our people and, hopefully, the billions of people around the world who believe in that notion of American democracy. Remember, these images are still there.

I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Missouri, Mr. HAWLEY.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, I want to begin this evening by saying thank you to the men and women of the Capitol Police, the National Guardsmen, the Metropolitan Police, and others who came to this Capitol and put their lives on the line to protect everybody here who was working inside. I want to thank law enforcement all across this country—in my home State of Missouri and everywhere else—who do that day in and day out.

I just want to acknowledge that, when it comes to violence, it was a terrible year in America this last year. We have seen a lot of violence against law enforcement, and today, we saw it here in the Capitol of the United States. In this country, in the United States of America, we cannot say emphatically enough: Violence is not how you achieve change. Violence is not how you achieve something better.

Our Constitution was built and put into place so that there would be, in the words of Abraham Lincoln, no appeal from ballots to bullets, which is what we saw, unfortunately, attempted tonight. There is no place for that in the United States of America, and that is why I submit to my colleagues that what we are doing here tonight is, actually, very important because, for those who have concerns about the integrity of our elections and for those who have concerns about what happened in November, this is the appropriate means. This is the lawful place where those objections and concerns should be heard. This is the forum that the law provides for—that our laws provide for—for those concerns to be registered, not through violence—not by appealing from ballots to bullets—but here, in this lawful process.

So to those who say that this is just a formality today—an antique ceremony that we have engaged in for a couple of hundred years—I can't say that I agree. I can't say that our precedent suggests that. I actually think it is very vital, what we do. The opportunity to be heard and to register objections is very vital because this is the place where those objections are to be heard and dealt with, debated, and finally resolved—in this lawful means, peacefully, without violence, without attacks, without bullets.

Let me just say now, briefly—in lieu of speaking about it later—a word about Pennsylvania, which is a State that I have been focused on and have objected to, as an example of why people are concerned—why millions of Americans are concerned—about our election integrity.

I say to Pennsylvania, quite apart from allegations of any fraud, you have a State constitution that has been interpreted for over a century to say that there is no mail-in balloting permitted except for in very narrow circumstances, which is also provided for in the law. Yet, last year, Pennsylvania's elected officials passed a whole new law that allowed for universal mail-in balloting, and they did it, irregardless of what the Pennsylvania Constitution said.

Then, when Pennsylvania's citizens tried to be heard on this subject before the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, they were dismissed on grounds of procedure and timeliness, in violation of that supreme court's own precedent.

So the merits of the case have never been heard. The constitutionality of the statute, actually, has never been defended. I am not aware of any court that has passed on its constitutionality. I actually am not aware of anybody who has defended the constitutionality, and this was the statute that governed this last election in which there were over 2.5 million mail-in ballots in Pennsylvania.

This is my point, that this is the forum. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court hasn't heard the case, and there is no other court to go to, to hear the case in the State, so this is the appropriate place for these concerns to be raised, which is why I have raised them here today.

I hope that this body will not miss the opportunity to take affirmative action to address the concerns of so many millions of Americans—to say to millions of Americans tonight that violence is never warranted, that violence will not be tolerated, that those who engage in it will be prosecuted, but that this body will act to address the concerns of all Americans across the country.

We do need an investigation into irregularities, fraud. We do need a way forward together. We need election security reforms. I bet my friends on the other side of the aisle don't disagree with that. We need to find a way to move forward on that together so that the American people from both parties and all walks of life can have confidence in their elections and so that we can arrange ourselves under the rule of law that we share together.

I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. The Senator from Pennsylvania, Mr. CASEY.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise tonight to defend the people of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania—to defend the more than 6.9 million voters who voted in this election—and to condemn, in the strongest possible terms, this attempt to disenfranchise the voters of Pennsylvania based upon a lie, a falsehood. That same lie sowed the seeds of today's violence and today's lawlessness here in the Capitol.

One of my constituents, Susan, from Lehigh Valley—the community of our State where Senator TOOMEY lives—recently wrote to my office and, perhaps, said it best:

> We cannot allow ANYBODY to overturn the legal votes of the citizens of Pennsylvania. This would be the ultimate destruction of our democracy.

Susan had it right. We cannot allow ''ANYBODY''—and she put that word in all caps—to overturn the legal votes of the people of our State.

Let me address the allegation regarding the Pennsylvania Constitution and the general assembly and somehow that the general assembly didn't have the authority to enact ''no excuse mail-in voting''—that process—for the people of our State.

First, the law in question, Act 77, was passed in 2019 and was implemented without any serious question as to its constitutionality. The law was passed by a Republican-controlled general assembly, house and senate. It was only after the 2020 election, when it became clear that President-Elect Joe Biden won Pennsylvania by a little more than 80,000 votes, that some Republican politicians in our State decided to challenge the constitutionality of the law.

Second, Act 77 is plainly constitutional. My colleagues allege that the State constitution requires in-person voting except under limited circumstances. This is not true. While Pennsylvania lays out specific situations in which absentee voting is required, there is no in-person requirement in our State constitution. The constitution sets a floor, not a ceiling, for this type of voting.

Third, apart from the argument made by my colleague, there is bipartisan agreement across our State—at the local, State, and Federal levels—that our election was fair, secure, and lawful. On Monday, my colleague from Pennsylvania, Senator TOOMEY, wrote in an op-ed: ''The evidence is overwhelming that Joe Biden won this election.''

There is simply no evidence to justify the outrageous claims of widespread voter fraud or election irregularities that have been suggested by those seeking to overturn the election. There have been 60 cases in court after court, all throughout our State and throughout the country, including in the Supreme Court, that have dealt with this bizarre argument that we know is based upon that lie.

In one court, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, Judge Bibas, appointed by President Trump, wrote:

> The campaign's claims have no merit. The United States has free and fair elections, which are the lifeblood of our democracy. Charges require specific allegations and then proof. We have neither here.

So said Judge Bibas.

Finally, a word about those election officials who did such work. These election officials all across our State—Republicans and Democrats from red counties and blue counties—did their jobs. They are patriots, and these objections are an attack on these Pennsylvania public servants. I will give you one example from Republican Commissioner Al Schmidt, of Philadelphia.

He wrote:

> There really should not be a disagreement, regardless of party affiliation, when we're talking about counting votes . . . by eligible voters. It is not a very controversial thing or, at least, it shouldn't be.

After election day, Commissioner Al Schmidt, his family, and his colleagues were subjected to death threats simply because he was trying to do his job with integrity. It calls to mind that great line from ''America the Beautiful'': ''O beautiful for patriot dream, That sees beyond the years.''

These election officials, like so many of our patriots—and we heard from Senator DUCKWORTH tonight, a real patriot—did their jobs. Let's support these patriots. Vote against this objection.

I yield the floor.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Utah, Mr. ROMNEY.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. ROMNEY. Today was heartbreaking, and I was shaken to the core as I thought about the people I have met in China and Russia and Afghanistan and Iraq and other places who yearn for freedom and who look to this building and these shores as a place of hope. I saw the images being broadcasted around the world, and it breaks my heart.

I have 25 grandchildren. Many of them were watching TV, thinking about this building, and whether their grandpa was OK. I knew I was OK. I must tell you, as well, that I am proud to serve with these men and women. This is an extraordinary group of people. I am proud to be a Member of the U.S. Senate and meet with people of integrity as we do here today.

Now, we gather due to a selfish man's injured pride and the outrage of his

supporters, whom he has deliberately misinformed for the past 2 months and stirred to action this very morning. What happened here today was an insurrection that was incited by the President of the United States. Those who choose to continue to support his dangerous gambit by objecting to the results of a legitimate and democratic election will forever be seen as being complicit in an unprecedented attack against our democracy. Fairly or not, they will be remembered for their role in this shameful episode of American history. That will be their legacy.

I salute Senators LANKFORD and LOEFFLER and BRAUN and DAINES and, I am sure, others who, in light of today's outrage, have withdrawn their objections. For any who remain insistent on an audit in order to satisfy the many people who believe the election was stolen, I would offer this perspective: No congressional audit is ever going to convince these voters, particularly when the President will continue to say that the election was stolen. The best way we can show respect for the voters who are upset is by telling them the truth.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

That is the burden. That is the duty of leadership. The truth is that President-Elect Biden won the election, and President Trump lost. I had that experience myself. It is no fun.

(Laughter.)

Scores of courts, the President's own Attorney General, and State elections officials, both Republican and Democrat, have reached that unequivocal decision.

In light of today's sad circumstances, I ask my colleague: Do we weigh our own political fortunes more heavily than we weigh the strength of our Republic, the strength of our democracy, and the cause of freedom? What is the weight of personal acclaim compared to the weight of conscience?

Leader MCCONNELL said that the vote today is the most important in his 36 years of public service. Think of that after his authorizing two wars and voting against two impeachments. He said that not because the vote reveals something about the election but because this vote reveals something about us.

I urge my colleagues to move forward with completing the electoral count, to refrain from further objections, and to unanimously affirm the legitimacy of the Presidential election.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. The Senator from New Hampshire, Senator SHAHEEN.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, on January 3, I, along with 31 of my colleagues, stood in this Chamber and swore an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. It is both ironic and deeply disappointing that only 3 days after swearing these oaths, some of my colleagues are coming close to breaking this promise.

Since 1797, each U.S. President has peacefully handed over power to the next, and that will happen again on January 20, when Donald Trump, despite the protesters today, the violence today—when Donald Trump leaves the White House at noon and Joe Biden becomes President.

We have heard tonight from both Democrats and Republicans about the importance of the voters speaking in the election and about the fact that there is no evidence of widespread voter fraud. But this is not just an issue for us here in the United States; this is an issue for nascent democracies around the world, which, as Senator ROMNEY said, look to the United States as an example. We are the shining city on the hill. We give those struggling under oppression hope for a better future.

Now, like so many of us in this Chamber, I have traveled to developing democracies around the world—to Afghanistan and Iraq, to the Western Balkans, to Africa, to the country of Georgia. I went there with my colleague Senator RISCH.

In 2012, we went to Georgia to observe officially, on behalf of the Senate, the election between outgoing President Mikheil Saakashvili and his United National Movement Party and the challenge by Georgian Dream, which was a newly formed party supported and funded by billionaire oligarch Bidzina Ivanishvili. It was a battle for Parliament, but also for control of the government.

Senator RISCH and I visited multiple polling places on election day, and we agreed with the international assessment that that election was free and fair and that Georgian Dream were the winners.

But there was real concern in the country that Saakashvili was going to refuse to give up power—that that would lead to violence, and it would end the nascent democratic reforms that were happening in that former Soviet Republic.

So Senator RISCH and I, the day after the election, went to visit President Saakashvili to try and talk him out of staying in power. I remember very clearly going to his home, and we sat down with him, and we pointed out that the hallmark of a democracy—what he had worked so hard for in his 8 years as President of Georgia—the hallmark of that was to turn over power in a peaceful election to the person the voters chose. Well, President Saakashvili listened to us, and he did leave office peacefully.

But it is important that future generations recognize that America—like democracies everywhere—depends on a peaceful transition of power, on believing in what the voters say, and ensuring that happens.

Unfortunately, we have heard from some Senators today who have been enabling President Trump's willful disregard of the votes of our citizenry, even as they speak out against foreign leaders who ignore their own people.

They will fail, and history will remember them.

I hope that future generations will view the actions of some of those folks today as little more than an unfortunate anomaly.

Future opportunists may use this ill-fated effort to seek short-term political gain over the long-term stability of our Republic. But for the sake of our great country and America's standing in the world, I ask my colleagues today to fully endorse the results of the free and fair election and set aside this partisan attempt to subvert the will of the people. We should be venerating the peaceful transition of power, even if our own preferred candidate didn't win. That is, after all, who we are in the United States of America.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I yield up to 5 minutes to the Senator from Ohio, Senator PORTMAN.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Vice President, you have fulfilled your duties as President of the Senate tonight with distinction, and we all appreciate it.

I thought about changing my mind and not speaking tonight, given the lateness of the hour, and I know all of my colleagues would have appreciated that greatly. But I thought it was necessary to speak because I want the American people, particularly my constituents in Ohio, to see that we will not be intimidated, that we will not disrupted from our work, that here in the citadel of democracy, we will continue to do the work of the people. Mob rule is not going to prevail here.

Now, let's face it. We did not reclaim this Chamber tonight. Brave and selfless law enforcement officers stood in the breach and ensured that the citadel of democracy would be protected and that we would be defended, and we are deeply grateful for that—as is the Nation.

I have listened carefully to comments of my colleagues, and I have listened over the past couple of weeks as this issue has been discussed, and I tell you, for me, it is not a hard decision. I stand with the Constitution. I stand with what the Constitution makes clear: The people and the States hold the power here, not us.

My oath to the Constitution and my reverence for our democratic principles make it easy for me to confirm these State certifications.

By the way, I opposed this process some 15 years ago, when some Democrats chose to object to the electors from my home State of Ohio after the 2004 elections. I opposed it then, and I oppose it now. I said at the time that Congress must not thwart the will of the people. That is what we would be doing.

Let's assume for a moment that those who object to the certifications are right, that the Constitution intended that a bare majority of Members of Congress could circumvent the States that have chosen to certify the popular votes of their own State citizens. I ask the objectors to think about the precedent that would be set if we were to do that.

What if the majority in the House and the Senate were of the other party when a Presidential candidate of our party came through a close Presidential election? Would you want a Congress controlled by the Democrats to play the role you now intend for us?

It is asking Congress to substitute its judgment for the judgment of the voters and its judgment for the judgment of the States that certified the results. And even forgetting the dangerous precedent that would be set, what would be the basis for objecting in this election?

Look, I voted for President Trump. I supported him because I believe the Trump administration's policies are better for Ohio and for the country. And I supported the Trump campaign's right to pursue recounts—they had every right to do it—and legal challenges.

I agree that there were instances of fraud and irregularities in the 2020 elections. I think we all do. And by the way, there are fraud and irregularities in every Presidential election.

But it is also true that after 2 months of recounts and legal challenges, not a single State recount changed the result. And of the dozens of lawsuits filed, not one found evidence of fraud or irregularities widespread enough to change the result of the election. This was the finding of numerous Republican-appointed judges and the Trump administration's own Department of Justice.

Every State has now weighed in and chosen to certify its electoral slate based on the popular vote, as set out in the Constitution.

I understand that many Americans who would never storm this Capitol don't trust the integrity of the 2020 election, don't think the States should have certified, don't think we should have accepted the results from the States, and are insisting on more transparency and accountability.

In the 2016 elections, lest we forget, many Democrats objected to the results and distrusted the election.

I challenge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to listen but also to do our part to try to restore faith in our elections. We should all work to improve the integrity of the electoral system and the confidence of the American people in this bedrock of our great democratic Republic.

Today, I will do my constitutional duty and oppose these efforts to reject the State-certified results.

And tomorrow, in the wake of this attack on the Capitol, the pandemic that engulfs us, and other national challenges, let's work together for the people.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I believe we have 8 minutes left, so I would like to divide 4 to Senator KING and 4 to Senator VAN HOLLEN.

The VICE PRESIDENT. That is correct.

The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, Winston Churchill once said that he could do a 2-hour speech extemporaneously, but a 10-minute speech took immense preparation. I don't know what he would have said about a 4-minute speech.

We are a 240-year anomaly in world history. We think that what we have here in this country is the way it has always been.

It is a very unusual form of government. The normal form of government throughout world history is dictators, kings, czars, pharaohs, warlords, tyrants. And we thought 20 years ago the march of history was toward democracy, but it is in retreat in Hungary and Turkey—goodness knows, in Russia.

Democracy as we have practiced it is fragile. It is fragile, and it rests upon trust. It rests upon trust in facts. It rests upon trust in courts, in public officials, and, yes, in elections.

I don't sympathize or justify or in any way—in any way—support—that is putting it mildly—what happened here today, but I understand it. I understand it because I saw those people interviewed today, and they said: We are here because this election has been stolen.

And the reason they said that is that their leader has been telling them that every day for 2 months.

We cannot afford to pull bricks out from the foundation of trust that underlies our entire system. And I agree with Governor ROMNEY that the answer to this problem is to tell people the truth—is to tell them what happened.

It is easy to confront your opponents. It is hard to confront your friends.

It is hard to tell your supporters something they don't want to hear, but that is our obligation. That is why the word ''leader'' is applied to people in jobs like ours. It is not supposed to be easy. It is supposed to be something that we take on as a sacred obligation, and if people believe something that isn't true, it is our obligation to tell them: No, I am sorry, it isn't, just as Senator PORTMAN just said, as MIKE LEE just said: I am sorry we can't do this here. We don't want to do this here. This is a power reserved to the States, not to the Congress.

And I agree with the majority leader. I think this is one of the most important votes any of us will ever take.

On December 1, 1862, Abraham Lincoln came to this building. He came to this building in the darkest days of the Civil War. He was trying to awaken the Congress to the crisis that we were facing, and he didn't feel that they were fully and effectively engaged. He ended his speech that day with words that I think have an eerie relevance tonight. Here is what Abraham Lincoln said:

> Fellow-[Americans], we cannot escape history. We of this Congress and this administration, will be remembered in spite of ourselves. No personal significance, or insignificance, can spare one or another of us.

And here are his final words:

> The fiery trial through which we pass will light us down in honor or dishonor to the latest generation.

The fiery trial through which we pass, will light us down in honor or dishonor to the latest generation.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you, Mr. President. The mob violence and attack we saw on our Capitol today should be a wake-up call to each and every one of us of what happens when we fail to come together, not as Democrats and Republicans but each of us as Americans, to stand up to a President who time and again has shown contempt for our democracy, contempt for our Constitution.

Today, here on the Capitol, we witnessed people taking down an American flag and putting up a Trump flag. That is not democracy in the United States of America.

As every Senator who has spoken has mentioned, we have for hundreds of years had a peaceful transfer of power. Nobody likes to lose, and supporters of the losing candidate are always disappointed. What is different this time?

We all know what is different this time. We have a President who, as the Senator from New Jersey said, even before a vote was cast, that if he didn't win the election, it was going to be a fraud and every day since then has perpetrated that lie.

We have a President who just today criticized the very loyal Vice President, who is presiding right now, urging him to disregard his responsibilities under the Constitution of the United States in order to reinstall Donald Trump as President; the same person who got on the phone to the secretary of state in Georgia and threatened him to change the results of the election.

Mr. President, I read something this week I never thought I would read in a newspaper in the United States of America. It was an op-ed by all the living former Secretaries of Defense, including Secretaries Rumsfeld, Cheney, and Mattis, warning—warning—the country about our tradition of peaceful transfer of power and that it would be inappropriate for the military to take sides in the United States of America. We talk to the world about how we want to promote democracy and our values, and right here at home too many are undermining those values.

Mr. President, Donald Trump could not do this alone. He could only do it if he is aided and abetted by individuals

who are willing to perpetrate those lies and those conspiracies, and that is why it is so important that we as Democrats and Republicans and Senators stand up together—stand up together and tell the truth. You know when you go into a court of law, like those 60 cases, you are testifying under penalty of perjury. That is very different than here in the House and the Senate, and in all those 60 cases, under penalty of perjury, there was no evidence of widespread fraud. So it should be easy for us all together to tell the truth.

On January 20, Joe Biden will be sworn in as the next President of the United States. He has said he wants to bring the country together. He has said he wants to bring Democrats and Republicans together to do some of the pressing business of this country, to defeat this pandemic, to get the economy going again, to face challenging issues of racial and social justice. I hope we will learn from what happened today—the mob attack on this Capitol—the price we pay when we don't stand up for the truth and for democracy.

James McHenry, Maryland's delegate to the Constitutional Convention, wrote about a famous exchange in his diaries between Elizabeth Willing Powel and Benjamin Franklin. A lady asked Dr. Franklin, ''Well, Doctor, what have we got, a Republic or a monarchy?'' ''A republic,'' replied Dr. Franklin, ''if you can keep it.''

My colleagues, this is a test of whether we unite to keep our Republic. I hope we will pass the test together. Thank you.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President. January 6, 2021, will forever mark a historic day for our Nation. Not simply because our beloved Capitol building—the very heart of our democracy—laid under siege. Not simply because rioters stormed the Senate and House floors, assaulting Capitol Police officers and leaving a wake of destruction along the way. Not simply because the President of the United States encouraged his supporters to commit these felonies—to march to the Capitol and ''to fight,'' in his words. No, today will also be remembered because of what happened before all of that. Today, over 100 Members of the House and a dozen Senators supported a ploy to deprive the States and the American people of their constitutional role to choose our next President—a ploy that amounts to nothing less than an assault on our Constitutional republic.

The President's obscene claim that the election was stolen from him, which he continued to spout even while his rioting supporters roamed the Halls of the Capitol today, has been disproven time and again. Every single Senator knows that Vice President Biden won the election and did so decisively. Claims that President Trump won reelection are not just fantasy; they are delusional. And citing voters' mistrust in the election results as grounds for this stunt is particularly disingenuous given that those concerns have been fueled by the President's own baseless conspiracy theories—not by the evidence, not by the facts, and not by State election administrators, both Republicans and Democrats, who actually oversaw these elections and know what they are talking about.

President Trump and his allies have now lost more than 60 cases in courts across the country, by judges of every political stripe, including those appointed by the President. The lopsidedness of these decisions has been extraordinary. It has been nothing less than a wholesale rejection of the President's claims. But this is not surprising. The President's own Attorney General said there is no evidence of widespread fraud. His own Department of Homeland Security described it as the ''most secure election in American history.''

President Trump serves no one but himself. He is not a custodian or guardian of our democracy. He is a man whose every decision is driven by his shallow self-interest. I did not expect him to be gracious in defeat. I expected him to throw tantrums. I am not even surprised that his rhetoric has incited violence, as it has today. That is who President Trump is; we have all known that for some time. I am surprised and disappointed that so many Members of this body have let it get this far. After he incited rioters and criminal actions by a mob attacking America's symbol of democracy, our Capitol, what more will he do? He should just leave. He has damaged the country enough.

Our job today is simply to count the votes and to certify that Joe Biden won the election. Pretending that Congress could effectively overturn the will of the American people has, predictably, poured gasoline on an already lit fire. We must now get to work to put this fire out. I am glad that Congress is taking the first step now—that is, to stop with this nonsense and certify this election. The next step will be harder. The only way we stand a chance of coming together as a country, let alone making progress for the American people, is by working together.

I am thankful to the many Senate Republicans who have forcefully rejected this dangerous political stunt, even before the violence. Your words had meaning and sent a message to the country that our democracy will endure.

I have served in the Senate for 46 years. I can tell you that history will remember this sad day. So let us ensure that it is not just remembered for the destruction, for the President's recklessness, and for those in Congress who so casually attempted to overturn the will of the American people. Let us work together now and certify this election, so this day will also be remembered for those who stood up and rejected this dangerous political stunt for the good of the Republic and for the good of the American people.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President. Today has been a dark day that will take a long time and a lot of work to overcome. It has been a day truly unworthy of our Nation.

I thank the U.S. Capitol Police, the U.S. Secret Service, the law enforcement officers from Washington, DC, Maryland, and Virginia, the National Guard, and others who have protected this institution and the U.S. Congress today.

There will be time to say more about today's events, but I rise now to speak about the unprecedented actions today to attempt to undermine a fairly and properly conducted democratic election.

Under our system of government, States bear the primary responsibility for runninq elections and certifying election results, and that is exactly what we have seen—all 50 States and the District of Columbia have certified the results of the 2020 Presidential election.

The results of the election are clear: Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS won.

Challenging these electoral votes now is the height of hypocrisy for a party that prides itself on States' rights.

Even worse, today's actions are based on the faulty premise that this election was somehow tainted by widespread fraud, which is flat out wrong.

Protesting these votes today is a disservice to our constitutional order and the more than 81 million Americans who voted for Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS.

We must also recognize that today's actions could echo far beyond this election. Our democratic Republic has survived as a result of certain bedrock principles, including the peaceful transfer of power and the right of the people to elect their leaders.

For Congress to challenge the legitimacy of electoral votes because President Trump is upset that he lost far exceeds our role as envisioned by our Founding Fathers.

These challenges threaten the very core of a functioning democracy—that voters and votes matter.

If a State's electoral votes can be set aside by Congress based on conspiracy theories dreamed up by the President and his followers, the value of free and fair elections is damaged.

Mr. President, those who feel they needed to protest today's results say they do so because of allegations of fraud. The problem is, those allegations all originate from President Trump himself.

The Justice Department found no evidence of widespread fraud. Attorney General Barr himself said there were no irregularities that could have affected the outcome of the election.

Likewise, our courts—including the Supreme Court—have tossed out lawsuit after lawsuit filed by President Trump and his allies, more than 60 in total.

I appreciate those Republicans Senators who have stood up for democracy and against these baseless objections to the election results.

Senator ROMNEY called it an ''egregious ploy.''

Senator TOOMEY said, ''Allegations of fraud by a losing campaign cannot justify overturning an election.''

Senator PORTMAN said, ''I cannot support allowing Congress to thwart the will of the voters.''

And Senator THUNE added, ''It's time for everybody to move on.''

He is right; the election is over. President-Elect Biden won.

Especially now, after all of the events of the day. It is truly time to get to work repairing our country.

Thank you, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, ''free, fair elections are the lifeblood of our democracy. Charges of unfairness are serious, but calling an election unfair does not make it so. Charges require specific allegations and then proof. We have neither here.''

Those aren't my words. Those are the words of a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, rejecting President Trump's legal challenges to the Pennsylvania election—a judge who, I might add, was a longtime member of the conservative Federalist Society and was nominated to the bench by President Trump.

Mr. President, the 2020 presidential election was hard-fought, but the American people spoke clearly and decisively: 81.2 million votes for Joe Biden, 74.2 million votes for Donald Trump, 51.3 percent of the vote for Joe Biden, 46.8 percent of the vote for Donald Trump, 306 electoral college votes for Joe Biden, 232 electoral college votes for Donald Trump.

Accepting the outcome of an election can be difficult when our political party doesn't win, but calling an election unfair does not make it so.

More than 60 Federal and State courts, involving more than 90 judges, many of whom were nominated by Republican Presidents, including President Trump, are all in agreement. No evidence of widespread fraud, wrongdoing, or other irregularities have been uncovered during the 2020 election.

Unfortunately, some of our colleagues today ask us to do the same thing Donald Trump asked of the secretary of state of Georgia: to overturn the results of the 2020 election without specific allegations and without proof. Our colleagues are asking us not to abide by the will of the people but to bend to the will of one man, Donald Trump.

In 1787, delegates from 13 States convened in Philadelphia to debate the future of our country. Our Founders disagreed on many things, but they did agree that they didn't want a King, and they set up an intricate system of checks and balances to ensure that we would never have an all-powerful King. That system of checks and balances is being pushed to a dangerous limit here today, but it will prevail.

Here are just some of the claims Donald Trump and his legal team have made and that our colleagues lend credence to today: that Venezuela, Cuba, and China rigged our country's voting machines in favor of Joe Biden; that dead people voted in this election and they only voted for Joe Biden; and that poll watchers and election observers—who risked their lives during this pandemic to uphold the integrity of our elections—stuffed ballot boxes with Biden votes and shredded Trump votes. Not one—let me repeat—not one of these things is true. There is no evidence to back up these ridiculous claims.

Many of these absurd claims from Donald Trump and his legal team are nothing more than conspiracy theories circulating online. This misinformation and dangerous rhetoric from the President and his allies, including calls for violence, have polluted our discourse and imperiled our peaceful transition of power. And when our colleagues show indifference or outright support for these unsubstantiated claims and conspiracy theories, they lead our nation and our Constitution down a dangerous path. We all swore an oath to support and defend our Constitution—not our political party, and certainly not any individual candidate.

Colleagues, for the safety of our citizens and our Republic, we must lead by example and turn the temperature down. It was a hard-fought campaign, but the campaign is over, the votes have been counted, the count has been certified in all 50 States, and in 2 weeks, on January 20th, Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS will be sworn-in as President and Vice-President of the United States.

We have serious and urgent challenges that will require working with our new President and Vice President and with one another, including making sure hundreds of millions of Americans can be vaccinated, getting our kids back to school, and getting their parents back to work, just to name a few.

It is time to stop trying to overturn the will of the people and get back to working on their behalf.

President Lincoln observed at the end of the Gettysburg Address that ours is a ''government of the people, by the people, and for the people.'' Even in the midst of a Civil War, President Lincoln put his unwavering faith in ''the people'' to chart our Nation's course. We would be wise to remember Lincoln's words in this moment. We are not a government of Trump, by Trump, and for Trump. We are a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. And the people have spoken. Our only job today is to listen to them.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, not liking whom the voters choose to vote for in an election does not mean it is a fraudulent election. Enabling such talk and actively working to disseminate false information that cripples our government is in itself a fraud committed against the American people and our Constitution.

This past November, the American people voted in the highest numbers we have seen in our Nation's history. More than 155 million Americans cast a ballot in what was a free and fair election.

A clear majority voted for former Vice President Joe Biden over President Donald Trump. This was not the closest election in our Nation's history by a long shot. President-Elect Joe Biden won by more than 7 million votes. He and Vice President-Elect KAMALA HARRIS won 306 electoral votes. Donald Trump and Mike Pence received 232 electoral votes.

Given the tremendous impact the COVID–19 pandemic has had on our country, everyone should be overwhelmed that Americans turned out in such strong numbers for this election. People should not have to choose between casting their ballot and protecting their own health and their family's health. The pandemic wreaked havoc in so many of our lives for much of last year, which is why our election officials in most States responded by taking special measures and precautions to protect the right to vote while safeguarding the health and well-being of voters and election judges alike.

Election security officials, Federal and those in all 50 States and the District of Columbia—Democrats, Republicans, and Independents—have all certified that we held a free and fair election despite these extraordinary circumstances. The Department of Homeland Security, DHS, stated that the November 3 election was ''the most secure in American history'' and that ''there is no evidence that any voting system deleted or lost votes, changed votes, or was in any way compromised.''

President Trump responded how we would expect a would-be autocrat to respond, by firing the head of the DHS agency overseeing election security, pursuing baseless and groundless lawsuits, and promoting wild conspiracy theories about a rigged election. These lawsuits repeatedly have been dismissed as frivolous by both State and Federal judges appointed by both Republican and Democratic Chief Executives.

There is simply no evidence of widespread voter fraud claims in this election that can credibly affect the outcome of the election, which even former U.S. Attorney General William Barr—speaking on behalf of the Department of Justice—acknowledged. In December, the electoral college met to certify the results, and all of the States and the District of Columbia have now regularly reported their results to Congress, pursuant to the 12th Amendment to the Constitution.

In Pennsylvania, a panel of the Third Circuit Court of Appeals unanimously rejected President Trump's lawsuit making claims that a State court had already dismissed. Stephanos Bibas—a judge whom President Trump appointed—wrote, ''Free, fair elections

are the lifeblood of our democracy. Charges of unfairness are serious. But calling an election unfair does not make it so. Charges require specific allegations and then proof. We have neither here.''

On Monday, January 4, in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, James Boasberg—whom George W. Bush originally appointed to the bench—dismissed yet another frivolous lawsuit seeking to stop Congress from certifying President President-Elect Joe Biden's victory when it meets in joint session to tally the electoral college votes on Wednesday.

In a 7-page opinion, Judge Boasberg noted that the plaintiffs had filed in the wrong court; did not have standing to sue; and had made no effort to serve defendants with the suit, a legal requirement. He indicated that he was contemplating referring the case to the Court's Committee on Grievances ''for potential discipline of Plaintiffs' counsel.'' More importantly, he wrote, ''the suit rests on a fundamental and obvious misreading of the Constitution.'' He concluded, ''It would be risible were its target not so grave: the undermining of a democratic election for President of the United States.''

After being shut down again and again by the courts and State election officials—the people who run the elections—President Trump has continued his sordid campaign to undermine the rule of law in our Nation. He continues to fan the flames of division in our Nation, including encouraging fringe elements seeking to declare martial law or have the military intervene to overturn the election results. This demagoguery led all 10 former Secretaries of Defense who are still living—Republicans and Democrats alike—to warn against any attempt to involve the military in pursuing claims of election fraud, arguing that it would take the United States into ''dangerous, unlawful and unconstitutional territory.''

President Trump and his enablers' ceaseless provocations call into question whether we can have a peaceful and orderly transition of power in the United States. This concern is not theoretical, as we saw today, as a lawless mob encouraged by the President temporarily took control of our sacred Capitol.

President Trump's recent phone call to pressure the Georgia secretary of state to ''find'' the votes he needs to win the State is his latest failure to take care that the laws be faithfully executed.

Historically, American Presidents have understood that America is a democracy and not an autocracy or a cult of personality. I find it unfathomable that we even need to say that out loud.

Elected legislators cannot, in good conscience, allow President Trump to continue to act like a dictator by trying to undermine valid election results and trash and burn our Republic on his way out of office.

If a foreign leader acted in such a blatant way to overturn legitimate election results, the full U.S. Congress would forcefully condemn such autocratic and undemocratic moves.

My congressional colleagues who are objecting to the electoral college results without any evidence or legal basis must stop coddling President Trump's insatiable ego. They must remember their oath is to the Constitution and not the President.

Sixty years ago, John F. Kennedy warned that people who foolishly seek power by riding the back of the tiger ultimately end up inside its belly. People should heed that advice. It is time to put country before personal ambition.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, the American people should have full faith in our election system, which is why I led the passage of voter ID legislation in North Carolina and why I supported President Trump's right to call for recounts and bring challenges to the courts. I share the concerns of many Americans regarding the lack of security of widespread mail-in voting and the partisan actions of activist Democratic lawyers who succeeded in making questionable changes to the voting process while Americans were already casting their ballots. Even if it wasn't enough to change the outcome of the election, irregularities and fraud are never acceptable, and they should be investigated and prosecuted when appropriate.

The Framers of our Constitution made it clear that the power to certify elections is reserved to the States, not Congress. Refusing to certify State election results has no viable path to success, and, most importantly, it lends legitimacy to the left's stated policy objective of completely federalizing elections and eliminating the electoral college. Congress should not overstep its constitutional authority by overturning the results of States and the will of American voters, especially absent legitimate requests from States for Congress to intervene.

It is a precedent we should not set, and NANCY PELOSI and CHUCK SCHUMER should not have the power to set aside electors after the 2024 election and overrule Federal courts and the Constitution as they see fit.

I was proud to support President Trump's agenda and campaign with him, and I am deeply disappointed he was not reelected despite his success in creating jobs, cutting taxes, securing a conservative judiciary, reforming the VA, and rebuilding our military. Although I certainly wish the results were different, Congress cannot change them without inflicting irreparable damage to our constitutional Republic. I will not oppose the certification of the electoral college votes, and I will not embolden politicians in the future to appoint our Presidents instead of having the American people duly elect them.

Mr. KELLY. Mr. President. In America, we have fair elections and peaceful transitions of power. In America, democracy prevails over chaos. And in America, those who commit violent acts against our government are held accountable. These are the values that I served to defend in the U.S. Navy and that I have sworn an oath to uphold in the Senate, and they have not failed us.

Our democracy was tested today—first, by a baseless objection to Arizona's electoral votes, despite the fact that Arizona's elections were fairly administered and certified by a Republican Governor, a Democratic Secretary of state, and public servants at every level of government and representing both political parties; and then again when individuals, spurred on by the President, stormed the Capitol in an unpatriotic attempt to overturn our election. They will fail. Tonight we will count Arizona's electoral votes and those of every other State.

For centuries, our democracy has thrived because after elections we have come together to find common ground and solve our challenges, and that is the work we begin tonight. My focus will continue to be on representing Arizonans by working with Republicans and Democrats and the incoming administration to beat this virus and rebuild our economy.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. President, it is the privilege of a lifetime to represent the people of Wyoming in this great deliberative body. I genuinely look forward to joining each of you to make a difference for the American people and to uphold my solemn oath to support and defend the Constitution.

Let me be clear. An attack on our Capitol is an attack on our Constitution and democracy itself. I strongly condemn the violence that occurred today, which did more to thwart the democratic process than to protect it. Today, many Members of the Senate were trying to peacefully use our democratic process to ensure each and every American's vote counts. In the best tradition of the U.S. Senate, we will fulfill our constitutional duty and complete the electoral count tonight.

In 1833, Senator Daniel Webster said that ''duty binds . . . the conscience of the individual member'' in counting the votes for President and Vice President. Each of us has a solemn duty to ensure that the slate of Presidential electors we certify is beyond reproach, respecting the people's voice and upholding the Constitution.

Congress will not overturn the people's voice. A president will be inaugurated on January 20. Congress cannot and shall not dictate the results of a Presidential election to our States. That would be the death of our Republic.

In the coming months, Congress must take a fresh look at troubling concerns from the election that simply don't add up. After the 2000 Presidential election, millions of voters in Florida felt disenfranchised, and now 74 million Americans deserve the assurance and the dignity that their votes

count the same as every other American. We owe our first duty to the American people, following procedures—like the Electoral Count Act—used for nearly 150 years.

It is my fervent hope that our State legislatures will consider meaningful election reform to ensure that our election laws are applied uniformly, to ensure the technology we use is accurate and secure, and, most importantly, to ensure that all Americans treasure our precious right to vote and feel their voices are heard. States are at the very center of elections in our country and will remain so.

Many ask why Congress should be involved in election matters that have been considered by the courts. Some argue that Congress' role in certifying our Presidential elections is merely ministerial. Under our constitutional separation of powers, it is too often forgotten that Congress has the right and duty to interpret the Constitution, especially on matters which by the Constitution have been delegated to Congress, like the electoral count. Congress interpreted the Twelfth Amendment in passing the Electoral Count Act in 1887 and continues to breathe new life into these provisions by its actions today. Our Founders understood Congress would play a key role in debating constitutional issues as a coequal branch of government. Thomas Jefferson commented in an 1819 letter that ''each of the three departments [of government] has equally the right to decide for itself what is its duty under the Constitution.''

I remain deeply concerned that the electoral votes of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania were not ''regularly given'' under Pennsylvania law, as required by the Electoral Count Act. Serious concerns have been raised about the constitutionality of Pennsylvania's vote-by-mail statute. Also, Pennsylvania election law may have been applied unevenly by State officials, including signature verification and voter identification requirements.

In 2005, Senator Barbara Boxer and the late Representative Stephanie Tubbs Jones objected to the slate of electors from Ohio. They rightfully drew attention to the fact that many African-Americans and other communities suffered disproportionate wait times at the polls, broken voting machines, and high ballot rejection rates. Raising this objection led to some of these issues being remedied and more Americans having the precious opportunity to vote. That is a legacy our Senate and every American should value today.

Thank you.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from South Carolina, Senator GRAHAM.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Many times, my State has been the problem. I love it. That is where I want to die but no time soon.

Tim and I have a good relationship. I love TIM SCOTT. In 1876, South Carolina, Louisiana, and Florida sent two slates of electors—they had two Governors, by the way—and we didn't know what to do. Why did South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana do it? To hold the country hostage to end Reconstruction. It worked.

The Commission was 8 to 7. It did work. Nobody accepted it. The way it ended is when Hayes did a deal with these three States: You give me the electors. I will kick the Union Army out. The rest is history. It led to Jim Crow. If you are looking for historical guidance, this is not the one to pick.

If you are looking for a way to convince people there was no fraud, having a commission chosen by NANCY PELOSI, MITCH MCCONNELL, and John Roberts is not going to get you to where you want to go. It ain't gonna work. So it is not going to do any good. It is going to delay, and it gives credibility to a dark chapter of our history. That is why I am not with you, but I will fight to my death for you. You are able to object. You are not doing anything wrong. Other people have objected. I just think it is a uniquely bad idea to delay this election.

Trump and I have had a hell of a journey. I hate it being this way. Oh, my God, I hate it. From my point of view, he has been a consequential President. But today, the first thing you will see, all I can say is, count me out. Enough is enough. I tried to be helpful. But when the Wisconsin supreme court ruled 4 to 3 that they didn't violate the Constitution of Wisconsin, I agreed with the three, but I accept the four. If Al Gore can accept 5 to 4 he is not President, I can accept Wisconsin 4 to 3.

Pennsylvania went to the Second Circuit. So much for all the judges being in Trump's pocket. They said: No, you are wrong. I accept the Pennsylvania Second Circuit that Trump's lawsuit wasn't right.

Georgia, they said the secretary of state took the law in his own hands, and he changed the election laws unlawfully. A Federal judge said no. I accept the Federal judge, even though I don't agree with it.

Fraud. They say there is 66,000 people in Georgia under 18 voting. How many people believe that? I asked: Give me 10. I haven't had one. They said 8,000 felons in prison in Arizona voted. Give me 10. I haven't gotten one.

Does that say there are problems in every election? I don't buy this. Enough is enough. We got to end it.

Vice President PENCE, what they are asking you to do, you won't do because you can't.

Talk about interesting times. I associate myself with RAND PAUL. How many times will you hear that? The mob has done something nobody else could do to get me and Rand to agree. Rand is right. If you are a conservative, this is the most offensive concept in the world that a single person could disenfranchise 155 million people.

[T]he President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and the House of Representatives, open all certificates and the votes shall then be counted;-The person having the greatest number of votes for President shall be President.

Where in there does it say that Mike can say, ''I don't like the results; I want to send them back to the States; I believe there was fraud''?

To the conservatives who believe in the Constitution, now is your chance to stand up and be counted.

Originalism, count me in. It means what it says.

So Mike—Mr. Vice President, just hang in there. They said: We can count on Mike. All of us can count on the Vice President. You are going to do the right thing. You are going to do the constitutional thing. You have a son who flies F–35s. You have got a son-in-law flying F–18s. They are out there flying so we can get it right here.

There are people dying, to my good friend from Illinois, to make sure we have a chance to argue among ourselves, and when it is over, it is over. It is over.

The final thing. Joe Biden. I have traveled the world with Joe. I hoped he lost. I prayed he would lose. He won. He is the legitimate President of the United States. I cannot convince people, certain groups, by my words, but I will tell you by my actions that maybe I, above all others in this body, need to say this. Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS are lawfully elected and will become the President and the Vice President of the United States on January the 20th.

(Applause, Senators rising.)

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I yield back the balance of our time.

VOTE ON OBJECTION TO COUNTING OF ARIZONA ELECTORAL VOTES

The VICE PRESIDENT. All time has expired.

The question is, Shall the objection submitted by the gentleman from Arizona, Mr. GOSAR, and the Senator from Texas, Mr. CRUZ, and others be sustained?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 6, nays 93, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 1 Leg.]

YEAS—6

Cruz	Hyde-Smith	Marshall
Hawley	Kennedy	Tuberville

NAYS—93

Baldwin	Brown	Coons
Barrasso	Burr	Cornyn
Bennet	Cantwell	Cortez Masto
Blackburn	Capito	Cotton
Blumenthal	Cardin	Cramer
Blunt	Carper	Crapo
Booker	Casey	Daines
Boozman	Cassidy	Duckworth
Braun	Collins	Durbin

Ernst	Loeffler	Sasse
Feinstein	Luján	Schatz
Fischer	Lummis	Schumer
Gillibrand	Manchin	Scott (FL)
Graham	Markey	Scott (SC)
Grassley	McConnell	Shaheen
Hagerty	Menendez	Shelby
Harris	Merkley	Sinema
Hassan	Moran	Smith
Heinrich	Murkowski	Stabenow
Hickenlooper	Murphy	Sullivan
Hirono	Murray	Tester
Hoeven	Paul	Thune
Inhofe	Peters	Tillis
Johnson	Portman	Toomey
Kaine	Reed	Van Hollen
Kelly	Risch	Warner
King	Romney	Warren
Klobuchar	Rosen	Whitehouse
Lankford	Rounds	Wicker
Leahy	Rubio	Wyden
Lee	Sanders	Young

The VICE PRESIDENT. On this vote, the yeas are 6, the nays are 93.

The objection is not sustained.

The Secretary will notify the House of the action of the Senate, informing that body that the Senate is now ready to proceed to joint session for further counting of the electoral vote for President and Vice President.

The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. So, colleagues, here is where we are. We have a few more speakers now as we wait for the House to finish their debate and vote. We expect the House to finish voting on Arizona between 11:30 and midnight.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with the following Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 5 minutes each: Senator TOOMEY, Senator RUBIO, and Senator COLLINS.

Mr. SCHUMER. And on our side, Senators WYDEN, HIRONO, and COONS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

OBJECTION TO COUNTING OF PENNSYLVANIA ELECTORAL VOTES

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I appreciate the indulgence of my colleagues allowing me to speak twice today. But my understanding is that later this evening, objectors will object to the certification of Pennsylvania's electoral votes because they disapprove of the process that my State used in the last election. So in light of my expectation of this objection, I rise to defend the right of my citizens, my constituents, to vote in the Presidential election.

Let's be clear. That is exactly what this objection is about. It is what it would do. It would overturn the results of the Presidential election in Pennsylvania, and it would thereby deny Pennsylvania's voters the opportunity to even participate in the Presidential election.

Even if Congress did have the constitutional responsibility to judge the worthiness of a State's election process, which it does not, rejecting Pennsylvania's electoral votes would still be wildly out of proportion to the purported offenses and very damaging to our Republic.

Let me go through a few facts about Pennsylvania.

First, some of the objectors and, in fact, even the President of the United States this morning have observed that the Pennsylvania Supreme Court disregarded existing law when it ruled that mail-in ballots could be counted even if they arrived up to 3 days after election day.

Now, the objectors are right about that. In my view, the Supreme Court of the United States should overturn that illegal decision. But only 10,097 ballots arrived in Pennsylvania during the 3 days after the election, and those 10,097 ballots have been excluded from the vote count that resulted in President-Elect Biden winning Pennsylvania by about 80,000 votes. What greater remedy could the objectors possibly want than the complete exclusion of the late-arriving ballots? How could we possibly invalidate the entire Pennsylvania election over 10,000 votes that were not even included in the vote count?

A second charge we heard—and the Senator from Missouri alluded to it this evening—is that a 2019 Pennsylvania law that allows mail-in ballots for any reason—that that might violate the Pennsylvania Constitution. First of all, as Senator CASEY observed, this was a bipartisan law passed with nearly unanimous Republican support. Clearly, the State legislators and the Governor believe it is consistent with the Pennsylvania Constitution.

Secondly, this law was not challenged when it was passed. It wasn't challenged when it was applied during the June primary election. It was challenged only after President Trump lost the general election. But 2.6 million Pennsylvanians voted by mail-in ballot in the general election. Over 37 percent of Pennsylvania voters, in good faith, relied on a law to cast their votes, as they had done previously. Now, I understand you can make a theoretical argument about whether this is consistent with Pennsylvania's Constitution, and that needs to be resolved for future elections. But because of this constitutional question that some people have, the objectors want to prevent Pennsylvania voters from participating in the Presidential election entirely. That would be an outrageous remedy to this purported offense.

A third charge we have heard is that Pennsylvania officials did not properly implement Pennsylvania election law in a variety of other ways. But the Trump campaign has shown that many of these issues have—well, first of all, none of these issues would have changed the election outcome, but more importantly, the campaign had many opportunities, of which it availed itself, to litigate these issues. They did time and again, and they lost repeatedly, often in unanimous, bipartisan decisions.

Some of the objectors also cite Congress's own failure to investigate allegations of election irregularities, and that is their justification for refusing to certify the election results. But the allegations of election irregularities and fraud have been investigated. They have been adjudicated. They were adjudicated in the States in which they were alleged to have occurred.

In Pennsylvania, the Trump campaign took their case of election irregularities into the courtroom of Judge Matthew Brann of the Federal district court. Judge Brann is a conservative Republican Federalist Society member. Here is what he said about the Trump campaign case:

> This court has been presented with strained legal arguments without merit and speculative accusations . . . unsupported by evidence. In the United States of America, this cannot justify the disenfranchisement of a single voter, let alone all [the] voters of the sixth most populated state.

So the campaign then appealed Judge Brann's decision to the Third Circuit, and they drew a three-judge panel, all Republican-appointed judges, one appointed by President Trump. The panel concurred with Judge Brann.

Certainly there were irregularities in this election—there always are—but there is no evidence of significant fraud, conspiracies, or even significant anomalies that cast any serious doubt on who actually won the election.

You know, one of the ways you can tell is to look at the big picture in Pennsylvania. Look at what happened. In 2016, President Trump won Pennsylvania by eight-tenths of 1 percent. In 2020, he lost Pennsylvania by a little over 1 percent. Is there anything at all that is implausible or surprising about a 2-percent change in the election outcome?

Relative to 2016, in Pennsylvania the President lost a little ground in most of the rural counties he had carried. He lost a lot of ground in the big suburban counties, and he slightly narrowed his large loss in Philadelphia. There are no surprises here. This reflects a pattern that occurred all across the country.

My colleagues, as I have said, it is not our responsibility to sit in judgment of State election procedures in the first place, but if it were, there would not be nearly sufficient reason to deny my constituents their right to participate in this Presidential election.

Joe Biden won the election. That is not what I had hoped for, but that is what happened. It was an honest victory with the usual minor irregularities that occur in most elections.

We witnessed today the damage that can result when men in power and responsibility refuse to acknowledge the truth. We saw bloodshed because the demagogue chose to spread falsehoods and sow distrust of his own fellow Americans. Let's not abet such deception. Let's reject this motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, with just a few minutes to speak, I am going to get right to the point.

Gunfire in the halls here, IEDs on the Capitol grounds—I will say to my colleagues, with the domestic terrorists roaming the halls just a few hours ago, I have been stunned that this debate is actually going forward, and that is because, colleagues, this is a fake debate on electoral certifications; that is because it lends credibility to the bogus idea that the Congress can actually toss out the results of the election, and, as we saw today, it serves to fuel insurrection.

Contrary to what some of my ''aye'' voting colleagues believe by votes cast just a few minutes ago, this debate has never been about setting up some kind of routine election tribunal. This isn't about election security. If the Republic majority for the last 2 years had actually been interested in election security, they would not have worked relentlessly to block my legislation to secure our 2020 elections with hand-marked paper ballots and post-election security audits.

By the way, those are the kinds of approaches that are part of the Oregon system, where for 25 years we voted by mail. I am the Nation's first mail-in U.S. Senator. The second—and I see my colleagues from Maine and Alaska here because they are very fond of him, like I am—Gordon Smith, a Republican, was the second mail-in U.S. Senator in our country. That is because we do the job right. It is efficient.

Our late-Republican secretary of state, Dennis Richardson, actually told President Trump there was no evidence of fraud.

So if Republicans had been interested over the last 2 years in actually working with me and colleagues on both sides of the aisle and secretaries of state, we could have had an approach that would have empowered the Oregon idea to go national. Instead, we are now debating tonight the idea of—a discussion grounded in total fiction, brewed in cauldrons of conspiracies online. These, colleagues, are fever dreams—fever dreams laundered by people with election certificates and real power. And I will tell you, it has been painful to watch colleagues sidle up to some of those conspiracies that would inflict so much damage on the American experiment.

Colleagues, I am going to close with one last point. We saw today an effort by domestic terrorists to try to punch our democracy to the ground, to the ropes. I am going to close by simply saying something that hadn't been said tonight, and that is that Donald Trump can do enormous damage to our country in the next 2 weeks. In the next 2 weeks, colleagues, Donald Trump can do enormous damage to our wonderful country.

This afternoon—I don't know if my colleagues saw it—the National Association of Manufacturers—an organization with thousands of businesses, thousands of companies, and not exactly a leftwing outfit—they called for moving forward with the 25th Amendment. That was all over the news already this afternoon, colleagues. The National Association of Manufacturers. That is what we are seeing in our country with respect to the fear of Americans, having watched what happened here.

I am just going to close by way of saying that I believe that for the next 2 weeks, we have an enormous responsibility to watchdog Donald Trump day in and day out, to do everything possible to prevent the kinds of abuses that we saw today, where an American lost her life, and we saw the fear among our citizens at what went on. Let's do everything we can as leaders, Democrats and Republicans, to make sure that in the next 2 weeks, Donald Trump's abuses are checked and we do everything we can to protect this wonderful Nation of ours.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida is recognized.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, over the last weeks and days leading up to this vote here today, I have heard from a lot of people about this vote, and I guess I want to address it as much to them as anybody else. These are people I know. These are friends. These are neighbors. These are longtime supporters, generally people on my side of the political aisle.

And they are upset. They are upset. They look at the media, and the media, they censored stories that might have been negative toward Joe Biden or were negative toward Joe Biden, and social media companies helped them out. And they saw how some States tinkered with and even mutilated State election laws, and they have doubts that the election was legitimate.

It gives this country this extraordinary crisis of confidence, which is very dangerous because democracy is very fragile, and it is not held together by elections. Democracy is held together by people's confidence in the election and their willingness to abide by its results.

So the notion was we need to do something; we need to fight. Several of my colleagues have adopted the idea—and I respect it—that they are going to object.

Now, listen, it is important to understand something. Even the people objecting in the Senate recognize that it is not going to pass. It is not going to change the outcome, but it is going to send a message, and it is going to make a point.

The problem is I think it is a terrible idea at this moment. Just hours ago, a young lady died in this Capitol. That means somebody, somewhere in this country, got a phone call that their daughter was dead. Their daughter was going to a political rally; she is dead—died in this Capitol, somewhere not far from where we are standing.

We had police officers—the men and women we walk by every single day, who guard the doors and we say hello to—out there with riot gear getting spit on and attacked today—not 10 weeks ago; just a few hours ago. I think it is important to think about all those things on a night like tonight with everything that has happened.

I wouldn't even be here today—I doubt very much whether I would have even been interested in politics—had it not been for my grandfather. He died when I was 14, but I grew up at his knee. He would sit on the porch and would smoke three cigars a day, and he loved history.

He was born in 1899 in rural Cuba. It was still governed by the United States. It was a protectorate. Three years later, it gained its independence and became a republic.

During my grandfather's first 60 years of life, he saw his country have an armed insurrection after a contested election, multiple Presidents go into exile, two military coups, and the rise of a Marxist dictator—a tyranny that stands to this day.

My entire life—my entire life I have lived with and next to people who came to America because their country was chaotic and their country was unsafe. What I saw today—what we have seen—looks more like those countries than the extraordinary Nation that I am privileged to call home, and I think about the mockery that it makes of our country.

A lot of people say: Oh, well, China, China. Let me just say something. In all modesty, no one here has worked harder on the issue of China. They hate my guts. I am sanctioned—I don't know what they are sanctioning—double sanctioned, and I can't travel there. I wasn't planning to anyway.

China is laughing. They are loving this tonight. In Beijing they are high-fiving because they point to this and they say: This is proof the future belongs to China. America is in decline.

Vladimir Putin—there is nothing Vladimir Putin could have come up with better than what happened here. It makes us look like we are in total chaos and collapse—not to mention the Ayatollah, who is probably bragging, if he has buddies, to his buddies: Look what is happening to the Great Satan.

I think politics has made us crazy. Everybody in this country has lost their minds on politics, and we have forgotten that America is not a government, America is not a President, America is not a Congress.

Let me tell you what America is. America is your family. America is your faith. America is your community. That is America. That is what our adversaries don't understand, and that is what we need to remember. That is how we are going to rebuild this country and turn the page and have a future even brighter than our past.

So that is why I feel so strongly about this and why I hope those who disagree with me will understand.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii is recognized.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, it has been hard, at times, to find the words to describe the full harm that Donald Trump has inflicted on our country. We can spend hours dissecting how his policies have made us less safe and less healthy, but his Presidency has also been a profound moral failure.

Let me tell you a story. A few years ago, a father from Hawaii joined me at one of my talk-story sessions in my office, and he asked me a question that struck me hard at that time and has stuck with me until today. He said: How can I tell my son that lying is not OK when the President of the United States lies every single day? I struggled to answer his question then, and I am not sure I could offer an adequate answer now.

But this conversation remains a clear example of how we do not live in normal times. How is it normal as we and the world watched in horror as an angry mob stormed the U.S. Capitol? Blood was shed. People were hurt. Vandalism occurred.

It is not normal when we have a President who lies every single day. And even in the face of this vandalism, this mob, he really doesn't have much to say except: I love you. You should go home now.

It is not normal when, in the middle of a pandemic that has claimed the lives of over 350,000 Americans, which is nearly the combined population of the islands of Maui and the Big Island, we have a President who only seems to care about spreading conspiracies to undermine confidence in our elections and our democracy.

It is not normal when duly elected Senators who took an oath to uphold the Constitution pull a stunt to try and nullify millions of votes in six States so that Donald Trump can remain President. I call this effort a stunt because it is doomed to fail.

We have a strong bipartisan majority, as noted in the vote that we just took, in both Chambers of Congress who reject this stunt, and courts have ruled against Trump and his allies in more than 60 cases.

So whenever this farce ends, the result will be the same: Donald Trump will have lost the election, and Joe Biden will become the 46th President of the United States.

You can tell a lot about a person from the way they handle defeat. The way Donald Trump has handled defeat says a lot about who he is. Watching so many of our colleagues indulge the President tells us a lot about them too.

We don't have to look back very far in history to find examples of candidates who lost tough races but demonstrated their character in defeat. Our colleague Senator ROMNEY graciously conceded his defeat to President Obama in noting:

> At a time like this, we can't risk partisan bickering and political posturing. Our leaders have to reach across the aisle to do the people's work, and we citizens also have to rise to the occasion.

And in 2000, during an election with substantial irregularities and partisan intervention from the Supreme Court, Al Gore, nevertheless, put his country first and he said:

> Let there be no doubt, while I strongly disagree with the Court's decision, I accept it. . . . And tonight, for the sake of our unity as a people and the strength of our democracy, I offer my concession.

As I reflect on the service of these distinguished public servants and the acts they took to maintain our democracy, I am also drawn to remarks President Obama made 4 years ago in his farewell address to the Nation when he warned that our democracy is threatened whenever we take it for granted.

It is a particularly sage warning as we contend with the President of the United States seeking to nullify a free and fair election simply because he lost. We have to stand up, speak out, and fight back because our democracy itself is at stake.

American democracy has endured over these centuries in large part because our institutions serve as guardrails to keep us from going over the cliff. As elected officials, we can strengthen these guardrails by listening to our own conscience in moments of peril, by having what our friend John Lewis called ''an executive session with myself.''

Before making a big decision, John would say: Listen self, this is what you must do; this is where you must go. Today, we can follow John's example, listen to our conscience, stand up for our Constitution, and do what is right.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine is recognized.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, let me begin my remarks tonight by expressing my heartfelt gratitude to the members of the law enforcement community and the National Guard whose hard work and courage made it possible for us to resume our deliberations tonight.

We return to this Chamber tonight undeterred by the violence we witnessed and strengthened in our determination to fulfill our constitutional duty. The Constitution is the foundation of our American democracy, and the Constitution is what must guide our decisions on the Presidential election.

The process the Constitution sets forth for electing Presidents through the electoral college is straightforward. The people vote. Electors are chosen. The electors vote. Then Congress counts the electors' votes.

That final step in the process is why we have convened today. Counting the votes of the electors, a function that the 12th Amendment assigns to Congress, is an administrative and largely ceremonial act. Our job is simply to count the votes certified by each State—nothing more. We should not attempt to usurp the roles of the voters, the States, or the electoral college.

The American people have done their job, turning out in record numbers to vote in the midst of a frightening pandemic. Indeed, as a percentage of the voting-eligible population, the turnout was the highest in 120 years. Similarly, in the midst of this pandemic, hundreds of election officials and volunteers have done their job, staffing polling places and faithfully counting and often recounting votes. The States have done their job by certifying the election results.

Now, I have heard the proponents of these objections raise questions about whether the various States conducted their elections properly. When disputes over elections arise, candidates are able to appeal to our legal system, not Congress, for recourse.

In the 2 months since the 2020 election, the President's lawyers and allies have had the opportunity to make their arguments and challenge election results before the courts. Notably, every one of nearly 60 lawsuits they have brought forward have been rejected. In fact, the Supreme Court has twice refused to hear their election challenges.

We must abide by these rulings. The time has now come for Congress to do its job. We should affirm the certified results of each State by counting the votes of their electors. Altering the results of the electoral college would set a terrible precedent in which the party in control of Congress could override the will of the voters and overrule our courts to unilaterally choose the next President. One Senator attempted such a maneuver after the election in 2004, and the Senate overwhelmingly rejected that effort. The Senate has demonstrated by its vote tonight that it will follow that precedent and do so again.

Today—tonight, Mr. President, I will continue to vote to reaffirm the foundation of our democracy, the Constitution of the United States. And I will reject these challenges to the electoral college.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon is recognized.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I invite all of my colleagues to cast your eyes upon these three boxes sitting on the table in front of the dais. These three boxes contain the certified results from every State in our Union regarding how that State voted, how their electors have voted for the President of the United States of America.

You cast your eyes on these three boxes, and you know that there is something special. You see that there are straps on them holding the top on and straps around the side and they are engraved—beautiful handle, beautiful leather work, crafted in the cabinet shop of our very Senate to say to the world that their cargo is precious.

There are three of these boxes. The third box is brand new. It was crafted

because so many States were celebrating this process that they started to use very large forms, very large envelopes, very large seals to put those ballots into and, thus, a third box was needed. These boxes contain the voice of the American people weighing in, as they have election after election after election. They have been used—these two smaller boxes—for the last 14 elections. They are transported through those doors to the House of Representatives, where the Senate and House gather to witness the opening of the envelopes to determine who will be the President of the United States. It is our constitutional responsibility to witness the counting. That is what the Constitution calls for.

Tonight, when this Senate Chamber was under attack by domestic terrorists, we were held here in this room, doors locked to protect us with the help of the Capitol Police. They did an excellent job. And then they escorted us to a safe room. That announcement came quickly. And when that announcement came, our senior assistant parliamentarian, Leigh Hildebrand, organized the team to rescue these boxes and keep them safe.

Thank you to her and the entire team that rescued the voice of the American people. Had they not done so, then the hooligans outside, disrespecting the Constitution, would have come in here and opened these boxes and burned the ballots, destroying the voice of the people symbolically. I know no one in this Chamber wanted something like that to happen because we are here to defend the Constitution, to defend the integrity of the election process, not to allow it to be destroyed.

But, colleagues, although we are 100 Senators—or 99, actually, now because there are only 99 of us who are duly elected at the moment. We are 99 Senators united across party, defending these ballots from the hooligans outside.

There is more than one way these ballots can be destroyed, and that is for this Chamber and the House Chamber to vote that one of those envelopes representing the State will be shredded, will be burned, that those votes will be discounted.

We just held a vote on whether or not the envelope containing the electoral votes from Arizona should be burned. We defended these ballots against the hooligans outside, but there are those in this Chamber supporting the destruction of the voice of the citizens of Arizona—six voted. And we are coming back later tonight to vote on whether to shred or burn the ballots for the people of Pennsylvania.

We have to stand together to say absolutely not. The constitutional responsibility is for us to defend the process, not to proceed to destroy these ballots.

Now, in spite of all the troubling things that have happened in this Chamber this evening, something beautiful happened, and that is, we sat here in this Chamber, all of us listening to each other, 5-minute speeches, hearing each other out, diverse views, wrestling with a complicated issue. It is really the first time that has happened in the 12 years I have served in the Senate.

We need to restore the process of struggling with America's issues together on the floor of the Senate. That is the Senate I saw when I first came here as an intern for my home State Senator in 1976. That is the Senate that I saw when I worked for Congress in the 1980s. That is the Senate that has disappeared.

There is a conversation going forward between Democrats and Republicans to restore the ability to hold debate on the floor, to restore the ability to have amendments on the floor so that we deliberate and wrestle with—in a very public and transparent fashion—the big issues.

So let's take this moment, when we are rethinking how to restore the institutions of our government, to restore and improve how this Senate operates to deal with the issues ahead of us, so that this moment is a moment where we come together rather than be divided; where, in a bipartisan fashion, we craft a strategy to restore issues to the floor—bills and amendments—and debate and decisions before the public.

Out of a dark moment can shine a bright light, a renewal, and it is a moment much needed now—a moment much needed in the executive branch as we, on the 20th of January, welcome new leadership.

And it is a moment much needed for us to restore the Senate to be the deliberative body once renowned and respected around the world. Let's defend these ballot boxes, both from the hooligans outside and those who would vote to destroy the ballots from any given State. And let us come together and restore the Senate and fight for the vision of our ''we the people'' Republic.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware is recognized.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, ''Free, fair elections are the lifeblood of our democracy. Charges on fairness are serious.'' I think we will all agree. ''But calling an election unfair does not make it so. Charges require specific allegations and then [they require] proof. We have neither here.''

Those are not my words. Those are the words of a judge on the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit rejecting President Trump's legal challenges to the Pennsylvania election. I might add, a judge who was a longtime member of the conservative Federalist Society and was nominated to the bench by none other than Donald Trump.

The 2020 Presidential election was hard-fought—we will all agree. But the American people spoke clearly, and they spoke decisively: 81.2 million voters voted for Joe Biden—81.2; 74.2 million voted for Donald Trump; 51.3 percent of the vote went for Joe Biden; 46.8 percent of the vote was for Donald Trump; 306 electoral college votes for Joe Biden; 232 electoral college votes for Donald Trump. Four years earlier, Donald Trump referred to that kind of outcome as a ''landslide'' for him, and he lost the popular vote by 3 million votes.

But accepting the outcome of the election can be difficult when our political party doesn't win. We have all felt that before. But calling an election unfair does not make it so. More than 60 Federal and State courts involving more than 90 judges—many of whom were nominated by Republican Presidents, including Donald Trump—are all in agreement. That is pretty amazing, isn't it? All in agreement. No evidence of widespread fraud, wrongdoing, or other irregularities have been uncovered during the 2020 election. That is a victory for democracy, for our democracy.

Unfortunately, some of our colleagues today ask us to do the same thing that Donald Trump asked of the secretary of state for the State of Georgia—to overturn the results of the 2020 election without specific allegations and, more importantly, without any proof. Our colleagues are asking us not to abide by the will of the people but to bend to the will of one man—one man—Donald Trump.

In 1787, delegates from the Thirteen Colonies convened in Philadelphia to debate the future of what would become the United States of America. Our Founders disagreed on a lot of things, but, you know, they all agreed on one thing for sure: They did not want a King; they did not want a Monarch. Many of them had been there, done that. They didn't want to see it and feel it again, and they set up this intricate system of checks and balances to ensure that we would never have that all-powerful King in this country.

That system of checks and balances is being pushed to a dangerous limit here today, but that system will prevail—along with it, our democracy.

Here are just some of the claims Donald Trump and his legal team have made and that our colleagues lend credence to here today: that Venezuela, Cuba, and China rigged our country's voting machines in favor of Joe Biden; that dead people voted in this election, and they only voted for Joe Biden; that poll watchers and election observers who risked their lives during this pandemic to uphold the integrity of our elections stuffed ballot boxes with Biden votes, and then they shredded Trump votes.

Not one—let me repeat—not one of these things is true. There is no evidence—no evidence—to back up these ridiculous claims. Many of these absurd claims from Donald Trump and his legal team are nothing more than conspiracy theories circuiting online.

This misinformation and dangerous rhetoric from the President and his allies—including calls for violence—have

polluted our discourse and imperiled our peaceful transfer of power.

When our colleagues show indifference to outright support for these unsubstantiated claims and conspiracy theories, they lead our Nation and our Constitution down a dangerous, dangerous path.

All of us who serve here swore an oath to support and defend our Constitution. I swore that same oath as a naval flight officer many times and as midshipman before that. But all of us here have sworn to support and defend our Constitution, not our political party and certainly not any individual candidate.

Colleagues, for the safety of our citizens and our Republic, we must lead by example. We must turn the temperature down. It was a hard-fought campaign, but the campaign is over. The votes have been counted. The count has been certified in all 50 States.

In 2 weeks, on January 20, Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS will be sworn in as President and Vice President of the United States, as they should be. We have serious and urgent challenges that will require working together with our new President and new Vice President, with one another in this Chamber—Democrats, Republicans, and Independents—and with our colleagues over in the House of Representatives.

What is on our ''to do'' list?

We can start with making sure that hundreds of millions of Americans get vaccinated—that we get off the dime and start vaccinating. We vaccinated 4 million people last month. We were supposed to have vaccinated 20 million. How are we ever going to get to 250 million at this rate?

What else is on our ''to do'' list?

We are getting our kids back to school. We have kids who are unable to get on the internet, who are unable to participate in their classes, and who may not have any adult supervision at home. They are struggling, and they are falling even further behind. We need to do something to help them.

What else is on our ''to do'' list?—getting their parents back to work, just to name a few things. Think of all of the millions of people who have lost jobs and don't have skills anymore to fill the jobs that are needed. They need our help. They need to be retooled and retrained. It is time to stop overturning the will of the people. Let's get back to working on their behalf.

Abraham Lincoln has been quoted a couple of times here tonight, but he observed at the end of the Gettysburg Address that ours is a ''government of the people, by the people, for the people.'' Even in the midst of a civil war, President Lincoln put his unwavering faith in the people to chart our Nation's course. We would be wise to remember Lincoln's words at this moment, at this special moment, in our Nation's history.

We are not a government of Trump, by Trump, and for Trump. We are a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, and the people have spoken. The people have spoken. Our job here today is to listen to them. I intend to do that. I trust that my colleagues will join me in doing that as well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, first, I want to thank all of the first responders who helped to protect this sacred Chamber today and protect those electoral college ballots.

Today is a special day. On a day when some 2,500 or more Americans will lose their lives to the coronavirus, when another 130,000 will be hospitalized with it, when hundreds of small businesses will close their doors and put thousands of Americans out of work—on this day—the U.S. Senate is not debating how to get more life-saving vaccines into Americans' arms or how to put 2,000 badly needed dollars into their pockets. No. Instead, we are using the first days of the new Senate and Congress to give time to our radical Republican colleagues' baseless and damaging claims of election fraud—all in an attempt to keep Donald Trump in office in violation of the U.S. Constitution. There is a word for this. It is called ''sedition.'' All of these unfounded objections to State electors are seditious. They are nothing short of an insurrection against the established order of the U.S. Constitution and our democratic Republic.

This is a historically shameful day for the Senate and for our country. To be clear, the notion that there is any meaningful voter fraud that has been identified in the 2020 Presidential election is a dangerous, anti-democratic, treasonous fiction. Joe Biden won. Donald Trump lost—period—but that hasn't stopped the President and his supporters from making allegations of voter fraud in some 60 legal challenges across the country, heard by some 90 judges, including Trump judicial appointees. Not one of these challenges succeeded—not one. Despite this reality, my radical Republican colleagues claim we must have a commission to investigate the fraud.

Well, we do know one of the most undeniable instances of substantial and significant election fraud ever. We even have a recording and a transcript of it. It is of President Trump, talking like a Mafia boss to the Georgia Secretary of State—a Republican no less—pressuring and threatening him to fix the election in Trump's favor, and holding out the prospect of criminal prosecution if he doesn't.

''Find me 11,780 votes,'' Trump said. Well, someone should find Donald Trump a real lawyer and measure him for an orange jumpsuit, because the list of statutes that this latest, shocking Presidential phone call may violate is too long to recite. The President's words on that phone call—indeed, his conduct since his election—demand a serious response, one much more serious than the sham before us today.

First, Federal and State law enforcement authorities should investigate Donald Trump for election fraud, extortion, conspiracy, and whatever other charges fit the bill and, if warranted, indict and try him for any crimes he has committed.

Second, we must recognize that Donald Trump is and will remain a danger to our Constitution and our democracy. So, while time is certainly limited, we should impeach Trump again and bar him from holding office in the future.

Finally, we should abolish the electoral college. It is a vestige of a racist Jim Crow America, and we have outgrown it. Every person's vote in every State should count just the same—one person, one vote.

Election fraud and reform are very serious issues. Election reform absolutely should be debated in Congress, which is why, instead of today's Kabuki theater, I invite my Republican colleagues to stand up and say: Yes, we need to protect and expand voting rights and election security. We need automatic voter registration. We need online voter registration. We need same-day voter registration. We should make election day a Federal holiday. We should restore voting rights to people with prior felony convictions. We should support independent redistricting commissions. Let's spend our time debating that on the floor—debating how to reduce the influence of big money in our political system, to slow the revolving door between government officials and lobbyists, to stop gerrymandering and voter suppression. That is the real election reform that we should be debating and supporting, not these shameful, craven, baseless objections.

More than 350,000 Americans have died from the coronavirus. That is the truth. Nearly 8 million people have fallen into poverty because of the economic crisis caused by this virus. That is the truth. Wearing a mask saves lives. Vaccines are safe and effective. That is the truth. Joe Biden won. Donald Trump lost. That is the truth.

I urge all of my Senate colleagues to vote against these objections, affirm our democracy, and recognize that Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS will rightfully be sworn in on January 20 as the President and Vice President of the United States.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, today was a stomach-turning, gut-wrenching moment in our history. Truly, it was an assault on the heart of our democracy.

I want to join in thanking the first responders and the police.

I also want to thank others who have been heroes of our democracy—unsung in many instances. First, they are all of the election officials, all of the poll workers, all of the members of boards

of election who actually counted the votes—who went to the polls and made sure that votes could be cast—and who, ultimately, stood firm for the integrity of that voting system.

I want to thank the judges. There are now about 90 of them who, except for one or two who ruled the other way on a technicality, have stood firm for the integrity of that voting system. In those 60 to 70 cases, except for that one who ruled on a technicality, they went with the integrity of our voting system and the rule of law.

Today was, indeed, disgusting and sickening. It was shocking and despicable. It was heartbreaking, but it was not surprising. In fact, today's assault on our democracy—the mob violence, the riots, the thugs and goons who were inspired and incited by the President of the United States—all were of a piece, in these past 4 years, of a President who has no respect for the truth or the rule of law.

Donald Trump's Presidency is coming to a close in the very same way it began—with an attack on our democracy. In 2016, the Trump campaign welcomed hostile foreign interference with our election. The President refused to acknowledge that he would accept the results of the election if he lost. Then, again and again, he demonstrated his contempt for the rule of law and for laws themselves. He obstructed justice, and he would have been charged with it had he not been the President of the United States. He invited a foreign government to interfere in our elections and find dirt on his political opponent.

Most disturbingly, these actions by a President who demonstrated that contempt for the rule of law were met with silence from many political leaders, our colleagues here in the Senate among them—silence in the face of that contempt for the rule of law and disrespect for the law enforcers.

So we could have seen today coming. In fact, we did. I warned about it, and others did because the fantasies and falsehoods that drove those rioters—not protesters but the mob who assaulted the temple of democracy—were fueled by the President's misstatements and lies and contempt for the truth, and he was enabled. He had enablers.

Today, we are stopping, in one instance, that enabling, but we must also make sure to stop it going forward. The political stunt that brought us here today offers no great solace that it will. These stunts have consequences. We say words have consequences, and the actions today will have significant consequences. They are an attack on our democracy that undermines the core tenets of our American Government and a disrespect for the will of the people and a peaceful transition of power. The political stunts themselves, driven by opportunism, blaze a path that can be followed by more competent challenges just as the dictatorial instincts and actions of this President can be followed by more effective would-be tyrants intent on destroying our Republic.

Yes, we have more important tasks that we should be addressing as well—the pandemic, the economic revival. Yet, today, we must be mindful of the threat to our democracy that we face down and come together on a bipartisan basis, but silence is never excusable in the face of lawlessness at the very top of our political structure.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I have a question for all of my colleagues this evening, which is this: What happened here today, and how is it different from what we expected as we assembled in this Chamber early this afternoon?

Sadly, much like the impeachment trial of just a year ago, I think as many of us slogged our way to the Nation's Capital and dutifully filed into this Chamber, we expected hours and hours of debate and discussion, knowing the outcome, knowing that what was being engaged in by a handful of our colleagues was a political stunt, feeding the ego of our President, who is chasing conspiracy theories about how he actually won the election 2 months ago that he lost and indulging his belief that somehow, somehow, the Congress could still, at the last moment, snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.

Even in the last day, President Trump had been haranguing his own incredibly loyal Vice President, MIKE PENCE, as if somehow Vice President PENCE would simply declare him President today.

We knew that President Trump had been stirring up the spirits of thousands, urging them to come to Washington. We had an inkling that he might go out and speak to them, but I don't think, as we filed into this Chamber, any of us—any of us—expected that, for the second time in our Republic's history, the perimeter of this Capitol would be breached, Members of the Senate would be rushed to safety; that not just the Capitol Police but U.S. Marshals and FBI officers and fully combat-geared soldiers would be in the U.S. Capitol, taking it back from a riotous mob of thugs.

Just a few moments ago, I went to the Rotunda to see the litter and the trash, the residue and the remnants of those who took over this building today, and to say thank you to the men and women of law enforcement who helped secure it after it fell to an angry mob.

But, folks, we have to think about the consequences of what happened here today, why this happened, and what it means and what it teaches, because, frankly, tonight, now, the whole world is watching. The entire world is watching a montage of scenes—of folks cavorting in the Capitol, half-naked men taking that seat, scrawling things on different surfaces, parading up and down the Capitol corridors with a Confederate flag and a Trump flag, and in other ways signaling that they had done something significant. No. In fact, what they have actually done is weakened our democracy, showed some of its fragility, and encouraged our opponents around the world.

In the last 2 months since the election, we have one man who has abandoned his post, who has mostly spent his time golfing and tweeting and indulging himself in conspiracy theories and been less and less attuned to our national security and to a raging pandemic, and another man, our President-elect, who is preparing to take over the responsibility for leading this country out of this pandemic and out of its current state of deep, deep division.

President Trump has abandoned his post. He does not deserve to be President any longer, and he poses a real and present threat to the future of our democracy.

But let me also say this to my colleagues, half of whom changed their intended vote today after seeing what happened in the Capitol. There were, as we began, roughly 13 Senators—Republicans—who said they were going to vote against the certification of the election, and when we actually finally called the roll, it was just 6—7 of them having been chastened by the events of today. But two who continue on this quest clerked for the Supreme Court Chief Justice, are deeply schooled in the law, and know better than what they did today. And in the House, in the debate going on over in the House even now, more than 100 House Republicans continue with this effort.

On this floor earlier today, this evening, there were strong and clear and brave speeches by Republicans and Democrats alike.

So I have a question as we move forward. When will this fever break? When will we finally say to each other: Enough is enough of indulging and following populism and demagoguery. Is it time to finally show who the leaders are and to uphold our Constitution that every one of the House Members and a third of us swore to uphold just 3 days ago?

I will tell you, as I look ahead, that I am confident that 2 weeks from now, Joseph Biden will be sworn in as the next President, KAMALA HARRIS sworn in as the next Vice President, and we have a unique moment in my lifetime, because, as Presidents and leaders in the Senate of both parties over the last decades have observed, the Senate has steadily shrunk in its significance, its role, in its power, and the Presidency has steadily grown. Not in my lifetime—not since LBJ—have we had an incoming President who spent 36 years in this Chamber.

We have a chance with Joe Biden, a President-elect who ran on bringing our country together, a President-elect who ran on turning the page from our moment of national division, and a

President-elect who respects and honors and understands the significance of this body.

So we have to take this opportunity to heal, to hear each other, to compromise, to work together, and to see the real challenges facing the American people and take this last best moment.

What happened here today should leave all of us gravely concerned about the health and the future of our democracy, and the opportunity we will have 2 weeks from today is one we should not let pass us by.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, more than 350,000 of our loved ones have died from a terrible disease. Small businesses have gone under, never to reopen. Millions have lost their jobs, and too many families don't know how they are going to pay the rent or put groceries on the table.

It is tough out there, but Americans are fighters, and despite all the challenges, in November they did what Americans do when they are unhappy with their leadership—they voted for change. They turned their backs on a sitting President who fans the flames of hatred while bodies pile up in the morgue. Instead, they elected a new President who wants to save lives, to save our economy, and to save our democracy.

Even as the pandemic raged, Americans showed up for democracy. States worked overtime to set up safe systems, ballot drop boxes, early voting, and gallons of hand sanitizer. Voters mailed their ballots earlier, put on masks, and stood in line at the polls. The election of 2020 shattered voting records.

So here we are on the floor of the U.S. Senate in the aftermath of a historic election held in the middle of a pandemic. People are suffering, and we should be working to get them the help they need. Instead, we are here because Donald Trump wants to overturn the results of that election. The Republicans objecting to the results of this election will be judged by history, but the rest of us will be judged as well.

It is our responsibility to stand up for our democracy even while other Senators work to undermine it.

Losing is hard. I ran for President myself. It was a hard-fought primary, but Joe Biden won and I lost. I am not the only one to live through that; a number of Senators in this room have run for President. None of us was successful, and when we lost, we conceded and we got out of the race because that is how democracy works. None of us lied about the results. We didn't throw temper tantrums. We didn't tell our allies in Congress or the States to overturn the results. We didn't feed poisonous propaganda to our supporters. We didn't urge people to march on State capitals or to descend on Washington. We accepted the will of the voters.

And it is not just us; it is everyone who has run for President since the beginning of America. Only once in America's history have the people who lost tried to burn down our democracy on the way out. They caused a civil war that nearly destroyed our Nation.

Make no mistake, the violence we witnessed in this Chamber today was the direct result of the poisonous lies that Donald Trump repeated again and again for more than 2 months. His words have consequences. Our democracy has been grievously injured by this lying coward.

This effort to subvert our democracy is not merely one last Presidential tantrum. This effort is designed to knock out the basic pillar on which democracy is founded: the idea that the voters—not the sitting President and not the Members of Congress but the voters decide who will lead this Nation.

A democracy in which the elected leaders do not bend to the will of the voters is no democracy. It is a totalitarian state. And those who pursue this effort are supporting a coup.

I urge my colleagues to vote no on this effort to overthrow our democracy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess subject to the call of the chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the Senate stands in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 11:25 p.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 12:28 a.m. when called to order by the Vice President.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I know of no further debate.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Pursuant to S. Con. Res. 1 and section 17, title III, U.S. Code, when the two Houses withdraw from the joint session to count the electoral vote for separate consideration of an objection, a Senator may speak to the objection for 5 minutes and not more than once. Debate shall not exceed 2 hours, after which the Chair will put the question: Shall the objection be sustained?

The clerk will report the objection made in the joint session.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Objection from Senator HAWLEY from Missouri and Representative PERRY from Pennsylvania, ''We, a U.S. Senator and Member of the House of Representatives, object to the counting of the electoral votes of the State of Pennsylvania on the ground that they were not, under all of the known circumstances, regularly given.''

The VICE PRESIDENT. The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I know of no further debate.

VOTE ON OBJECTION TO COUNTING PENNSYLVANIA ELECTORAL VOTES

The VICE PRESIDENT. If there is no further debate, the question is, Shall the objection submitted by the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. PERRY, and the Senator from Missouri, Mr. HAWLEY, be sustained?

Is there a sufficient second?

Mr. THUNE. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 7, nays 92, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 2 Leg.]

YEAS—7

Cruz	Lummis	Tuberville
Hawley	Marshall	
Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)	

NAYS—92

Baldwin	Graham	Peters
Barrasso	Grassley	Portman
Bennet	Hagerty	Reed
Blackburn	Harris	Risch
Blumenthal	Hassan	Romney
Blunt	Heinrich	Rosen
Booker	Hickenlooper	Rounds
Boozman	Hirono	Rubio
Braun	Hoeven	Sanders
Brown	Inhofe	Sasse
Burr	Johnson	Schatz
Cantwell	Kaine	Schumer
Capito	Kelly	Scott (SC)
Cardin	Kennedy	Shaheen
Carper	King	Shelby
Casey	Klobuchar	Sinema
Cassidy	Lankford	Smith
Collins	Leahy	Stabenow
Coons	Lee	Sullivan
Cornyn	Loeffler	Tester
Cortez Masto	Luján	Thune
Cotton	Manchin	Tillis
Cramer	Markey	Toomey
Crapo	McConnell	Van Hollen
Daines	Menendez	Warner
Duckworth	Merkley	Warren
Durbin	Moran	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murkowski	Wicker
Feinstein	Murphy	Wyden
Fischer	Murray	Young
Gillibrand	Paul	

The VICE PRESIDENT. On this vote, the yeas are 7, the nays are 92.

The objection is not sustained.

The Secretary will notify the House of the action of the Senate, informing that body that the Senate is now ready to proceed to Joint Session for further count of the electoral vote for President and Vice President.

The majority leader.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, for information of all of our colleagues, we don't expect additional votes tonight.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Roberts, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages

from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT RELATIVE TO THE ISSUANCE OF AN EXECUTIVE ORDER DECLARING ADDITIONAL STEPS TO BE TAKEN CONCERNING THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY AND SERVICES SUPPLY CHAIN DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13873 OF MAY 15, 2019, RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE ON JANUARY 5, 2021—PM 1

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order declaring additional steps to be taken concerning the national emergency with respect to the information and communications technology and services supply chain declared in Executive Order 13873 of May 15, 2019 (Securing the Information and Communications Technology and Services Supply Chain) to deal with the threat posed by applications and other software developed or controlled by Chinese companies.

The pace and pervasiveness of the spread in the United States of certain connected mobile and desktop applications and other software developed or controlled by persons in the People's Republic of China (PRC), to include Hong Kong and Macau (China), continue to threaten the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. By accessing personal electronic devices such as smartphones, tablets, and computers, Chinese connected software applications can access and capture vast swaths of information from users, including sensitive personally identifiable information and private information. The continuing activity of the PRC and the Chinese Communist Party to steal or otherwise obtain United States persons' data makes clear that there is an intent to use bulk data collection to advance China's economic and national security agenda. To deal with this threat, additional steps are required against those who develop or control certain Chinese connected software applications to protect our national security.

The Executive Order prohibits certain future transactions, as determined by the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary), involving the following Chinese connected software applications: Alipay, CamScanner, QQ Wallet, SHAREit, Tencent QQ, VMate, WeChat Pay, and WPS Office. The Secretary is also directed to:

(i) continue to evaluate Chinese connected software applications that may pose an unacceptable risk to the national security, foreign policy, or economy of the United States, and to take appropriate action in accordance with Executive Order 13873; and

(ii) in consultation with the Attorney General and the Director of National Intelligence, provide a report to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs with recommendations to prevent the sale or transfer of United States user data to, or access of such data by, foreign adversaries, including through the establishment of regulations and policies to identify, control, and license the export of such data.

I have delegated to the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury and the Attorney General, the authority to take such actions, including adopting appropriate rules and regulations, and employing all other powers granted to the President by IEEPA, as may be necessary to implement the Executive Order. The heads of all executive departments and agencies are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to implement the provisions of the Executive Order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

DONALD J. TRUMP.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *January 5, 2021.*

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE ON JANUARY 6, 2021

At 12:32 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 21. An act to enhance the innovation, security, and availability of cloud computing products and services used in the Federal Government by establishing the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program within the General Services Administration and by establishing a risk management, authorization, and continuous monitoring process to enable the Federal Government to leverage cloud computing products and services using a risk-based approach consistent with the Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 and cloud-based operations, and for other purposes.

H.R. 22. An act to amend the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, to require the budget justifications and appropriation requests of agencies be made publicly available.

H.R. 23. An act to require congressional notification for certain changes in status of inspectors general, and for other purposes.

H.R. 26. An act to amend the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, to correct a provision on the prohibition on the use of a reverse auction, and for other purposes.

H.R. 27. An act to amend chapter 3 of title 5, United States Code, to require the publication of settlement agreements, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, without amendment:

S. Con. Res. 1. Concurrent resolution to provide for the counting on January 6, 2021, of the electoral votes for President and Vice President of the United States.

S. Con. Res. 2. Concurrent resolution extending the life of the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies and authorizing the use of the rotunda and Emancipation Hall of the Capitol by the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies in connection with the proceedings and ceremonies conducted for the inauguration of the President-elect and the Vice President-elect of the United States.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 1. Concurrent resolution regarding consent to assemble outside the seat of government.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to H. Res. 2, resolving that Cheryl L. Johnson of the State of Louisiana be, and is hereby, chosen Clerk of the House of Representatives; that Paul D. Irving of the State of Florida be, and is hereby, chosen Sergeant-at-Arms of the House of Representatives; that Catherine Szpindor of the Commonwealth of Virginia be, and is hereby, chosen Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives; and that Reverend Doctor Margaret Grun Kibben of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania be, and is hereby, chosen Chaplain of the House of Representatives.

The message further announced that the House has agreed to H. Res. 3, resolving that the Senate be informed that a quorum of the House of Representatives has assembled; that NANCY PELOSI, a Representative from the State of California, has been elected Speaker; and that Cheryl L. Johnson, a citizen of the State of Louisiana, has been elected Clerk of the House of Representatives of the One Hundred Seventeenth Congress.

The message also announced that a committee of two Members be appointed by the Speaker on the part of the House of Representatives to join with a committee on the part of the Senate to notify the President of the United States that a quorum of each House has assembled and Congress is ready to receive any communication that he may be pleased to make.

The message further announced that pursuant to Senate concurrent resolution 1, One Hundred Seventeenth Congress, and the order of the House of January 4, 2021, the Speaker appoints as tellers on the part of the House to count the electoral votes: Ms. LOFGREN of California and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 1238(b)(3) of the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001 (22 U.S.C. 7002), as amended, and the order of the House of January 4, 2021, the Speaker re-appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives to the United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission for a term expiring on December 31, 2022: Mr. Jeffrey L. Fiedler of La Quinta, California, and Mr. Michael Wessel of Falls Church, Virginia.

The message further announced that pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 2001, and the order of the House of January 4, 2021, the Speaker appoints the following Members to the House Office Building Commission to serve with herself: Mr. HOYER of Maryland and Mr. MCCARTHY of California.

At 11:15 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has rejected the objection submitted by the Representative from Arizona, Mr. GOSAR, and the Senator from Texas, Mr. CRUZ, and is now ready to further proceed with the counting of the electoral votes for President and Vice President of the United States.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE ON JANUARY 7, 2021

At 3:14 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has rejected the objection submitted by the Representative from Pennsylvania, Mr. PERRY, and the Senator from Missouri, Mr. HAWLEY, and is now ready to further proceed with the counting of the electoral votes for President and Vice President of the United States.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 21. An act to enhance the innovation, security, and availability of cloud computing products and services used in the Federal Government by establishing the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program within the General Services Administration and by establishing a risk management, authorization, and continuous monitoring process to enable the Federal Government to leverage cloud computing products and services using a risk-based approach consistent with the Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 and cloud-based operations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 22. An act to amend the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, to require the budget justifications and appropriation requests of agencies be made publicly available; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 23. An act to require congressional notification for certain changes in status of inspectors general, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 26. An act to amend the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, to correct a provision on the prohibition on the use of a reverse auction, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 27. An act to amend chapter 3 of title 5, United States Code, to require the publication of settlement agreements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 11. A bill to provide for an exception to a limitation against appointment of persons as Secretary of Defense within seven years of relief from active duty as a regular commissioned officer of the Armed Forces

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 13. A bill to establish an advisory committee to make recommendations on improvements to the security, integrity, and administration of Federal elections.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. COTTON, Mr. LANKFORD, Mrs. FISCHER, Ms. ERNST, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. ROUNDS):

S. 13. A bill to establish an advisory committee to make recommendations on improvements to the security, integrity, and administration of Federal elections; read the first time

ORDERS FOR FRIDAY, JANUARY 8, 2021, THROUGH TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2021

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that upon the dissolution of the Joint Session, the Senate stand adjourned to then convene for pro forma sessions only, with no business being conducted on the following dates and times, and that following each pro forma session, the Senate adjourn until the next pro forma session: Friday, January 8, at 10 a.m.; Tuesday, January 12, at 12:30 p.m.; Friday, January 15, at 10 a.m. I further ask that when the Senate adjourns on Friday January 15, it next convene at 12 noon on Tuesday, January 19; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; finally, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL FRIDAY, JANUARY 8, 2021, AT 10 A.M.

At the conclusion of the joint session of the two Houses, and in accordance with the order previously entered, at 3:48 a.m., the Senate adjourned until Friday, January 8, 2021, at 10 a.m.

WITHDRAWALS

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on January 6, 2021 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nominations:

Chad F. Wolf, of Virginia, to be Secretary of Homeland Security, vice Kirstjen Nielsen, resigned, which was sent to the Senate on January 3, 2021.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

JASON ABEND, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, VICE JON T. RYMER, RESIGNED.

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION

WILLIAM PATRICK JOSEPH KIMMITT, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 16, 2029, VICE F. SCOTT KIEFF, TERM EXPIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

BARBERA HALE THORNHILL, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. TERRENCE A. ADAMS
COL. CURTIS R. BASS
COL. STEVEN G. BEHMER
COL. JOSEPH L. CAMPO
COL. ANDREW M. CLARK
COL. TAD D. CLARK
COL. LUKE C. G. CROPSEY
COL. MELISSA S. CUNNINGHAM
COL. ROBERT D. DAVIS
COL. GEORGE T. M. DIETRICH III
COL. AARON D. DRAKE
COL. LYLE K. DREW
COL. STEVEN M. GORSKI
COL. GLENN T. HARRIS
COL. BRIAN S. HARTLESS
COL. JUSTIN R. HOFFMAN
COL. OTIS C. JONES
COL. BRIAN S. LAIDLAW
COL. JASON E. LINDSEY
COL. DEBRA A. LOVETTE
COL. WILLIAM L. MARSHALL
COL. ROBERT A. MASAITIS
COL. MICHAEL A. MILLER
COL. RICKY L. MILLS
COL. JEFFREY W. NELSON
COL. RANDY P. OAKLAND
COL. MAX E. PEARSON
COL. JONATHAN C. RICE IV
COL. JASON M. RUESCHHOFF
COL. JOEL W. SAFRANEK
COL. TIMOTHY A. SEJBA
COL. STEPHEN P. SNELSON
COL. BENJAMIN W. SPENCER
COL. FRANK R. VERDUGO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. ANTHONY P. ANGELLO
COL. FRANK L. BRADFIELD III
COL. HOWARD TRAVIS CLARK III
COL. ROBERT W. CLAUDE
COL. LISA M. CRAIG
COL. MITCHELL A. HANSON
COL. JENNIE R. JOHNSON
COL. ANDREW J. LEONE
COL. JOHN D. MCKAYE
COL. CRAIG MCPIKE
COL. KEVIN J. ROETHE
COL. REGINA A. SABRIC
COL. MICHAEL T. SCHULTZ

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. JOHN M. PAINTER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. BONNIE JOY BOSLER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. MICHAEL A. BATTLE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. MITCHEL NEUROCK

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. JAMES E. RAINEY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. MARIA R. GERVAIS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. RICHARD E. ANGLE
BRIG. GEN. JAMES E. BONNER
BRIG. GEN. MICHELE H. BREDENKAMP
BRIG. GEN. RICHARD R. COFFMAN
BRIG. GEN. CHARLES D. COSTANZA
BRIG. GEN. ROBERT L. EDMONSON II
BRIG. GEN. BRIAN S. EIFLER
BRIG. GEN. JAMES J. GALLIVAN
BRIG. GEN. ANTHONY R. HALE
BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM J. HARTMAN
BRIG. GEN. DONN H. HILL
BRIG. GEN. DAVID M. HODNE
BRIG. GEN. HEIDI J. HOYLE
BRIG. GEN. SCOTT A. JACKSON
BRIG. GEN. MARK H. LANDES
BRIG. GEN. CHRISTOPHER C. LANEVE
BRIG. GEN. DAVID A. LESPERANCE
BRIG. GEN. CHARLES R. MILLER
BRIG. GEN. MICHAEL T. MORRISSEY
BRIG. GEN. ALLAN M. PEPIN
BRIG. GEN. ANTHONY W. POTTS
BRIG. GEN. WALTER T. RUGEN
BRIG. GEN. DOUGLAS F. STITT
BRIG. GEN. DARREN L. WERNER

IN THE SPACE FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES SPACE FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. DENNIS O. BYTHEWOOD
COL. TODD R. MOORE
COL. DEVIN R. PEPPER
COL. JAMES E. SMITH

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C. SECTION 624:

To be major

TRAVIS D. BELLICCHI
PAUL S. SMITH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

JOEL R. BISCHOFF
SHELBY W. JUDD
ROBERT S. MARTIN, JR.
KENNETH D. POWERS
WAYNE T. SLETTEN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

JOHN D. CALDWELL
STEFANOS DOUMTSIS
KURT D. FIFE
KYLE J. SMET
MARION R. WENDALL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

ANDREW C. GORDON
CHELSEA M. HUTCHINSON
MEGAN G. LORD
REXFORD R. PEARCE
AARON M. ROBERTS
CASEY M. SABBAG
KARTIK SHENOY
CHRISTOPHER A. SMITH
AARON M. TAUER
CLAUDIA THOMAS
PAUL M. TRINQUERO
HANNAH E. VALDES
CASSANDRA J. WASSON
EVA K. WELCH
RICHARD G. WITTMEYER III

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

ALEXANDER O. KIRKPATRICK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

JAMILA G. EVANS
STEFAN B. FAGANKELLY
DEVAN M. THOMPSON

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY VETERINARY CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 7064:

To be lieutenant colonel

TERRA L. DAWES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL'S CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 7064:

To be major

RACHELE A. ADKINS
MOHAMED T. ALDARSANI
RUFUS C. ALLEN
ARDALAN AZAD
ROBERT J. BATEY
PETER C. BAULEKE
STEPHEN M. BEATY
ALEXANDER P. BOETTCHER
ADAM F. BRADLEY
ISAAC A. BROWN
MEGHAN L. BROWN
EDWIN CABAN, JR.
KATHARINE M. CALDERON
WESLEIGH J. COCHRANE
ANTHONY A. CONTRADA
ANDREW W. DEEL
ALBERTO J. DELGADO
AMANDA L. DIXSON
MARISSA K. DOMINGUEZ
PETER M. ELLIS
MARC J. EMOND
BRETT D. ERLAND
STEPHEN J. ESPOSITO
ALISON E. EVANS
NABEEL GADIT
IRA A. GALLAGHER
JOHN C. GIBSON
MATTHEW G. GOBLE
CATHERINE E. GODFREY
SHALOE T. GREEN
ANDREW K. GROUND
JACLYN G. HAGNER
RICHARD W. HAGNER
KENDRA J. HARRIS
JASON A. HARRUP
ERICH M. HARTMANN
CATHY H. HARTSFIELD
BRANDON D. HERBST
ALEXANDER N. HESS
NINA S. HILLNER
REBECCA S. JACKSON
BRANDON S. JONES
BRIAN D. JONES
JAMES B. KAMOROFF
KENDALL R. KEMELEK
CALLIN E. KERR
LLEWINGTINA C. KING
JONATHAN G. KRUG
JOSEPH M. LARSON
MICHAEL J. LYNESS
KEZIA B. MANESE
AARON R. MATTHES
LANDON A. MEDLEY
ESTEFANIA B. MISHKIN
OWEN D. MORRIS
MEREDITH M. PICARD
ALLYSON G. RAFFERTY
DAVID L. RETLAND
CEARA L. RIGGS
OLESEA ROAN
ROBERT W. RODRIGUEZ
JASON M. SAYRE
TRISHA M. SCHELL
LESLIE M. SCHMIDT
MATTHEW J. SCHULZ
PAUL T. SHIRK
STEVEN R. SOLLEE
JESSE S. SOMMER
AMANDA L. STAPLES
ATINA T. STAVROPOULOS
VANESSA K. STROBBE
BRITTNEY M. SULLIVAN
RYAN E. SULLIVAN
FABIENNE M. SUTER
EBONY N. THOMAS
NICOLE K. ULRICH
JOSEPH C. VANDUSEN
TUONGQUAN N. VU
RONALD C. WALTON
ANDREW S. WARMINGTON
BEAU O. WATKINS
REANNE R. WENTZ
BENJAMIN J. WETHERELL
BENJAMIN D. WILLIAMS
JOHN R. WILLIAMS
MICHAEL D. WINN
JONATHON M. WOOD
IRIS YAO
AARON G. YEE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

CLIFTON C. KYLE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

DEWAYNE L. DEENER

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

MONDRE X. BARNES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be captain

JAMES M. MCDONALD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

BRANDON T. SALES

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

CHRISTOPHER L. HARDIN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

AARON B. STOKES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

MICHAEL S. DEWEY
PAUL M. HERRLE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

MICHAEL J. ALLEN
MATRIX W. ELIAS
DARREN R. FLINT
CHRISTOPHER M. SMITH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

DOUGLAS A. MAYORGA
MARK L. OLDROYD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

JOSEPH W. HOCKETT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

JAMEEL A. ALI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

TIMOTHY M. LANDWERLEN
ADAM J. ROMNEK
KYLE H. SHOEMAKER
LONG N. VO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

JAMES A. BERRY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

JASON M. DAVIS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

STEVEN L. FERWERDA
ERIC J. GIANNETTINO
MATTHEW T. MIGLIORI
KARLTON L. PETTY
TREVOR M. SMITH
WEIGUO R. XU

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

BENJAMIN D. KASTNING
ROBERT A. LOPEZ, JR.
PAUL F. THOMAS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

DAVID W. DIXON, JR.
ROSELL HUDSON III
ELISABET PAGTAKHAN
RICHARD L. POLLARD
THOMAS R. RICE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

AARON MORA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

MARIO J. ARELLANO
JAMES V. OBRIEN
THOMAS B. WHITE, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

KELLY E. DAYTON
MARK W. MOYER, JR.
RICHARD L. RAINES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

ISMAEL ALICEA
MATTHEW A. BEARD
KENNETH J. MIDDENDORF
CHRISTOPHER M. NOLTING
ALFREDO TOPETE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS RESERVE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

JAMES L. BIGGERS, JR.
RYAN B. BOLLING
TED A. BONANNO
SEAN P. BRADLEY
DAVIS R. CHRISTY
JOHN R. COLOMBERO
WILLIAM R. CREAMER
MICHAEL P. DELPALAZZO
MICHAEL A. DETTORE
BRENDAN C. FOGERTY
SCOTT C. GARDINER
GLENFORD G. GILLETT
JOSHUA E. IZENOUR
GARY R. KIPE
LAWRENCE C. LEE
KYLE A. LEWIS
NICK G. MACKRES
MICHAEL D. MCCARTHY
SARA E. MCGRATH
ELIZABETH D. PEREZ
STEPHEN M. POWELL
DAVID M. ROSS
KEVIN T. SAUNDERS
EDWARD J. SHEA
BRIAN D. STEMPIEN
PHILIP H. STEUBER
JENNY I. STORM
DEREK L. TRABAL
DAVID A. VALDEZ
SCOTT R. WALTON
MICHAEL K. WENDLER
STEPHEN G. WEST
MAISIE M. WONG
CARL M. ZIEGLER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED LIMITED DUTY OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

JARED A. MASON

IN THE SPACE FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES SPACE FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major

JOSHUA D. KING

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Ms. STEFANIK. Madam Speaker, on January 4, 2021, I missed the procedural vote Roll Call No. 5, the motion to table the motion to refer H. Res. 8, due to a Presidential Medal of Honor ceremony in the Oval Office. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 5.

CONGRATULATING GILPIN COUNTY COMMISSIONER GAIL WATSON ON HER RETIREMENT

HON. JOE NEGUSE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, today I wish to recognize the accomplishments of an incredible public servant. Since 2012, Gail Watson has served as a County Commissioner for Gilpin County. During her time in office she has proven that hard work and determination are the cornerstones of implementing change.

As a County Commissioner, Gail has been a huge proponent of environmental protection. She has spent endless hours ensuring that Gilpin County's public lands remained free of invasive plant species and protected from development. Commissioner Watson has been a huge asset to her community and her work has positively impacted the people she has been so proud to serve.

She has shown a passion for maintaining the safety and wellbeing of her constituents. During her time as a County Commissioner, Gail prioritized access to broadband internet and phone service in Gilpin County, emphasizing that access to broadband service is a necessity in cases of emergency and for education. She also ensured that Gilpin County was well prepared for any natural disaster that might hit and focused on bolstering Gilpin's emergency preparedness.

I am grateful for Gail's dedicated service as a Gilpin County Commissioner, and I know that the impact of her work will continue to be felt for many years to come. I wish her a restful and well-deserved retirement.

HONORING FORMER PHOENIX CITY COUNCILMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER CALVIN C. GOODE

HON. GREG STANTON

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. STANTON. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of a civil rights icon and progressive giant, former Phoenix City Councilman Calvin C. Goode, who passed away on December 23, 2020 at the age of 93. Calvin spoke softly but carried with him the moral authority of having fought—and won—many civil rights battles throughout his long career.

Calvin was just 10 months old when his family moved from Oklahoma to Gila Bend, Arizona. The family relocated again to Prescott when the local school refused to enroll Calvin because of the color of his skin. He went on to attend Carver High School in Phoenix, Arizona's only high school built for Black students. After growing up attending segregated schools, Calvin devoted his life to improving education access in our community alongside his beloved late wife Georgie. He earned degrees in business and education from Phoenix College and Arizona State University, and served as an accountant for Carver and other Phoenix Union High School District schools for 30 years.

First elected in 1971, Calvin served a record 22 years on the Phoenix City Council. During his time at City Hall, Calvin continued to be guided by his deeply held belief in the equality of all people. Known as the ''Conscience of the Council,'' his legacy of creating opportunity for all endures in Phoenix—from the early childhood education and jobs programs he championed to the anti-discrimination ordinance he helped broker. He was instrumental in pushing the City to recognize Martin Luther King Jr. Day, paving the way for the holiday to be observed statewide.

Even after his time on the Council, Calvin remained one of the most impactful leaders in the Phoenix community. He fought to protect the history of his beloved Eastlake Park neighborhood where he lived for most of his life—an area shaped by segregation and redlining that became a gathering place for civil rights leaders. In his later years, he was instrumental in turning his alma mater, the formerly segregated Carver High School, into a museum and worked to ensure the institution would survive and thrive to hold African American Arizonans' history for future generations.

He was above all a man of quiet courage and unshakeable conviction, and we are all better because of his lifetime of service. Godspeed, Calvin.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BUILD AMERICA ACT OF 2021

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. HASTINGS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Build America Act of 2021, legislation that will provide $10 billion annually for merit-based infrastructure grants across the country. For years, House Democrats have called for a dramatic investment in infrastructure, and for years, these calls have gone unanswered. I am hopeful that this will be the year that we finally make the investments we need. I am proud to introduce my legislation today—not for a massive, all-encompassing infrastructure package—but rather, for a commonsense expansion of successful programs based on need and merit that will ensure we put money towards the greatest infrastructure needs regardless of any additional package passed in the House.

My legislation will significantly increase the size and scope of two existing infrastructure grant programs, the Capital Investment Grant Program (CIG), also known as New Starts/Small Starts, and the BUILD Grant Program, formerly known as the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Grant Program, or TIGER Grants. These programs have been immensely successful in the past, assisting rural and urban communities prioritize their own needs. Each program requires matching funds from those seeking assistance, making them smart and effective avenues for leveraging federal funding to make a real impact across the country.

My bill takes these programs out of the annual appropriations process. Instead, it establishes them as mandatory programs with permanent and expanded funding streams totaling more than $10 billion annually.

This expansion will be welcome news to the thousands of communities like those I represent. Consider this, since 2009, Congress has dedicated more than $8 billion for multiple rounds of TIGER/BUILD funding. In FY2020 alone, the program received over $9 billion in applications. That is more than the total amount of funding over a 10-year period in just a single fiscal year. The process is competitive, and it allows the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to reward applicants that exceed eligibility criteria and demonstrate commitments to their projects.

By increasing these funding levels and removing the programs from the annual appropriations process, we will take the guesswork and uncertainty out of the programs. This in turn will allow communities around the country to submit funding requests for projects of national, regional, or metropolitan-area significance, including the construction and repair of roads, bridges, and tunnels, the installation of high-speed internet, revitalization of drinking water infrastructure, and the construction and expansion of fixed-guideway public transportation systems, including subways, light rail, commuter rail, and bus rapid transit (BRT).

Madam Speaker, we have talked about prioritizing a large-scale infrastructure package for years. Last Congress, the House passed H.R. 2, the Moving Forward Act, a $1.5 trillion plan to rebuild American infrastructure. However, like so many other bills passed during the 116th Congress, it was ignored by the Republican controlled Senate. We need to get serious.

Every four years, the American Society of Civil Engineers issues a ''Report Card'' for America's Infrastructure. The report depicts the condition and performance of American infrastructure, assigning letter grades based on

the physical condition and needed investments for improvement across 16 major infrastructure categories. The most recent report card was issued in 2017. Among the national rankings, transit systems were rated a D− and roads were rated a D.

Dams: D.

Drinking water: D.

Inland waterways: D.

Levees: D.

We need to move this process forward. I urge my colleagues to support this critically important bill, so that our country can begin making the investments it desperately needs.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALAN S. LOWENTHAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Madam Speaker, I was absent on Tuesday, January 5, 2021 due to illness. I would have voted aye on H.R. 22—Congressional Budget Justification Transparency Act of 2021, which was considered on the House floor that day.

JEFF DORSCHNER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jeff Dorschner of the U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Colorado, for his more than 20 years of service to the state and people of Colorado.

Throughout Jeff's time with the U.S. Attorney General's office, he has had many different responsibilities and roles—from Spokesman and Public Affairs Specialist to a Member of the Executive Management Team. He is best known and will be remembered for his hard work and dedication to the office and the people it serves.

During his tenure, Jeff handled media relations for the office on issues large or small, and no matter what time or day of the week. This required Jeff to know about all office activities, stay up to date with major investigations and law enforcement events, and be well versed in all offices policies and programs. He served as a spokesperson on many diverse subjects, ranging from criminal law to civil law and financial litigation, and served as a credible voice on behalf of the U.S. Attorney and Assistant U.S. Attorneys. He developed longstanding, close relationships with members of the news media, referred to by many reporters upon his retirement as one of the state's ''toptier'' Public Information Officers (PIO), always helpful, trustworthy and responsive.

In his role in public affairs and as part of the Executive Management team, Jeff provided sound advice and counsel to the U.S. Attorney as well as responded to citizen inquiries. On occasion, Jeff would also handle inquiries from Members of Congress or state or local elected officials. Jeff was on duty on 9/11/2001 and was subsequently assigned as the Chief Information Officer for the U.S. Attorney's Anti-Terrorism Advisory Committee (ATAC).

During his tenure with the U.S. Attorney's Office, Jeff coordinated more than ten different visits by other U.S. Attorneys General as well as visits by the Deputy Attorneys General of the United States. He served four Presidents (Clinton, Bush, Obama and Trump) along with many presidential appointed and acting U.S. Attorneys (Tom Strickland, Richard ''Dick'' Spriggs, John Suthers, William ''Bill'' Leone, Troy Eid, David Gaouette, John Walsh, Bob Troyer and Jason Dunn).

I want to extend my deepest appreciation for Jeff's long career in public service and countless contributions to our community. I wish him the best in retirement and future endeavors.

REMEMBERING CHRISTINE TERLESKY

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. RYAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in memory of Christine Terlesky, a beloved mother, wife, teacher, coach, daughter, sister and friend who passed away after a long battle with ALS.

While Christine played many roles, I first came to know her as an advocate. Soon after being diagnosed, she came to Capitol Hill as a passionate voice for families living with ALS to champion additional funding, research, and legislation that would benefit those afflicted with this debilitating disease.

That's just who Christine was; a person who immediately was spurred into action on behalf of others despite being confronted with a disease that impacted all aspects of her and her family's lives.

Forever the teacher, she continued to tell her story to teach others about the realities of ALS. Forever the Coach, she used that platform to fight for ALS funding and affordable, universal healthcare for all.

I saw firsthand how Christine passionately gave her time and energy—even as it was in increasingly limited supply—to what she believed in. And for Christine, that meant community. It meant family. It meant Youngstown. We had that in common.

I have fond memories of a dinner we had in D.C. with her sisters, swapping stories of our days as Youngstown State University athletes, our big Italian families, our love of sports, and her 19 years teaching history and government and coaching at Boardman High School. The evening went on for hours.

That dinner was also when I learned of Christine's deep admiration for Hillary Clinton. In 2016, during one of Secretary Clinton's campaign stops in Youngstown, I was able to connect Christine to Secretary Clinton. I will never forget the joy in Christine's face when she first met the Secretary. And in that moment, Christine did what she always did, put others first. She used her short time with the Secretary to advocate for those suffering with ALS.

In her final months, Christine continued to use her online presence to educate and advocate. She never lost her faith in government, advocacy, and enacting policies to improve the lives of Americans.

Christine Terlesky is survived by her parents, Ronald and Judy Moschella of Boardman; her husband, Brian Terlesky; their three children, Brian (21), Tyler (16) and Emma (12); two younger sisters, Nadine (Nick) Colla and Jolene (Donald) Ross; her in-laws, Mary Lou and Ted Terlesky and nieces and nephews, Jenna and Jimmy Vivo, Lia and Nicholas Colla and Tessa, Gianna and Lena Ross.

Christine was one of the most caring, brave, and passionate people I have ever met. She gave her life to helping others and never backed down from a fight. I'm honored to have known her.

She will be sorely missed, but her community—our community—will continue to work together to carry out her mission. My prayers are with her family.

CONGRATULATING SUMMIT COUNTY COMMISSIONER THOMAS DAVIDSON ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. JOE NEGUSE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, today I seek to highlight the career of an exemplary public servant from Colorado's Second Congressional District. For fourteen years, Summit County Commissioner Thomas Davidson tirelessly devoted himself to the betterment of his community.

Thomas has never strayed during his public service from his commitment to health, safety, and equity. As the Chairman of the Combined Housing Authority, he advocated for affordable housing for all. He spent 13 years on the board of Early Childhood Options which started the County's Head Start program—providing critical resources to low-income families in this mountain county. In 2013, he was appointed by the Governor of Colorado to the State's Early Childhood Leadership Commission, and in 2015, was called on by the Governor once more to serve on the State Board of Human Services—a testament to his leadership and tenacity.

As Summit County's first openly gay County Commissioner and a vocal advocate for LGBTQ rights, Commissioner Davidson has broken barriers for the next generations and set an excellent example for his community. I am so proud to represent such a dedicated public servant and member of his community.

I am grateful for all the work Commissioner Davidson has done as a Summit County Commissioner and am glad that he will continue his involvement in his community even after his time as a County Commissioner is over. I wish him a restful and well-deserved retirement from public service.

CONGRATULATING J. GARY MUDD, VICE PRESIDENT OF GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS AT THE AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND, ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. JOHN A. YARMUTH

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. YARMUTH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate J. Gary Mudd, Vice

President of Government and Community Affairs at the American Printing House for the Blind (APH), on his retirement. For more than 34 years, Gary has been a tireless advocate for thousands of students and adults who are blind or visually impaired.

Gary has been the face of APH on Capitol Hill for decades. His approach to educating Members of Congress and their staff was to emphasize the importance of increased funding for the blind and visually impaired; demonstrating the many technologies developed by APH; and making clear how that investment helps expand educational opportunities for those without sight. Gary's determination, both personally and professionally, proved to all who know him that a blind man can achieve great success. Gary is a proud graduate of the University of Louisville where he received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Sociology.

Gary was known to many on Capitol Hill, and his guide dogs were often more recognizable than their owner. When Gary called for an appointment, the first question was: ''Is the dog coming?'' Heathcliff was his first companion. When he passed away, Denver filled the coveted position. Not that we weren't pleased to see Gary, but his companions were always a highlight of the day. Gary was a valuable resource for members of the Capitol Hill community and was always available to answer any questions about educating the blind and visually impaired.

Gary's accomplishments are many: he played a key leadership role on the APH executive board; helped establish the National Prison Braille Network—a partnership with the APH and prisons across the United States to learn braille to transcribe textbooks for blind students; and played an integral role at the APH Museum, the InSights Arts Competition, and the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Center resources services team. Gary was not only instrumental in ensuring that the APH facility was an accessible workplace for all, but also led the team to include accessibility for the blind for the Louisville Metro region to expand accessibility and technology for transit, buildings, and streets, and he worked tirelessly to help incorporate changes into city planning documents for our city.

As Helen Keller said, ''The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision.''

Gary's work at the APH demonstrated more than vision. He inspired others to join in his quest to provide the best for blind students, adults, and the visually impaired all over this great nation.

I wish Gary the very best in retirement and send my good wishes to him, his wife Susan, daughters Kelly and Rachel, and grandchildren Cate, Carter, Davis, and Kase.

IN HONOR OF THE LATE MR. ANTONIO DIAS CHAVES

HON. LORI TRAHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mrs. TRAHAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the contributions and legacy of Mr. Antonio Dias Chaves, a proud Portuguese immigrant who made Hudson, Massachusetts his home and dedicated his life and career to public service and the prosperity of the Portuguese community in Massachusetts. He tragically passed away due to COVID–19 on December 31, 2020.

From 1967 when Antonio immigrated to the United States from the Azores until his death, he worked tirelessly to make his country and community a better place. Shortly after his arrival, he enlisted in the Army and proudly served his country during the Vietnam War. His public service did not end there. Rather, it was just the beginning. In 1978, Antonio became the first Portuguese-American elected to the Hudson Board of Selectmen and just the second elected Portuguese-American in all of Massachusetts. His passion for politics blossomed and he developed friendships with many political leaders throughout the Commonwealth and beyond—all to give back to his country, support his community, and most importantly, help others.

Antonio's impact on the Portuguese diaspora in Massachusetts cannot be understated nor can his commitment to helping other immigrants achieve the American Dream. Antonio helped thousands of people make a life for themselves and their families in America as both an immigration consultant and a public servant with the Massachusetts Office of Refugees and Immigrants. As a former congressional staffer and member of Congress, I had the opportunity see first-hand Antonio's determined advocacy for helping others, his devotion to his community, his pride in his heritage, and of course, his passion for the Hudson Portuguese Club. I will miss seeing him among families and friends during dinners or feasts at the Club, where he could usually be found as the resident Master of Ceremonies, hosting in the restaurant, cheering on his favorite team (Sporting Clube de Portugal), having a toast with friends, or tending to duties as the president of the general assembly.

For his contributions and accomplishments, he was awarded one of the highest civilian honors bestowed by the Portuguese Government, the Order of Merit and the title of ''Comendador''. Throughout his life, Antonio would receive numerous recognitions from State and local government and other distinguished organizations for his work in the community through the Hudson Portuguese Club and Portugal 73, one of the oldest continually running Portuguese radio shows in the world. Recently, Antonio authored and published ''Os Meus Imperios'', a memoir of establishing the Holy Ghost Festival or ''Imperio'' in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

Antonio will be remembered for his love for his family, our great nation, unparalleled friendship, passion for helping others, and pride in his Portuguese heritage. His contributions to our community and grateful nation will never be forgotten. My heart goes out to Zelia, Derek, and the entire Chaves family during this difficult time. Antonio's legacy will live on through his loving family and all of us who had the honor of calling him a friend.

HONORING AUGUSTUS BENTON ''BEN'' CHAFIN, JR.

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. GRIFFITH. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of Virginia state Senator Augustus Benton ''Ben'' Chafin, Jr. of Lebanon, Virginia, who died on January 1, 2021 at the age of 60. Ben was a dedicated and effective state legislator and a kind and decent man.

Ben was a true son of Southwest Virginia. He was born on May 18, 1960 in Abingdon, Virginia. He earned a bachelor's degree from East Tennessee State University and a law degree from the University of Richmond. Ben practiced law in Lebanon as a principal of the Chafin Law Firm. He also served as a board member of the First Bank and Trust, which his father had helped to found, and ran a beef cattle farm.

In 2013, Ben won a seat in the Virginia House of Delegates. A year later, he won a special election to represent the 38th District in the Virginia Senate. The 38th District includes all of the Counties of Bland, Buchanan, Dickenson, Russell, Tazewell, and Pulaski, parts of the Counties of Smyth, Wise, and Montgomery, and the Cities of Norton and Radford. He was a great representative for the citizens of these jurisdictions, focused on listening to their concerns and addressing them with compassion and integrity. He was a voice in Richmond for the region he had long called home and the people he had known as his friends and neighbors.

Ben was my friend and a good friend to all of us in Southwest Virginia. He and I knew each other well as we often campaigned together across our region. The wide respect and affection Ben earned is indicated by the statement of Virginia Governor Ralph Northam: ''With the passing of Senator Ben Chafin, Southwest Virginia has lost a strong advocate—and we have all lost a good man.'' A similar sentiment was expressed by Virginia Delegate Terry Kilgore, a close friend of Ben: ''Ben was a fighter, both in the Virginia Senate and in the courtroom as an attorney. I am honored to have been able to know and work with him. Ben is one of the most honorable and genuine individuals I have ever known, and his passing is a tremendous loss for our region.''

Ben is survived by his wife Lora and his children Audra, Sophie, and Gus. I offer my condolences on the loss of this good man and great legislator.

WUHAN VIRUS CHRONICLER JAILED

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, The Wall Street Journal on Tuesday, December 29, Chun Han Wong reported that Wuhan Chronicler Zhang Zhan was convicted of ''picking quarrels and provoking trouble with her posts'' jailing her for four years.

''A Chinese court imposed a four-year prison term on a citizen journalist who documented how Covid–19 ravaged the city where the coronavirus was first detected . . .

''Zhang Zhan, 37 years old, was convicted of ''picking quarrels and provoking trouble'' after a roughly 2½-hour trial . . . where prosecutors accused her of spreading falsehoods about the pandemic through social-media posts . . .

''Her detention dovetails with Chinese leader Xi Jinping's campaign to recast the

coronavirus pandemic . . . featuring extensive propaganda and censorship efforts aimed at mollifying public anger and suppressing criticism against missteps in the government's initial response.

''In Monday's trial, Ms. Zhang said she regarded the proceeding, against her as illegitimate . . .''

I especially regret the Communist Party repression of the Chinese people because my father, First Lieutenant Hugh Wilson, served in China during World War II in the Flying Tigers where I grew up with his affection for the Chinese people and their extraordinary culture.

In conclusion, God Bless our Troops and we will never forget September 11th in the Global War on Terrorism.

ADOPTING THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE 117TH CONGRESS

SPEECH OF

HON. JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 4, 2021

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, I express my opposition to the proposed House Rules governing the 117th Congress.

As the Congresswoman for Puerto Rico, I represent 3.2 million Puerto Ricans, American citizens by birth since 1917. Yet as such I have no vote on passage of measures.

While House Resolution 8 will continue to provide the Delegates and the Resident Commissioner a vote in the Committee of the Whole, the vote will only count if the votes cast are not deciding votes.

If Delegates or the Resident Commissioner, while in the Committee of the Whole, cast deciding votes, the measure will receive a revote without any delegate or Resident Commissioner casting a vote during the second vote.

This is just a reflection of a continued injustice and a step that does little or nothing to address it.

More than a symbolic expression, my constituents need equal standing.

This past November, Puerto Ricans exercised their choice by casting 623,053 votes for statehood, capturing 52-percent of the total vote. This referendum was a straight yes-no question as to the ultimate will of the Puerto Rican voters.

Puerto Rico demands equality. My constituents voted for equal voting representation in the U.S. House of Representatives and the United States Senate, which can only be achieved through statehood.

Puerto Rico would have at least four U.S. Representatives in the House and the Constitutionally mandated two Senators when it becomes a state. This would give the island six electoral votes during a Presidential election cycle.

And still, there are those who still try to subvert the will of the voters who actually live in the island.

All the crises that Puerto Rico has suffered during the past four years, including hurricanes, earthquakes, the coronavirus pandemic, and the fiscal crisis, demonstrate the urgency of achieving equality with the states.

That is why statehood cannot wait any longer. The island must receive the same treatment that is received in the rest of the nation. There is strength in the Union, particularly in moments of collective crisis.

The territorial status is also primarily responsible for the island's economic underdevelopment and decline.

According to the Census there are 5.4 million Puerto Ricans living in the rest of the United States as opposed to 3.26 million living on the island—a difference of 2.1 million people, driven by the lack of opportunity.

It's a pleasure to serve in this House, the most diverse in its history. However, we are failing to address the pressing issue of Puerto Rico's need for real, not symbolic votes in Congress.

The island deserves equality, and my constituents deserve representation.

CONGRATULATING LARIMER COUNTY COMMISSIONER STEVE JOHNSON ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. JOE NEGUSE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, today I wish to recognize the incredible work and achievements of Larimer County Commissioner Steve Johnson. For 24 years, Steve has devoted himself to serving his community and the State of Colorado, including spending 12 years serving in the Colorado Legislature and 12 years serving as a Larimer County Commissioner.

Prior to becoming a Larimer County Commissioner, Mr. Johnson served in the Colorado House of Representatives for 6 years, during which time he served as the Majority Caucus Chairman. He followed that service with an equally long 6-year stint in the Colorado Senate, serving on the Joint Budget Committee and Senate Appropriations Committee.

While serving as Larimer County Commissioner, he helped the county's recovery efforts as Larimer County faced some of the largest natural disasters in the county's history. The High Park Fire in 2012, the One Hundred Year Flood in 2013, and the Cameron Peak Fire and COVID–19 in 2020 have caused extensive damage and posed great challenges to the county's leadership. Commissioner Johnson helped steer the community through these disasters with level-headed determination and a commitment to the people of Larimer County.

He was also instrumental in helping to pass the Behavioral Health Initiative, a measure which led to Larimer County being a leader in Colorado for providing mental health services and substance abuse care and increased available resources for his community.

After 24 years of public service, Commissioner Johnson certainly deserves a happy and restful retirement. On behalf of the people of Colorado's 2nd Congressional district, thank you Commissioner Johnson for your outstanding dedication to public service.

RECOGNIZING SHARON STARK FOR HER SERVICE AS DISTRICT DIRECTOR FOR THE 11TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my dear friend and District Director, Sharon Stark, on her retirement after more than a decade of dedicated and faithful service to our community.

Mrs. Stark's strong work ethic started at a young age when she got her first job selling shoes at the age of 15. After college, she began her career as a bank teller and worked her way up to be a Vice President of Operations by the time she was 29. She then started a second career as Vice President of a Top 25 title company for residential and commercial real estate.

In 2005, Sharon was selected to be a member of Virginia's 11th Congressional District Democratic Committee where she served as the Treasurer for many years with our dear friend Chairman George Burke. Two years later, in 2007, she was named finance chair for George Barker's campaign for the Senate of Virginia. The success of the Barker campaign flipped control of the Senate and helped Democrats secure the majority.

Sharon has managed my Congressional district offices since 2009. Under her leadership, the office has established a stellar reputation for constituent services and community engagement.

It was during the depths of the 2008 financial crisis and the subsequent collapse of the housing market that Sharon demonstrated just how hard she was willing to fight for constituents. She put her considerable talent and expertise to work for our constituents. People came to our office at risk of being foreclosed upon, having their utilities turned off, not knowing where they would be sleeping the next night, and Sharon took up their cause. She fought with the banks, gave people hope where they saw none, and even went to the courthouse steps to prevent foreclosures. She saved people's homes and changed their lives for the better.

Since 2011, our offices have kept track of the financial assistance we have been able to secure for our constituents. This assistance includes helping constituents receive their refund from the IRS or benefits from the Veterans Administration, helping someone resolve their Social Security Disability Insurance claim, and other efforts that result in constituents receiving financial assistance owed to them. Over the past 9 years, Sharon and her team have helped our constituents obtain nearly $20 million in one-time or retroactive benefits plus $9 million per year in recurring benefits.

Sharon has organized countless events for the benefit of our constituents. She has established an Open Season event that brings together various health plan providers and industry experts to educate thousands of federal employees, retirees, survivor annuitants, and veterans on their health plan options for the coming year. Sharon spearheaded the annual Congressional Art Competition for VA–11 and has grown the event into something truly

memorable for the participants and their families. Students compete for more than $1,000 in scholarship prizes and have the opportunity to see for the first time their own artwork in a professional gallery setting.

Sharon has also coordinated countless town halls, roundtables, fairs and festivals outreach booths, and numerous other community engagements. The events often grapple with serious topics such as gun control, the opioid epidemic, health care, and she has always striven to ensure that they are meaningful exchanges of information and viewpoints for attendees.

One particular area into which Sharon has thrown herself and her considerable energy is the Military Service Academy nomination process for VA–11. She organizes and coordinates the advisory boards from each service academy, sets the interview calendar, supports the deliberations, and in the end helps nominate the future military leaders of our nation. Under Sharon's leadership, our district is routinely in the top three nationally for having the most students accepted into one of the prestigious U.S. Military Academies. For Sharon, it is a labor of love and service to both our country and the promising young students who seek to serve their nation in uniform.

This past year as we endured the COVID–19 pandemic, Sharon once again stepped into the breach, deferring her retirement by working tirelessly to help constituents who have faced personal tragedies and financial hardships. During the pandemic, Sharon has helped small businesses secure desperately needed grants and loans, helped families resolve issues with economic impact payments, and made every effort to ensure that our constituents who were stuck abroad were able to make it back to the United States safely. In 2020 alone, Sharon and our staff were able to help more than 1,800 individuals overcome personal crises directly related to the global pandemic.

Madam Speaker, Sharon Stark is a model public servant and I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing Sharon Stark health and happiness as she concludes a distinguished career in service to her country and community. There are people who have their health, a roof over their head, or food on the table thanks to Sharon. I am proud to have had her lead my district offices for the past 13 years and represent me in our community. Our office, constituents, and district will miss her immensely; as will I, and I wish her nothing but the best in retirement in which she will be able to spend more time with her husband Seth, her daughter Christine, and her granddaughter Jacqueline. Job well done Sharon Stark.

OPPOSITION TO THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE OBJECTION

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. KIND. Madam Speaker, today is supposed to be a celebration of our democracy—the peaceful transfer of power in our Country. Instead we saw mob rule descend on our Nation's Capitol. That's why I rise today in defense of a pillar of our democracy—the right for a free and fair election decided by the will of the voters and, ultimately, respected and accepted by the losing candidate and their supporters.

The other side can indulge in all the conspiracy theories they want, but when you involve the integrity of our elections in my home State of Wisconsin, well then I have a problem.

In our federal system of government, the administration of elections are controlled by our States—not Congress.

What happens in Wisconsin is up to Wisconsin—not Washington.

Our job in Congress is to count the electoral college votes, not overturn them.

Wisconsin has a long history of open, fair, and accurate elections because of the laws that our State has established and executed by 2,000 state and local officials, and countless volunteers, all who take their responsibility seriously with the highest form of honesty, integrity, fairness, and accuracy.

What is being attempted here tonight is an attempt to invalidate 3.3 million valid Wisconsin votes merely because their preferred candidate didn't win.

But if they succeed, democracy dies and dictatorship reigns.

The Trump campaign has filed state and federal court cases challenging the outcome of the vote in Wisconsin—all of which have been dismissed due to lack of any evidence of fraud.

Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice Brian Hagedorn, who was former Republican Governor Scott Walker's chief legal counsel, wrote in dismissing one of these challenges:

"We are invited to invalidate the entire presidential election in Wisconsin by declaring it "null"—yes, the whole thing . . . this is a dangerous path we are being asked to tread. The loss of public trust in our constitutional order resulting from the exercise of this kind of judicial power would be incalculable."

And he is not alone in that assessment.

The former Republican Speaker of the House from Wisconsin, Paul Ryan, said in a statement:

"Efforts to reject the votes of the electoral college and sow doubt about Joe Biden's victory strike at the foundation of our republic.

It is difficult to conceive of a more anti-democratic and anti-conservative act than a federal intervention to overturn the results of state-certified elections and disenfranchise millions of Americans.

The fact that this effort will fail does not mean it will not do significant damage to American democracy."

He concluded by stating:

"The Trump campaign had ample opportunity to challenge election results, and those efforts failed from lack of evidence . . . Joe Biden's victory is entirely legitimate."

Or consider the third ranking Republican leader in this House, Rep. LIZ CHENEY who described this attempt as "deeply troubling".

She went on to state:

"This is directly at odds with the Constitution's clear text and our core beliefs as Republicans."

"Doing so" she said "Would be establishing a tyranny of Congress and stealing power from the States and the people in those States."

Finally consider what my friend and Republican colleague from Wisconsin, MIKE GALLAGHER, had to say about this:

"I just don't think we want to endorse the principle that January 6 is a legitimate forum for Congress to overturn the will of the States and the people . . . if you've endorsed that principle, then you've already destroyed the idea of American government. At least you've destroyed the conservative idea of American government."

What these Republican leaders understand is this—

If Congressional Members vote to reject valid Presidential electors for invalid reasons, There is nothing anyone can do about it.

The ugly truth is that, despite a nationwide vote, fenced in with legal and technical safeguards, after 244 years of history, the U.S. President is elected on the honor system of 535 Members of Congress, each sworn to preserve, protect, and defend our Constitution and our representative democracy enshrined in it.

It's not an oath to any individual or to any party.

Now it's easy to play war when you think that you're firing blanks, but these are not blanks being fired at our Constitution.

This is dangerous today because of the collateral damage that is being done to the sanctity of the ballot box.

It is also dangerous because it now provides a blueprint for next time.

President Trump will not be successful this time, but next time when some authoritarian wannabe takes a run at our Constitution, all bets are off.

We have a tendency in this Country to kick our Democracy around like it's a football—it's more like an egg, very fragile. You break it, good luck putting it back together again.

Please, do not put Donald Trump ahead of our Constitution, ahead of the rule of law, ahead of the sanctity of the ballot box.

Vote no on this attempt to overturn a valid election.

Vote no on this objection.

ELECTION IRREGULARITIES

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, after rigorous analysis and much reflection, I will not oppose the counting of certified electoral votes from any state.

I share some of the concerns about election irregularities. Today's proceedings give Congress the opportunity to raise concerns about alleged election wrongdoing in several states which I hope will ultimately lead to bipartisan state investigations and reform to ensure fair and free elections.

Today, however, Congress is tasked with counting the electoral votes sent by each state. Nullifying the electors of any state requires proof that electors were not "lawfully certified" according to state laws.

In early December, Attorney General William Barr told the Associated Press that "U.S. attorneys and FBI agents have been working to follow up specific complaints and information they've received, but "to date, we have not seen fraud on a scale that could have effected a different outcome in the election."

All elections in the United States must be free and fair—any action to subvert, cheat,

suppress or steal any election should be investigated and prosecuted.

Even if the nefarious activity was minor—and not likely to alter the outcome of an election—individuals who engage in such acts should be held accountable in a court of law.

Noone has a license to cheat.

Sixteen years ago, some Democratic members of the Senate and House tried to overturn the results of the Bush-Kerry Presidential election. They failed. When counting the electoral votes on January 6, 2005, I voted ''no'' on the objection to accepting Ohio's electors—enough to reverse the outcome of the election—sponsored by Rep. Stephanie Tubbs Jones (D–Oh) because the allegations lacked both merit and proof. Only 31 Members of the House voted in favor of the election changing objection.

Congress, states and local governments need to undertake a top-to-bottom review of election law and administrative polices to ensure that elections are free and fair.

The future of our Nation depends on it.

Finally, I unequivocally condemn the assault on the Capitol today. And those who committed violence, vandalism and other crimes should be prosecuted to the greatest extent of the law.

Special thanks to the Capitol Police and all law enforcement for their brave and decisive actions to mitigate and then end today's crisis.

Despite its many flaws, the U.S. Congress continues to be an extraordinary marketplace of ideas and differing opinions.

The enactment of wise public policy to benefit all Americans requires robust dialogue and debate—and genuine respect for one another especially when there is fundamental disagreement.

We must be committed to zero-tolerance towards violence in any form.

OBJECTION TO ELECTORAL COLLEGE

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I am filled with sadness and anger following the attack on the U.S. Capitol today. It is the result of a fever that has been building for weeks, months and years and which has only been further incited by President Trump. Today is a point of inflection and reflection, and we need to say enough. This only strengthens our resolve to get the Electoral Votes counted and certified and continue with a peaceful transition of power, as has been a hallmark of our nation.

The vote was decisive. Despite the ongoing pandemic, we saw a historic 158 million Americans vote. Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS won 306 votes in the Electoral College after earning the support of more than 81 million Americans. After 60 failed lawsuits and dozens of recounts, there is not one shred of evidence of major fraud in this election. Yet ever since Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS won this election, there has been a concerted effort to overturn the will of the voters. These objections are unfounded, absurd and dangerous. They are contrary to 60 courts which denied claims of fraud or vote improprieties. I am saddened to see many of my colleagues continue to peddle these lies and falsehoods instead of supporting the peaceful transition of power enshrined in our Constitution.

Our elections are among the safest and most transparent in the world. For that, I want to thank the tens of thousands of Americans who work to secure our elections each and every year, including Colorado's elections officials and workers who continue to exemplify a successful mail-in voting system and workers for Dominion Voting Systems based in Colorado. Unfortunately, due to these baseless attacks on the election results, many of these election workers have been threatened and intimidated. Yet these poll workers did their duty and counted the votes, shepherding and overseeing one of the most fundamental and integral pillars of our democracy—free, fair and open elections.

Today, Congress resolves to complete our work in Joint Session to formally receive the votes of the Electors, which have not been disputed by any state. Our job is not to overturn the will of the voters or the states, it is simply to certify their decision on who will be the next President and Vice President of the United States. I urge all my colleagues to reject these frivolous and dangerous objections to the vote of the Electoral College and join with the country in supporting the peaceful transition of power. It's time to get back to the business of the people and of the country as we build a better future.

CONGRATULATING SUMMIT COUNTY COMMISSIONER KARN STIEGELMEIER ON HER RETIREMENT

HON. JOE NEGUSE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, today I wish to recognize and honor the work of retiring Summit County Commissioner Karn Stiegelmeier. Karn has continuously devoted much of her time and energy to maintaining our beautiful public lands and environment in Summit County, Colorado—a community I am so proud to represent. Prior to serving as a County Commissioner, she worked for the National Forest Service and National Park Service, where she served in the crucial roles of wildland firefighter and park ranger, and also taught students in Summit County.

During her time as a Summit County Commissioner, Karn continued to advocate for the protection of our environment and was fiercely determined to preserve the precious quality of life we enjoy in Colorado. She also continuously advocated for forest health and wildfire prevention, both of which have helped Colorado's Second Congressional District in incalculable ways.

She has truly shown an incredible determination to better her community, and I thank her for her many years of service as County Commissioner. I am grateful for all the work Karn has done during her time as a Summit County Commissioner and wish her a restful and well-deserved retirement from public service.

CONCERNS ABOUT THE CERTIFICATION OF THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE VOTE

HON. SCOTT DesJARLAIS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Madam Speaker, I rise to voice my concerns about the certification of the Electoral College vote.

First, I think it is imperative to highlight the importance of how our nation's elections are conducted. I have received many calls, emails, letters, and I have spoken to many of my constituents who are concerned about the irregularities in the 2020 election cycle.

Today, I have many concerns about our most recent election, but my objection is focused on one primary constitutional question around changes to election laws made by state officials without the approval of their state legislatures. This is, of course, a legal question, concerning the constitutionality of last-minute election law changes made by executive orders without the approval of the state legislatures. Article II, Section 1 includes the ''Electors Clause,'' stating:

> Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.

There is no question that changes in state election laws were made by executive orders without legislative approval (usually under the guise of COVID) to allow for ballots to be allowed after deadlines had passed and mail-ins and absentees to be allowed under far more liberal circumstances which created an environment that allowed ''vote harvesting'' and thousands of ballots to be counted days and weeks after the election—without the requisite standards of verification that we should expect for a secure election.

It is a valid constitutional question and I note a recent observation by Justice Gorsuch in an unrelated recently decided case between the Brooklyn diocese and Governor Andrew Cuomo in New York on unlawful forced shutdowns:

> ''Government is not free to disregard the [Constitution] in times of crisis. . . . Yet recently, during the COVID pandemic, certain States seem to have ignored these long-settled principles.''

All of these issues are just some of the concerns and questions regarding the 2020 election and were not limited to these three states. Many other concerns of voting irregularities have been reported across the country including fraud and government officials changing state laws without legislature approval.

These are serious concerns and allegations. It should be the state legislatures, and not government officials or judges, making changes to election laws.

The timing of these election law changes is also problematic. In some states, changes were made to state election laws during the year of the election. These last-minute changes only allow for confusion and chaos, as we have seen since November 2020.

From a global pandemic to one of the most consequential Presidential elections in our lifetimes, 2020 was a year of many unknowns.

What should not be an unknown are the laws and rules states have on implementing our elections. However, the actions by many state officials and judges, along with improper voting activities, have allowed the 2020 Presidential election to be called into question.

It is because of these questions and irregularities, that I object to today's certification process and today, our challenge asks for a simple remedy—an appointment of an electoral commission that can hear the claims of election irregularities, review the evidence, and decide as to what the facts are and whether or not election laws were followed. I do not believe that to be an unreasonable demand.

I am proud to represent the state of Tennessee—a state that gets the election process done right and should be a role model for the nation. In addition to our open Election Day procedures, Tennessee provides a generous early voting process of 2 weeks in order for people to choose a day and time convenient to their schedule. In unique circumstances, there are also a number of statutory reasons where a citizen can request a mail-in or absentee ballot by mail and have their votes counted as well.

It is a process that works and is fair and equitable to everyone in the state. It is not unfair, it does not suppress voting, and it provides an orderly, secure method for conducting elections and counting votes in a timely fashion. Everyone has the ability to do their civic duty with a minimum amount of effort—no drama, no long lines and waits, and a process that is free and fair to all candidates. Votes are tabulated, and results are provided in a timely fashion on election night. It's not complicated, we have done this for many election cycles now, and we did not change our procedures on the fly in 2020.

We are very fortunate to do things the right way in Tennessee and we did once again in 2020. Sadly, there were a few states that got it wrong and call into question the integrity of the Presidential election. It is ridiculous and unacceptable in the 21st Century that other states have processes that lead to a situation where it took weeks to have votes tabulated, vote totals remaining uncertain, and the numbers of uncounted votes being uncertain for days—and weeks—after Election Day.

I respectfully and vigorously disagree with people who suggest that the processes that were opened and expanded in 2020 in many states are not subject to fraud and abuse—under these new standards ballots are mailed on behalf of people, ballots are sent to the wrong addresses, and ballot harvesting is encouraged. And again, one of the biggest problems with mail-in ballots is managing this process in a way that allows votes to be counted and winners to be determined in a timely fashion. It should not take weeks to determine a winner in state and federal races, and the prospects of all future Presidential elections being undecided for weeks on end leads to uncertainty and a lack of confidence in the results and the fairness of the process.

It is absurd. Even if you accept that everything is above board, no one should sit here and say that this process doesn't stink. Election reform is needed and the mail-in process will always be vulnerable to delays and the suggestion that foul play is involved—especially with the evidence being presented. Widespread mail in balloting with undefined rules and limitations is a solution in search of a problem and is unnecessary to conduct a fair election in this country. We need a defined in-person voting process that includes early voting. We need voter ID requirements. We need a limited mail in ballot process that allows for absentee votes for military personnel serving overseas or away from their homes, people traveling abroad for extended periods, and those that have serious health issues that would legitimately keep them from being able to make it to the polls. Beyond that, people should take a brief moment out of their lives to show up and make an informed vote for the candidates and issues on the ballot.

Since the disputed Presidential election in 2000, this nation has spent billions upon billions of dollars for updated machines and processes, and 20 years later we are arguably in a worse position in terms of having a transparent process. There is no reason—NONE—that we can't have a procedure in this day and time to have almost all votes accounted for on Election Day.

We cannot keep conducting our elections in a way that does not provide surety and confidence in its results. We need uniform processes for our federal elections, and we need laws in place to ensure that all legal voters are given their constitutionally protected rights to participate in civic engagement, but not through a process in which votes are gathered and harvested without their participation in the process. Tennesseans demand this fair process, and I will always fight for it.

ELECTION IRREGULARITIES CANNOT BE IGNORED

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise to support the objection. People across the United States are rightfully concerned about the mishandling of their votes and irregularities in the 2020 federal election. I share this concern given the incredible irregularities, additionally because the Constitution provides that election laws are the sole jurisdiction of state legislators which must be maintained, and not to be changed by obscure unilateral and judicial abuse with unfounded defiance of state laws. As a nation of laws, violence must never be excused by any one for any reason.

As a former Lexington County Election Commissioner, not just as a Member of Congress, I am disgusted at the irregularities in the 2020 presidential election. The failure to validate signatures, the omission of witnesses, the interruption of counting before completion, the denial of poll watchers for access to fully observe, the extension of ballots received beyond Election Day, and the registration of illegal aliens, allowing non-citizens to vote, are all an open invitation for fraud. I had counted on courts to fully consider lawsuits by 18 states and 126 members of Congress, but the Courts have declined to act.

In four states, Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, the authority of the state legislatures to enact election rules and procedures, which is delegated by Article II, Section 1, Clause 2 of the Constitution was unlawfully subverted. This is an unconstitutional act.

For these reasons, I will object to certification of the Electoral College.

SUPPORTING THE 2020 ELECTORAL COLLEGE OBJECTIONS

HON. BOB GOOD

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. GOOD of Virginia. Madam Speaker, first, I want to thank the incredible men and women serving as U.S. Capitol Police for their dedicated efforts to keep everyone safe and to secure our Capitol.

On January 3rd I took an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution. The lawlessness that broke down our Capitol doors today is a reminder of just how sacred our duty is to uphold the rule of law. I want to extend my thanks to my colleagues who join me in continuing the constitutional duties of Congress and having this debate tonight with civility and without fear.

Tonight is about more than the 2020 presidential election; it is about all future elections, and Congress doing its constitutional duty to ensure election integrity, and not accept electoral votes from states with sufficient evidence of fraud that has not been fully investigated, and whose state legislators did not ensure the law was followed or ensure the integrity of their elections.

This challenge is not uncharted territory or a new exercise, as Democrats have objected on this floor to every recent presidential victory by Republicans, most recently challenging the electoral votes for 10 states following the 2016 presidential election, with their primary justification being the phony Russian collusion charges.

What is unprecedented about this presidential election is first, the number of people who believe the election was stolen, second, the amount of evidence that indicates fraud and other violations of election law that has not been investigated, and third, the number of members who are objecting to some of the electoral votes, a number not seen since 1876—or 144 years.

The 2005 bipartisan commission headed by Jimmy Carter and James Baker warned of this type of widespread voter fraud through illegal aliens voting, not requiring identification verification, and mass voting by mail.

These three issues clearly facilitate the compromise of election integrity.

Yet, there have not been any evidentiary hearings to even consider these allegations of voter fraud.

Georgia is one of the most egregious examples of violations of legal election procedures to the degree that it almost certainly determined the outcome of the election allegedly decided by a mere 12,000 votes.

The legislators in Georgia failed to protect and ensure the integrity of their election.

We, the Congress, are the forum for the voices of the American people. It is our responsibility to evaluate the validity of these electoral votes and to either accept them as legitimately cast or reject them as questionable or unreliable.

It is my judgment that the electoral votes submitted by the state of Georgia are unreliable and therefore should not be accepted.

HONORING TREVER AUBRIA ''T.A.'' CARTER, JR.

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. GRIFFITH. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of Trever Aubria "T.A." Carter, Jr., who passed away on December 27, 2020 at the age of 93. T.A. was a veteran, architect, and philanthropist in Virginia's Roanoke Valley.

T.A. was born on December 20, 1927 to Trever Aubria Carter, Sr. and Pernell Jackson Carter Smith. He graduated from Jefferson High School. After serving in the United States Navy at the end of World War II, he earned a degree in architecture from Virginia Tech.

The properties T.A. helped develop dot the landscape of western Virginia. He launched the Double T Corporation with T.D. Steele and also worked in partnerships with other businessmen. Among the locations T.A. helped develop were Crossroads Mall, the first enclosed shopping mall in Virginia, and Tanglewood Mall in Roanoke, University Mall in Blacksburg, Hunting Hills Country Club, properties for the Marriott hotel chain in Roanoke and Blacksburg, and residential neighborhoods including the Stonegate neighborhood and the Stonegate Swim Club. He was a hands-on developer who visited his projects every day they were under development.

T.A. contributed to the architecture of western Virginia but he contributed in other ways. He advocated for Explore Park in Roanoke and Bedford Counties. As a devotee of his alma mater, Virginia Tech, he established the T.A. Carter Professorship in the College of Architecture, and he supported Roanoke College in Salem as well. T.A. also belonged to the Salem Rotary for many years.

T.A. was known for his kind and charitable nature, taking an interest in the people of his community and his profession and supporting their endeavors. I was a recipient of his generosity. The Stonegate Swim Club which he built and owned had an initiation fee and a membership fee, but he let a single-parent schoolteacher in the area pay the fees in installments for her children so they could use the facility. As one of those children, I enjoyed the opportunity to swim and took it up as a lifelong hobby. I am a member of that swim club to this day.

T.A. is survived by his wife of 71 years, Jeanette Watson Carter; his daughter, Treva Jean Carter and fiancé Alan; his son, Edward Paul Carter and wife Juliette; his granddaughter, Amber Miller Mason; grandsons Jeremy Wyatt Carter and wife Kel and Benjamin Gerald Carter and wife Melissa, and great-grandchildren Maggie, Carter, Wyatt, and Millie. I wish to offer my condolences on the loss of T.A., who did so much for the development and support of the Roanoke Valley.

CONGRATULATING STATE SENATOR MIKE FOOTE ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. JOE NEGUSE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, today I want to honor an extraordinary leader and colleague of mine who has worked tirelessly for his constituents, Colorado State Senator Mike Foote. After serving 5 years in the Colorado House of Representatives, Senator Foote then served an additional two years as State Senator for District 17 in the Colorado Senate.

The time and effort Senator Foote put into representing his community is a testament to his ability and dedication to his constituency. Senator Foote worked hard to generate bipartisan agreements on legislation, putting his constituents above politics. He worked tirelessly to represent the values of his constituents, especially as a leader in critical efforts to fight climate change and preserve our environment for generations to come.

During the COVID–19 pandemic, he authored legislation that was signed into law to protect consumers from price gouging and other deceptive business practices, and he has long worked to protect consumers all across Colorado.

Senator Foote has been a dedicated public servant to the people of Boulder County for many years, and he has made a tremendous impact on his community. I am grateful for his work, and I am sure that he will leave a lasting legacy in our great state. I thank him for his service and contributions to the state of Colorado and wish him a restful and well-deserved retirement from public service.

SUPPORTING THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE OBJECTIONS IN THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

HON. JOHN W. ROSE

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. ROSE. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the objection to counting the electoral votes from Pennsylvania.

Violence today did not prevail. We are back in this chamber, carrying out our constitutional duty by holding this debate and eventually moving forward with our American tradition of a peaceful transfer of power. I want to echo the Majority Leader's statements tonight that we need to act as Americans, as "we the people," and that is what I am doing—fighting to ensure the election integrity of this nation so that all Americans can have trust in the process that defines us. I am fighting today to preserve our democratic republic through a thoughtful debate on the obvious flaws of the 2020 election process.

While our actions today may not reverse the blatant failure of some states to properly vet the votes, this is an important venue to discuss the concerns of the many people who are dissatisfied with the 2020 election process.

Serious irregularities and improprieties in several states raise legitimate concerns about the election administration in those states. These documented irregularities were then under reported or ignored altogether by the media.

Although states have long been empowered to administer their elections, when a state or states blatantly fail to a provide a trustworthy process, those states should expect calls for accountability and transparency from citizens, officials, and states nationwide.

This 2020 presidential election has shone a bright light on the fact that states need to step up and properly reform their election processes, where needed, to deliver trustworthy results for all Americans.

Madam speaker, I urge my colleagues today to support this objection and to join me in the fight for election integrity.

DEFENDING OUR DEMOCRACY

HON. MIKE LEVIN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. LEVIN of California. Madam Speaker, for the first time since 1814, the United States Capitol Building was breached by an angry mob. More than 200 years ago, it was British troops. This time it was domestic terrorists, inspired and encouraged by President Donald Trump.

I started the day prepared to uphold my oath of office—an oath I took this past Sunday at the launch of the 117th Congress to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic."

I planned to uphold that oath by voting to certify the results of the Electoral College, and we are getting back to our work and certifying Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS as our next President and Vice President. We will do that work thanks to the efforts and bravery of the Capitol Police and other law enforcement agencies who have intervened. While there will be many questions about how this security breach occurred, I am incredibly grateful for the men and women who risked their lives to keep us safe today.

As for the domestic terrorists who sought to overthrow our democracy, they must be prosecuted. Their leader must be removed from office as soon as possible and their enablers in Congress must be held responsible for their role in this catastrophe.

Despite 81 million votes for President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect KAMALA HARRIS, multiple recounts, and more than 60 failed lawsuits challenging the election results, many of my Republican colleagues followed Trump's lead and pushed outlandish conspiracy theories and baseless claims of voter fraud without any evidence, entirely void of reality.

Many Congressional Republicans are seeking to overturn the results of a free and fair election because they don't like the results. They didn't realize—or didn't care—that their actions could result in a violent coup attempt. That's exactly what happened today.

The question now is a vital one: where does our country go from here?

For many decades, we have had passionate but peaceful political disagreements—a shining beacon of democracy. We Americans do not support insurrection or mob rule. In short, we are so much better than this.

We are now at a crossroads in our great nation's history, a moment where we see two divergent paths in front of us. We can continue down a path of hyper-partisanship, divisiveness, and democratic decay, or we can try to heal our country. We can come together to reject the violence we saw today and recommit to upholding the values that unite us as Americans: democracy, justice, and equality. It is paramount that we choose the right path.

I hope my colleagues who insist on continuing this charade, understand that their actions will be remembered as among the most shameful in our nation's history. Generations of Americans to come will learn of their attempt to undermine the democratic institutions our country was founded upon.

To those other colleagues—Republicans and Democrats alike—who will uphold their oath of office and help lead us down a better path, I thank them for defending our democracy. Our Constitution must never be taken for granted. We must continue to support and defend it every day, as our oath demands. I am proud to serve alongside them, and I look forward to addressing our nation's greatest challenges with them in the months and years ahead.

ELECTORAL COLLEGE CONTEST

HON. BRENDAN F. BOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, today we will not pick the next president. For the people did that on November 3rd. Rather, today, in this House, we will decide whether American democracy survives.

Let us be under no illusion. These are the stakes.

If this objection succeeds, and the will of 7 million Pennsylvania voters is cast aside, it will end our representative democracy.

There is no reasonable debate about what happened in this election in Pennsylvania.

Almost 7 million Pennsylvanians voted.

Joe Biden won by over 80,000 votes.

This was certified by bipartisan local elected officials, including Republican officials;

And every single court, whether the judge is a Democrat or Republican, has reaffirmed the outcome.

Now, the objectors claim we do not know the will of the people because the election in Pennsylvania was somehow conducted corruptly. Much of their objection centers around the state law passed in 2019, known as Act 77, that gives voters the option of expanded mail-in voting. Objectors are alleging this law was somehow a plot by Democrats to disadvantage Republicans and rig elections. This is false.

Here are the facts:

Act 77 was a Republican-led effort in the Republican-controlled legislature.

Literally every single Republican in the Pennsylvania Senate voted for it.

In the state House, 105 Republicans voted for it; and only 2 voted against it.

Here is what the Republican Speaker of the Pennsylvania House said about Act 77:

> ''This bill does not benefit one party or the other, or any one candidate or single election. It was developed over a multi-year period, with input from people of different backgrounds and regions of Pennsylvania. It serves to preserve the integrity of every election and lift the voice of every voter in the Commonwealth.''

There is no question as to the facts surrounding this election. They are as clear as they are overwhelming. The only question that remains is this: will this House reaffirm our fidelity to our democracy, or will we end it?

I must concede, Madam Speaker, I have been naïve about one subject. I always just assumed our democracy would naturally endure. I never even questioned it until the last several years.

Two centuries ago, one of our Founding Fathers, cautioned against this. John Adams wrote, ''Remember democracy never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts, and murders itself. There never was a democracy yet that did not commit suicide.''

I now realize the wisdom of his words. Never again, will I take for granted our democracy. It must be defended by every generation. Always.

But despite the alarm I feel that our democracy has been brought to this breaking point, I still maintain hope.

Growing up in Philadelphia, and raised in an immigrant family, I was often brought down to tour the historic sites. Every summer, without fail, we would spend a day seeing Independence Hall, Congress Hall, the Liberty Bell . . .

It was at Independence Hall, where our nation was declared free and our Constitution born. At the Constitutional Convention, the oldest and the most widely accomplished delegate was Benjamin Franklin, one of our greatest Founding Fathers, and my city's greatest citizen. Physically feeble, he rarely spoke throughout the Convention. In a notable address toward the close of the Convention, he gently urged dissenting delegates to put aside their legitimate criticisms and unite to adopt our Constitution.

On the final day, as the last delegates were signing the document, Franklin pointed toward the sun on the back of the Convention president's chair. Observing that painters had found it difficult to distinguish between a rising sun from a setting sun, Franklin went on to say:

> ''I have often . . . in the course of the session . . . looked at that sun behind the President without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting. But now at length I have the happiness to know it is a rising and not a setting sun.''

Madam Speaker, on a day like today, when a mob has stormed the Capitol and some Members are threatening the core of our democracy, it can be hard to tell whether, for American democracy, the sun is rising or setting. But I maintain my faith, that with an overwhelming bipartisan majority in Congress, we will uphold the will of the people and our democracy will live.

CITIZEN'S COMMITTEE FOR ELECTION INTEGRITY'S FINDINGS ON FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

HON. RUSS FULCHER

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. FULCHER. Madam Speaker, election law and regulations must be developed and administered at the state and local level. To that end, I believe criteria and engagement from all Idahoans must be included in this debate and want to enter the Committee's recommendations into Congress' current debate on free and fair elections.

The Citizen's Committee for Election Integrity's findings and recommendations:

All political power rests with the people.

Our Constitutionally guaranteed Republican form of government relies on free, fair, and honest elections to select our representatives and leaders.

To ensure equal protection and equal representation of the people, laws governing our elections must meet certain minimum standards.

It is the purpose of this Citizens Committee to concisely articulate the minimum standards for free, fair, and honest elections. These standards shall then be used by our local, state and federal legislators as a metric for reviewing and revising election law to ensure free, fair, and honest elections where the outcome is accepted by all citizens of good will.

Minimum Standards for Fair and Honest Elections

Our Constitutionally guaranteed republican form of government relies on free, fair, and honest elections to select our representatives and leaders. The standards listed here shall be used by our local, state, and federal legislators as a metric for reviewing and revising election law to ensure free, fair, and honest elections where the outcome is accepted by all citizens of good will.

All voting processes, other than those needed to preserve the privacy of a citizen's vote, must be open and available for direct observation, with no minimum distance requirements, and audit by agents of the candidates or parties.

All election materials must have a secure chain of custody at all times. Election officials must be accompanied by observers when accessing any election materials. Records of the chain of custody shall be complete and available for audit.

All votes, regardless of voting method, shall be held to equal standards.

Voters shall only be qualified electors that are able to verifiably provide their government issued photo identity before being issued a ballot. Voters who provide false information, including information of voter qualification, should face severe penalties.

As a condition of being issued a ballot, the voter's identity and signature must be recorded in a permanent record (Poll Book).

Original Ballots must have a physical form that allows voting choices to be examined and properly interpreted by the naked eye.

Ballots must have features designed to prevent counterfeiting.

An auditable system for tracking the status of all ballots must be implemented and maintained in the State of origin. The total number of printed ballots must equal the sum of the number of cast ballots, spoiled ballots, and unvoted ballots.

Ballot tabulation must be conducted by two independent and unrelated systems. The difference in totals between the two systems must be less than one half the margin of victory or 0.1% of the vote total, whichever is less. Tabulating machines must only tabulate and not modify ballots in any way, or be connected to the internet.

Before the results of an election can be certified, the ballot counts must be reconciled with the voter records. The margin of uncertainty must be less than one half the margin of victory or 0.1% of the vote total, whichever is less.

Lists of qualified electors must be purged of unqualified persons 180 days before an election. Voter Rolls should be vetted and compared with available government records to identify duplicate or Ineligible registrations.

Laws and regulations governing an election may not be changed for 180 days prior to that election.

All election records should be retained and preserved for not less than 22 months.

Voter identification for provisional ballots must be verified, with information provided by the voter, prior to that ballot being counted.

CONGRATULATING BOULDER COUNTY COMMISSIONER DEB GARDNER ON HER RETIREMENT

HON. JOE NEGUSE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, today I wish to recognize Ms. Deb Gardner, who has served the people of Boulder County for over a decade, and since 2012, has tirelessly devoted herself to serving her community as a Boulder County Commissioner. Over the past eight years, Deb has worked hard to make Boulder County a better place. In light of Deb's retirement, I want to take the opportunity to commend her distinguished career in public service.

Deb has never been afraid to stand up for what she believes in. Her work in Boulder is a reflection of her passion for equity, education, and the environment. A truly indispensable community member, she has fought to maintain Boulder County's natural beauty and ensure that everyone feels welcome in the community.

Prior to becoming a County Commissioner, she represented Colorado's 11th district, and the people of Boulder County, in the Colorado State Legislature as a State Representative, where she served on the House Transportation, Legislative Audit, Business and Economic Development, and Health Benefit Exchange Review committees. She has helped her community through countless disasters, including the 2013 flooding, historic wildfires, and the immense challenges posed by the COVID–19 pandemic this year, and I am grateful for her leadership.

For the entirety of her career, Deb has led by example and inspired countless others along the way. I am grateful for her distinguished record of service, and I thank Commissioner Gardner for her service to her community. I wish her a restful and well-deserved retirement.

OBJECTING TO CERTAIN ELECTORAL VOTES

HON. RANDY K. WEBER, SR.

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to voice my concerns regarding the irregularities and improprieties in the 2020 General Election. As I have said time and time again, the American people deserve to have full faith in our elections. The numerous votes cast by mail this year—due to the pandemic—have been plagued by allegations of fraud and wrongdoing. I watched with great concern as President Trump's legal team brought forth witnesses, sworn affidavits, and reams of legitimate evidence to courts in various states. There are countless, incontestable examples wherein governors, election officials, and judges altered states' election procedures in clear violation of Article II of the U.S. Constitution. Article II grants state legislatures—and only the state legislatures—the explicit power to determine the manner of appointing presidential electors.

In keeping with this constitutional responsibility, state legislatures have established detailed rules by which that state's electoral process and appointment of presidential electors should be conducted. However, in the months before the 2020 election, it is undeniable that—in several key states—either state court judges or state executive officials acted deliberately to fundamentally change state election law, usurping the state legislature's express authority under the Constitution.

In violation of the Constitution and with full knowledge of mail-in voting vulnerabilities, state officials, activists, and Democrat-led lawsuits in numerous states opened our electoral processes to fraud and abuse. The sheer volume of mail-in voting alone triggered not just administrative errors and clerical mistakes but actual election crimes.

As an alumnus of the Texas House of Representatives, I understand and guard zealously the prerogatives of state legislatures. As such, I feel strongly that the Supreme Court should have upheld the authority of those legislatures to establish the manner of appointing electors. Moreover, it was incumbent upon the court to determine the constitutional validity of any ballots that were cast under rules and procedures established by entities other than state legislatures.

Put bluntly, the usurpation of legislative power in several states produced unconstitutional ballots. As we asserted in our amicus brief that accompanied the Texas case, any state executive or judicial attempt to determine the manner of choosing electors-especially any attempt that directly contradicts the will of the state legislature—is void ab initio ("from the beginning").

Regrettably, on December 11th, SCOTUS denied Texas' motion for lack of standing, without ruling on the merits of the case or the questions of fact therein. However, Justice Samuel Alito, joined by Justice Clarence Thomas, disagreed with the high court's ruling, writing that, "In my view, we do not have discretion to deny the filing of a bill of complaint in a case that falls within our original jurisdiction . . . I would therefore grant the motion to file the bill of complaint . . . " I, too, believe that the Supreme Court got it wrong. That highest court has original jurisdiction over, specifically, suits involving two or more states.

Today, we the Congress—on behalf of "We The People"—will exercise our constitutional duty as the final judge, jury, and arbiter of all contested congressional, senatorial, and presidential elections. The legitimacy of our republic rests on the foundation that our elections—whether for President of the United States or any other office—are transparent, fairly administered, and above board. With the undeniable knowledge of illegal changes to various state election laws, enacted by parties other than the respective state legislatures, we (the Congress) constitute the last line of defense in ensuring the trust of our citizens in the integrity of their ballots.

Every single member of Congress swore an oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States of America. Our constitutional republic has endured for nearly-two and a half centuries based on the consent of the governed. That consent is grounded in the confidence of our people in the legitimacy of our institutions of government, the most fundamental being free and fair elections. The erosion of that foundation jeopardizes the stability of the republic.

I will therefore join my colleagues today in objecting to counting the electoral votes of Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, to restore the integrity of our electoral process.

CITIZEN'S COMMITTEE FOR ELECTION INTEGRITY'S FINDINGS ON FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Speaker, election law and regulations must be developed and administered at the state and local level. To that end, I believe criteria and engagement from all Idahoans must be included in this debate and want to enter the Committee's recommendations into Congress' current debate on free and fair elections.

The Citizen's Committee for Election Integrity's findings and recommendations:

All political power rests with the people.

Our Constitutionally guaranteed Republican form of government relies on free, fair, and honest elections to select our representatives and leaders.

To ensure equal protection and equal representation of the people, laws governing our elections must meet certain minimum standards.

It is the purpose of this Citizens Committee to concisely articulate the minimum standards for free, fair, and honest elections. These standards shall then be used by our local, state and federal legislators as a metric for reviewing and revising election law to ensure free, fair, and honest elections where the outcome is accepted by all citizens of good will.

Minimum Standards for Fair and Honest Elections

Our Constitutionally guaranteed republican form of government relies on free, fair, and honest elections to select our representatives and leaders. The standards listed here shall be used by our local, state and federal legislators as a metric for reviewing and revising election law to ensure free, fair, and honest elections where the outcome is accepted by all citizens of good will.

All voting processes, other than those needed to preserve the privacy of a citizen's vote, must be open and available for direct observation, with no minimum distance requirements, and audit by agents of the candidates or parties.

All election materials must have a secure chain of custody at all times. Election officials must be accompanied by observers when accessing any election materials. Records of the chain of custody shall be complete and available for audit.

All votes, regardless of voting method, shall be held to equal standards.

Voters shall only be qualified electors that are able to verifiably provide their government issued photo identity before being issued a ballot. Voters who provide false information, including information of voter qualification, should face severe penalties.

As a condition of being issued a ballot, the voter's identity and signature must be recorded in a permanent record (Poll Book).

Original Ballots must have a physical form that allows voting choices to be examined and properly interpreted by the naked eye.

Ballots must have features designed to prevent counterfeiting.

An auditable system for tracking the status of all ballots must be implemented and maintained in the State of origin. The total number of printed ballots must equal the sum of the number of cast ballots, spoiled ballots, and unvoted ballots.

Ballot tabulation must be conducted by two independent and unrelated systems. The difference in totals between the two systems must be less than one half the margin of victory or 0.1% of the vote total, whichever is less. Tabulating machines must only tabulate and not modify ballots in any way, or be connected to the internet.

Before the results of an election can be certified, the ballot counts must be reconciled with the voter records. The margin of uncertainty must be less than one half the margin of victory or 0.1% of the vote total, whichever is less.

Lists of qualified electors must be purged of unqualified persons 180 days before an election. Voter Rolls should be vetted and compared with available government records to identify duplicate or ineligible registrations.

Laws and regulations governing an election may not be changed for 180 days prior to that election.

All election records should be retained and preserved for not less than 22 months.

Voter identification for provisional ballots must be verified, with information provided by the voter, prior to that ballot being counted.

REGARDING JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS TO COUNT ELECTORAL BALLOTS

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, as a senior member of the House Committees on the Judiciary and Homeland Security Committee; Ranking Member of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, and the Congressional Voting Rights Caucus, I rise today to offer thoughts and reflections on the congressional responsibility to bear witness to the counting of electoral votes to determine formally the persons elected President and Vice President of the United States and on the campaign and election that brought us to this day.

The outcome of that count is not in doubt and has not been since November 7, 2020, when it became clear that Democratic candidates Joseph R. Biden and KAMALA HARRIS had won the states of Georgia, Pennsylvania, and Arizona to become the 46th President and 59th Vice-President of the United States, earning 306 electoral votes, 36 more than the 270 needed for election.

The results in those states, as well as every other state that chose presidential electors on November 3, 2020, has been certified and wherever necessary upheld against legal challenge by the courts in the affected states.

On December 14, 2020, presidential electors met in their respective state capitols to cast their votes for President and Vice-President, with the documentary and video evidence clearly demonstrating that the Biden/Harris ticket was the clear and unassailable choice of the Electoral College.

The counting of the electors' ballot today will ratify the outcome that has been foretold for months and only those with the most conspiratorial mindset and the willing suspension of disbelief, like the current occupant of the White House and his band of acolytes consisting of 140 Members of the House and 12 U.S. senators, could persist in the delusion that the vox populi, the voice of the people, has not spoken clearly and definitively.

Madam Speaker, the Biden/Harris ticket won the national popular vote going away, by more than 7 million votes, 81.3 million to 74.2 million.

Their victory was so sweeping that it won the majority of states, including five states won four years ago by the loser, including Georgia, which a Democratic candidate had not won since 1992, and Arizona, which last voted Democratic in 1996.

This day is not like its counterpart of 2001, when the determination of the winner hung in the balance on the outcome of the contest in Florida, where 537 votes out of 5.82 million votes cast separated the candidates and the U.S. Supreme Court halted the vote recount ordered by the Supreme Court of Florida, thus leaving reasonable persons to question who was the true winner of that state's decisive 25 electoral votes.

This day is not like 2005, where the outcome hinged on the 18 electoral votes of Ohio, and where state officials refused to count provisional ballots and engaged in other tactics alleged to be taken to suppress the votes of racial minorities.

And certainly this day is not like 2017, when Congress met to count the electoral votes cast in the state's first American presidential election in which the U.S. Intelligence Community had confirmed was the subject of cyberattacks and other subversive activities of entities allied with the Government of Russia that were undertaken for the express purpose of influencing the outcome to secure the election of its preferred candidate, Donald Trump, who it should be added, openly invited a hostile foreign power to launch cyberattacks against his political opponent.

Another important distinction involving the 2016 election is that it was the first presidential election held since the Supreme Court issued the notorious decision in Shelby County v. Holder, which neutered the preclearance provisions of the Voting Rights Act and adversely affected the ability of hundreds of thousands of persons to cast a ballot and have their vote counted.

In contrast, American voters in 2020 were forewarned and forearmed against Russian interference, propaganda, and disinformation and with no backing but with the active resistance of the Chief Executive, the governments of the United States and the individual states took active measures to ensure the security and integrity of election systems against fraud and undue interference.

This effort was so successful that the Election Infrastructure Government Coordinating Council (GCC) Executive Committee, consisting of the U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), U.S. Election Assistance Commission, National Association of Secretaries of State, and the National Association of State Election Directors, issued the following statement on November 12, 2020:

The November 3rd election was the most secure in American history. Right now, across the country, election officials are reviewing and double checking the entire election process prior to finalizing the result.

When states have close elections, many will recount ballots. All of the states with close results in the 2020 presidential race have paper records of each vote, allowing the ability to go back and count each ballot if necessary. This is an added benefit for security and resilience. This process allows for the identification and correction of any mistakes or errors. There is no evidence that any voting system deleted or lost votes, changed votes, or was in any way compromised.

Even United States Attorney General William P. Barr, the most politically biased person, to hold that office, publicly acknowledged that although U.S. attorneys and FBI agents had followed up on specific complaints and information they had received, ''to date, we have not seen fraud on a scale that could have effected a different outcome in the election.''

Under the laws of every state, the Trump Campaign was entitled to bring legal challenges to the administration of the election in any state where it felt aggrieved, and it took ample advantage of these opportunities, bringing scores of lawsuits alleging ''wide-spread fraud,'' requesting recounts, or demanding that votes cast for the Democratic candidate be thrown out or simply not counted.

These legal challenges were met with colossal failure, the Trump Campaign suffering stinging defeats in more than 65 cases; its lone success came in Pennsylvania where a court granted its request to allow monitors to observe ballot tabulation from a distance of six rather than 10 feet away .

Which brings us to this day, when die-hard followers of the current occupant of the White House, a group I call the ''Lost Cause Caucus,'' now seek to revive and press forward with the discredited and rejected claims of the Trump Campaign that the elections in the states that were key to bringing about his resounding defeat were ''rigged'' or ''fraudulent'' or the result of some vague conspiracy by the ''Deep State.''

Madam Speaker, this is utter nonsense; which I show by examining the challenge to the electors from Pennsylvania, where like Robert E. Lee at Gettysburg, Trump pitched his flag and made his grand stand.

Over 6.9 million Pennsylvanians voted in that election, with over 2.6 million of those voters using mail-in or absentee ballots; Vice President Biden received 3,459,923 votes, easily beating Trump, by 81,660 votes.

Vice-President Biden's vote margin was twice as large as was Trump's when he won the state in an upset in 2016.

Madam Speaker, it is not difficult to understand why so many Pennsylvanians voted in 2019, and by mail in unprecedented numbers.

In 2019, with broad and bipartisan support, the Pennsylvania General Assembly enacted Act 77 of 2019, which made several important updates and improvements to Pennsylvania's Election Code, Act of Oct. 31, 2019 (P.L. 552, No. 77), 2019 Pa. Legis. Serv. 2019–77 (S.B. 421) (West) (''Act 77'').

Among these were provisions that, for the first time, offered the option of mail-in voting to

all Pennsylvania electors. See 25 P.S. §§ 3150.11–3150.17.

This change was a significant development that made it easier for all Pennsylvanians to exercise their right to vote and brought the state in line with the practice of dozens of other states.

Under Act 77, voters had until October 27, 2020, to request a mail-in ballot for this year's November 3rd General Election. 25 P.S. § 3150.12a(a).

Act 77 set 8:00 p.m. on Election Day as the due date for returning those ballots to the county boards of elections. 25 P.S. § 3150.16.

The Election Code provides for a variety of safeguards to ensure the integrity of this process. See 25 P.S. § 3146.8(g)(3); 25 P.S. § 3146.2c; 25 P.S. § 3146.8 (g)(4); 25 P.S. § 3150.12b(a)(2).

The presidential election results were certified, and Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf signed the Certificate of Ascertainment on November 24, 2020, long in advance of the required date to fall under the ''Safe Harbor'' provision of three-day the governing Electoral Count Act of 1887, 3 U.S.C. § 5, making the certification of Pennsylvania's electors conclusive.

Madam Speaker, multiple challenges were made to the certification of Pennsylvania's electors, all of which were rejected by both state and federal courts.

First, there is no merit or truth to the claim that the Pennsylvania Secretary of State ''abrogated'' the mandatory signature verification requirement for absentee or mail-in ballots. See In re Nov. 3, 2020 Election, 240 A.3d 591, 610 (Pa. 2020) (Election Code does not authorize county election boards to reject mail-in ballots based on an analysis of a voter's signature. ''[A]t no time did the Code provide for challenges to ballot signatures.'').

Far from usurping any legislative authority, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court refused ''to rewrite a statute in order to supply terms which [we]re not present therein.'' Id. at 14.

A federal judge reached the same result. See In Donald Trump for President, Inc. v. Boockvar, 2020 WL 5997680, at *58 (W.D. Pa. Oct. 10, 2020) (''[T]he Election Code does not impose a signature-comparison requirement for mail-in and absentee ballots.'').

Second, there is a similar lack of merit and truth to the claim that certain Pennsylvania county boards of elections did not grant pollwatchers access to the opening, counting, and recording of absentee and mail-in ballots. See In re Canvassing Observation, __A.3d __, 2020 WL 6737895, *8–9 (Pa. 2020) (holding that state law re-quires candidate representatives to be in the room but the viewing distance is committed to the county boards, which, in that case, was reasonable); Trump for President, Inc. v. Sec'y of Pennsylvania, 2020 WL 7012522, at *8 (3d Cir. Nov. 27, 2020) (affirming dismissal of poll-watcher claim, in part, because the Trump Campaign ''has already raised and lost most of these state-law issues, and it cannot relitigate them here.'').

Third, there is no basis to a claim that certain Pennsylvania counties adopted differential standards favoring voters in Philadelphia and Allegheny Counties with the intent to favor former Vice President Biden.

This claim was raised and dismissed in Trump v. Boockvar, 4:20—cv–02078 (M.D. Pa. Nov. 18, 2020) because those charges were backed by neither specific allegations nor evidence. Trump for President, Inc. v. Sec'y of Pennsylvania, 2020 WL 7012522, at *8 (3d Cir. Nov. 27, 2020).

Fourth, that certain counties permitted voters to cure minor defects in mail-in ballots was permissible under Pennsylvania law because minor defects—such as a failure to handwrite the voter's name and/or address on the declaration—did not, in fact, void the ballot. See In re Canvass of Absentee & Mail-in Ballots of November 3, 2020 Gen. Election, 29 WAP 2020, __A.3d__, 2020 WL 6866415, *15 (Pa. Nov. 23, 2020) (''We have conducted that analysis here and we hold that a signed but undated declaration is sufficient and does not implicate any weighty interest. Hence, the lack of a handwritten date cannot result in vote disqualification.''); Trump v. Boockvar, 2020 WL 6821992, *12 (M.D. Pa. 2020) (''it is perfectly rational for a state to provide counties discretion to notify voters that they may cure procedurally defective mail-in ballots''), aff'd 2020 WL 7012522.

Fifth, there was no state law violation when the Pennsylvania Supreme Court temporarily modified the deadline for the receipt of mail-in and absentee ballots, because state constitutional law required it. See Pa. Democratic Party v. Boockvar, 238 A.3d 345, 369–72 (Pa. 2020).

Nothing in the Elections Clause of Article I ''instructs, nor has the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ever held, that a state legislature may prescribe regulations on the time, place, and manner of holding federal elections in defiance of provisions of the State's constitution.'' Arizona State Legislature v. Arizona Indep. Redistricting Comm'n, 576 U.S. 787, 817–18 (2015) (AIRC). The same is true for the Elector Clause in Article II.

Sixth, there is no truth to the claim that Pennsylvania ''broke its promise to the U.S. Supreme Court to segregate ballots and comingled illegal late ballots .

The Pennsylvania Secretary of State had already instructed that all ballots received during the three-day period be segregated and counted separately and Justice Alito adopted these instructions by the Secretary as an order of the Court.

The Pennsylvania county boards of elections complied with that order; qualified ballots received during the three-day extension were segregated and counted separately.

The number of such ballots is too small to change the outcome of any federal election in Pennsylvania.

Finally, there is nothing sinister, surprising, or fraudulent in the fact that late-counted mail-in ballots eviscerated Trump's temporary lead in the popular vote by disproportionately favoring Vice-President Biden.

The votes counted before 3 a.m. and those counted afterwards were indisputably not ''randomly drawn'' from the same population of votes, as those counted earlier were predominantly in-person votes while those counted later were predominantly mail-in votes .

Even the proponents of this bogus challenge to Pennsylvania's electors admit that Democratic voters voted by mail at two to three times the rate of Republicans.

Both this fact and the expectation that it would result in a shift in President-Elect Biden's favor as mail-in votes were counted were widely reported months ahead of the election.

Madam Speaker, as I noted at the outset, we are here today to exercise a duty imposed on Members of the House and the Senate by the Constitution and laws of the United States.

But it is true that although we are called upon to bear witness to the counting of electoral votes, our role is not confined to passive observation.

The Constitution and the law, specifically Section 15 of the Electoral College Act, 3 U.S.C. § 1 et seq., authorizes Representatives and Senators to object to the counting of any vote cast by an elector if in their judgment the vote was not ''regularly given'' or the person casting the vote was not ''lawfully certified'' as an elector.

The Constitution devolves this solemn duty upon the people's representatives, the Congress, because the linchpin of representative democracy is public confidence in the political system, regime, and community.

That confidence in turn rests upon the extent to which the public has faith that the system employed to select its leaders accurately reflects its preferences.

At bottom, this means that all citizens casting a vote have a fundamental right and reasonable expectation that their votes count and are counted.

For these reasons, I owe it to my constituents and to the American people to consider each electoral vote certificate as it is presented and accept those that appear to be meritorious.

Were any electoral vote certificate not to satisfy the statutory requirement that the votes reflected on the lists were ''regularly given' by ''lawfully certified'' electors I would oppose it.

But that is not the case before us because the votes before us were regularly given by lawfully certified electors, whose status was resolved, where need be, at least six days before the meeting of electors pursuant to laws that were in place before the election as required by Section 5 of the Electoral Count Act, 3 U.S.C. § 5.

That means the validity of their appointment is conclusive and their vote preferences binding on us.

For this reason, I oppose the objections raised and accept the final vote tally that will be announced by the President of the Senate at its conclusion, and in doing so will be keeping faith with the admonition and prayer made by President Lincoln over the graves of patriots that 'government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.''

CONGRATULATING BOULDER COUNTY COMMISSIONER ELISE JONES ON HER RETIREMENT

HON. JOE NEGUSE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, today I wish to recognize the accomplishments of an incredible public servant, County Commissioner Elise Jones.

Commissioner Jones has proudly served as a Boulder County Commissioner since 2013, and has shown throughout her impressive career a passion for helping those in need. She has fought for social justice and advocated for

measures that would help combat climate change and protect our treasured public lands and open spaces. During her time as a County Commissioner, she also represented Boulder County on the Denver Regional Council of Governments, and as the Representative to the Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee. She has served as a member of the Metro Area County Commissioners, which she chaired in 2016, and was recently appointed by the Governor of Colorado to the Colorado Air Quality Control Commission. In this latter position, Commissioner Jones has been able to utilize her extensive experience to fight for cleaner air for all Coloradans. She has helped her community through countless disasters, including the 2013 flooding, historic wildfires, and the immense challenges posed by the COVID–19 pandemic this year, and I am thankful for her leadership.

I am grateful that Commissioner Jones plans to continue her environmental work. While she leaves enormously big shoes to fill, her legacy will not be forgotten. On behalf of the people of Colorado's 2nd Congressional district, I would like to express my deepest gratitude for her service.

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 Friday, January 8, 2021 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

JANUARY 12

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine civilian control of the Armed Forces.

SD–G50

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

The House of Representatives and Senate met in joint session to count electoral votes.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S13–S42

Measures Introduced: One bill was introduced, as follows: S. 13. **Page S40**

Electoral Ballot Count: Senate met in Joint Session with the House of Representatives to count the electoral ballots of the States cast in the election of the President and Vice President of the United States. **Pages S13–32**

During the counting of electoral ballots today, Senate also took the following action:

By 6 yeas to 93 nays (Vote No. 1), the objection to the Presidential electoral vote certificate from the State of Arizona was not sustained. **Pages S31–32**

By 7 yeas to 92 nays (Vote No. 2), the objection to the Presidential electoral vote certificate from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania was not sustained. **Page S38**

Pro Forma Sessions—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the Senate adjourn, to then convene for pro forma sessions only, with no business being conducted on the following dates and times, and that following each pro forma session, the Senate adjourn until the next pro forma session: Friday, January 8, 2021, at 10 a.m.; Tuesday, January 12, 2021, at 12:30 p.m.; Friday, January 15, 2021, at 10 a.m.; and that when the Senate adjourns on Friday, January 15, 2021, it next convene on Tuesday, January 19, 2021, at 12 noon. **Page S40**

Message from the President: Senate received the following message from the President of the United States:

Transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the issuance of an Executive Order declaring additional steps to be taken concerning the national emergency with respect to the information and communications technology and services supply chain declared in Executive Order 13873 of May 15, 2019, received during adjournment of the Senate on January 5, 2021; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. (PM–1) **Page S39**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Jason Abend, of Virginia, to be Inspector General, Department of Defense.

William Patrick Joseph Kimmitt, of Virginia, to be a Member of the United States International Trade Commission for a term expiring June 16, 2029.

Barbera Hale Thornhill, of California, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore.

51 Air Force nominations in the rank of general.

26 Army nominations in the rank of general.

4 Space Force nominations in the rank of general.

Routine lists in the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Space Force. **Pages S40–42**

Nomination Withdrawn: Senate received notification of withdrawal of the following nomination:

Chad F. Wolf, of Virginia, to be Secretary of Homeland Security, which was sent to the Senate on January 3, 2021.

Messages from the House: **Pages S39–40**

Measures Referred: **Page S40**

Measures Placed on the Calendar: **Page S40**

Measures Read the First Time: **Page S40**

Record Votes: Two record votes were taken today. (Total—2) **Pages S31–32, S38**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 6, 2021 and adjourned at 3:48 a.m. on Thursday, January 7, 2021, until 10 a.m. on Friday, January 8, 2021. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S40.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee met in closed session to receive a briefing on certain intelligence matters from officials of the intelligence community.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 19 public bills, H.R. 217–235; and 1 resolution, H. Res. 20, were introduced. **Pages H115–16**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page H117**

Reports Filed: There were no reports filed today.

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein she appointed Representative Swalwell to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H75**

Electoral College Vote Tellers: Pursuant to S. Con. Res. 1, to provide for the counting on January 6, 2021, of the electoral votes for President and Vice President of the United States, and the order of the House of January 4, 2021, the Chair announced the Speaker's appointment of Representatives Lofgren of California and Rodney Davis of Illinois as tellers on the part of the House to count electoral votes. **Page H75**

Recess: The House recessed at 12:06 p.m. and reconvened at 12:55 p.m. **Page H76**

Joint Session: The Joint Session was called to order at 1:05 p.m. and dissolved at 1:14 p.m. for consideration of the objection to the electoral votes for Arizona. **Page H76**

Recess: The House recessed at 2:18 p.m. and reconvened at 2:26 p.m. **Page H85**

Recess: The House recessed at 2:29 p.m. and reconvened at 9:02 p.m. **Page H85**

Joint Session: The Joint Session was called to order at 11:41 p.m. and dissolved at 12:22 a.m. for consideration of the objection to the electoral votes for Pennsylvania. Following consideration, the joint session resumed at 3:25 a.m. and dissolved at 3:44 a.m. **Pages H94–98**

Declaration of the Election of President and Vice President: Pursuant to the provisions of S. Con. Res. 1, and the requirements of the Constitution and laws relating to the election of President and Vice President of the United States, the two Houses of Congress met in joint session with Vice President Pence as the presiding officer to count the electoral votes. The following votes were cast for President: Joseph R. Biden, Jr. of Delaware, 306; and Donald J. Trump of Florida, 232. The following votes were cast for Vice President: Kamala D. Harris of California, 306; and Michael R. Pence of Indiana, 232. After announcing the results of the certification process, the Vice President announced that the Joint Session was dissolved and that the results of the proceedings had during the Joint Session would be entered into the Journals of both Houses. **Pages H76–H115**

During the joint session, a Representative objected to the certification of electoral votes from Pennsylvania. The objection, having been signed by a Senator, was received and the joint meeting was dissolved for the purpose of considering the objection in each House. The objection was not agreed to in the House by a yea and nay vote of 138 yeas to 282 nays, Roll No. 11. Subsequently, notification was received in the House that the Senate disposed of the objection by a vote of 7 yeas to 92 nays. Upon resumption of the joint session, the Vice President announced that the original certification submitted by the State of Pennsylvania would stand as regular in form and authentic. **Pages H98–H112**

During the Joint Session various House Members rose to make a point of order, object to the counting of the electoral votes from Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, and Wisconsin or to make a motion. The presiding officer and Chair, Vice President Pence, held that each case required a writing signed by both a Member of the House and a Senator. None were signed by a Senator and none were received.

During the joint session, a Representative objected to the certification of electoral votes from Arizona. The objection, having been signed by a Senator, was received and the joint meeting was dissolved for the purpose of considering the objection in each House.

The objection was not agreed to in the House by a yea and nay vote of 121 yeas to 303 nays, Roll No. 10. Subsequently, notification was received in the House that the Senate disposed of the objection by a vote of 6 yeas to 93 nays. Upon resumption of the joint session, the Vice President announced that the original certification submitted by the State of Arizona would stand as regular in form and authentic. **Pages H77–93**

Presidential Message: Read a message from the President wherein he notified Congress that he had issued an Executive Order that takes additional steps concerning the national emergency with respect to the information and communications technology and services supply chain declared in Executive Order 13873 of May 15, 2019—referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed (H. Doc. 117–6). **Pages H75–76**

Senate Messages: Messages received from the Senate today appear on pages H94 and H112.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Two yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H93 and H112.

Adjournment: The House met at 12 noon and adjourned at 3:48 a.m.

Committee Meetings

No hearings were held.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, *p. D1135)*

H.R. 3465, to authorize the Fallen Journalists Memorial Foundation to establish a commemorative work in the District of Columbia and its environs. Signed on December 23, 2020. (Public Law 116–253)

H.R. 4761, to ensure U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers, agents, and other personnel have adequate synthetic opioid detection equipment, that the Department of Homeland Security has a process to update synthetic opioid detection capability. Signed on December 23, 2020. (Public Law 116–254)

S. 199, to provide for the transfer of certain Federal land in the State of Minnesota for the benefit of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe. Signed on December 23, 2020. (Public Law 116–255)

S. 1014, to establish the Route 66 Centennial Commission. Signed on December 23, 2020. (Public Law 116–256)

S. 2258, to provide anti-retaliation protections for antitrust whistleblowers. Signed on December 23, 2020. (Public Law 116–257)

S. 2904, to direct the Director of the National Science Foundation to support research on the outputs that may be generated by generative adversarial networks, otherwise known as deepfakes, and other comparable techniques that may be developed in the future. Signed on December 23, 2020. (Public Law 116–258)

S. 2981, to reauthorize and amend the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Act of 2002. Signed on December 23, 2020. (Public Law 116–259)

H.R. 133, making consolidated appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2021, providing coronavirus emergency response and relief. Signed on December 27, 2020. (Public Law 116–260)

S. 212, to amend the Native American Business Development, Trade Promotion, and Tourism Act of 2000, the Buy Indian Act, and the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to provide industry and economic development opportunities to Indian communities. Signed on December 30, 2020. (Public Law 116–261)

S. 900, to designate the community-based outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Bozeman, Montana, as the "Travis W. Atkins Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic. Signed on December 30, 2020. (Public Law 116–262)

S. 2472, to redesignate the NASA John H. Glenn Research Center at Plum Brook Station, Ohio, as the NASA John H. Glenn Research Center at the Neil A. Armstrong Test Facility. Signed on December 30, 2020. (Public Law 116–263)

S. 3257, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 311 West Wisconsin Avenue in Tomahawk, Wisconsin, as the "Einar 'Sarge' H. Ingman, Jr. Post Office Building. Signed on December 30, 2020. (Public Law 116–264)

S. 3461, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2600 Wesley Street in Greenville, Texas, as the "Audie Murphy Post Office Building". Signed on December 30, 2020. (Public Law 116–265)

S. 3462, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 909 West Holiday Drive in Fate, Texas, as the "Ralph Hall Post Office". Signed on December 30, 2020. (Public Law 116–266)

S. 4126, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 104 East Main Street

in Port Washington, Wisconsin, as the ''Joseph G. Demler Post Office''. Signed on December 30, 2020. (Public Law 116–267)

S. 4684, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 440 Arapahoe Street in Thermopolis, Wyoming, as the ''Robert L. Brown Post Office''. Signed on December 30, 2020. (Public Law 116–268)

S. 5036, to amend the Overtime Pay for Protective Services Act of 2016 to extend the Secret Service overtime pay exception through 2023. Signed on December 30, 2020. (Public Law 116–269)

S. 461, to strengthen the capacity and competitiveness of historically Black colleges and universities through robust public-sector, private-sector, and community partnerships and engagement. Signed on December 31, 2020. (Public Law 116–270)

S. 914, to reauthorize the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009, to clarify the authority of the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration with respect to post-storm assessments, and to require the establishment of a National Water Center. Signed on December 31, 2020. (Public Law 116–271)

S. 979, to amend the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 to incorporate the recommendations made by the Government Accountability Office relating to advance contracts. Signed on December 31, 2020. (Public Law 116–272)

S. 1130, to amend the Public Health Service Act to improve the health of children and help better understand and enhance awareness about unexpected sudden death in early life. Signed on December 31, 2020. (Public Law 116–273)

S. 1342, to require the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere to update periodically the environmental sensitivity index products of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for each coastal area of the Great Lakes. Signed on December 31, 2020. (Public Law 116–274)

S. 1694, to require the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to add recommendations and inform other relevant agencies of information relating to the principle of due regard and the limitation of harmful interference with Apollo landing site artifacts. Signed on December 31, 2020. (Public Law 116–275)

S. 1869, to require the disclosure of ownership of high-security space leased to accommodate a Federal agency. Signed on December 31, 2020. (Public Law 116–276)

S. 2174, to the extent provided in advance in appropriations Act, the Attorney General is authorized to use funds appropriated for the operationalization, maintenance, and expansion of the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) for the purpose of carrying out this Act. Signed on December 31, 2020. (Public Law 116–277)

S. 2216, to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to formally recognize caregivers of veterans, notify veterans and caregivers of clinical determinations relating to eligibility for the family caregiver program, and temporarily extend benefits for veterans who are determined ineligible for the family caregiver program. Signed on December 31, 2020. (Public Law 116–278)

S. 2683, to establish a task force to assist States in implementing hiring requirements for child care staff members to improve child safety. Signed on December 31, 2020. (Public Law 116–279)

S. 2730, to establish and ensure an inclusive and transparent Drone Advisory Committee. Signed on December 31, 2020. (Public Law 116–280)

S. 3312, to establish a crisis stabilization and community reentry grant program. Signed on December 31, 2020. (Public Law 116–281)

S. 3989, to amend the United States Semiquincentennial Commission Act of 2016 to modify certain membership and other requirements of the United States Semiquincentennial Commission. Signed on December 31, 2020. (Public Law 116–282)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY, JANUARY 8, 2021

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

No hearings are scheduled.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Friday, January 8

Senate Chamber

Program for Friday: Senate will meet in a pro forma session.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

11 a.m., Monday, January 11

House Chamber

Program for Monday: House will meet in Pro Forma session at 11 a.m.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Boyle, Brendan F., Pa., E17
Connolly, Gerald E., Va., E12
DesJarlais, Scott, Tenn., E14
Fulcher, Russ, Idaho, E17
González-Colón, Jenniffer, Puerto Rico, E12
Good, Bob, Va., E15
Griffith, H. Morgan, Va., E11, E16
Hastings, Alcee L., Fla., E9
Jackson Lee, Sheila, Tex., E19
Kind, Ron, Wisc., E13
Levin, Mike, Calif., E16
Lowenthal, Alan S., Calif., E10
Neguse, Joe, Colo., E9, E10, E12, E14, E16, E18, E20
Perlmutter, Ed, Colo., E10, E14
Rose, John W., Tenn., E16
Ryan, Tim, Ohio, E10
Simpson, Michael K., Idaho, E18
Smith, Christopher H., N.J., E13
Stanton, Greg, Ariz., E9
Stefanik, Elise M., N.Y., E9
Trahan, Lori, Mass., E11
Weber, Randy K., Sr., Tex., E18
Wilson, Joe, S.C., E11, E15
Yarmuth, John A., Ky., E10

Congressional Record

The *Congressional Record* (USPS 087–390). The Periodicals postage is paid at Washington, D.C. The public proceedings of each House of Congress, as reported by the Official Reporters thereof, are printed pursuant to directions of the Joint Committee on Printing as authorized by appropriate provisions of Title 44, United States Code, and published for each day that one or both Houses are in session, excepting very infrequent instances when two or more unusually small consecutive issues are printed one time. ¶Public access to the *Congressional Record* is available online through the U.S. Government Publishing Office, at *www.govinfo.gov*, free of charge to the user. The information is updated online each day the *Congressional Record* is published. For more information, contact the GPO Customer Contact Center, U.S. Government Publishing Office. Phone 202–512–1800, or 866–512–1800 (toll-free). E-Mail, *contactcenter@gpo.gov*. ¶To place an order for any of these products, visit the U.S. Government Online Bookstore at: bookstore.gpo.gov. Mail orders to: Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 979050, St. Louis, MO 63197–9000, or phone orders to 866–512–1800 (toll-free), 202–512–1800 (D.C. area), or fax to 202–512–2104. Remit check or money order, made payable to the Superintendent of Documents, or use VISA, MasterCard, Discover, American Express, or GPO Deposit Account. ¶Following each session of Congress, the daily *Congressional Record* is revised, printed, permanently bound and sold by the Superintendent of Documents in individual parts or by sets. ¶With the exception of copyrighted articles, there are no restrictions on the republication of material from the *Congressional Record*.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Superintendent of Documents, *Congressional Record*, U.S. Government Publishing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, along with the entire mailing label from the last issue received.