Another Teen Age Republican was Rusty DePass of Rock Hill who helped an all-Democrat York County become virtually all Republican today.

On that day there were no Republican elected officials in South Carolina, but the Goldwater victory in South Carolina in 1964 began a political revolution. Now, Republicans have a super majority in the legislature, including all statewide officials such as Governor Henry McMaster, Lieutenant Governor Pamela Evette, Attorney General Alan Wilson, State Superintendent of Education Ellen Weaver, State Treasurer Guy Moore, and Secretary of State Mark Hammond, and six of seven members of Congress, along with very credible candidates for President, Ambassador Nikki Haley and Senator Tim Scott. His philosophy of limited government, expanded freedom, individual responsibility, and Peace Through Strength, has triumphed.

Senator Goldwater’s visionary call for “Why Not Victory” to promote democracy to defeat communism has been achieved with the liberation of dozens of countries across the world. Actor Ronald Reagan delivered the Goldwater campaign challenge of “Time for Choosing” ultimately leading to his presidency. In conclusion, God Bless our troops who successfully protected America for 20 years, as the global war on terrorism continues moving from the Afghanistan safe haven to America with open Biden borders.

FOCUSING ON NATIONAL REUNIFICATION MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore, under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JACKSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I am unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

Mr. Speaker, this summer marks the 60th anniversary of the historic National Draft Goldwater for President Rally in Washington.

According to The New York Times, supporters of U.S. Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona assembled on July 4, 1963, with “more than 6,000 Goldwater backers from across the country filled the National Guard Armory here for a rally of the National Draft Goldwater Committee. They were predominantly a young crowd.”

As a Teen Age Republican at the High School of Charleston, I was grateful to participate with 30 activists by bus from Columbia, South Carolina, led by Republican State Chairman Drake Edens, with former Democrat State Representative Floyd Spence.

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In conclusion, God Bless our troops who successfully protected America for 20 years, as the global war on terrorism continues moving from the Afghanistan safe haven to America with open Biden borders.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK).

Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative JONATHAN JACKSON for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this summer marks the 60th anniversary of the historic National Draft Goldwater for President Rally in Washington.

According to The New York Times, supporters of U.S. Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona assembled on July 4, 1963, with “more than 6,000 Goldwater backers from across the country filled the National Guard Armory here for a rally of the National Draft Goldwater Committee. They were predominantly a young crowd.”

As a Teen Age Republican at the High School of Charleston, I was grateful to participate with 30 activists by bus from Columbia, South Carolina, led by Republican State Chairman Drake Edens, with former Democrat State Representative Floyd Spence, who was the first Democrat to switch parties and ultimately elected Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee.

Another Teen Age Republican was Rusty DePass of Rock Hill who helped an all-Democrat York County become virtually all Republican today.

On that day there were no Republican elected officials in South Carolina, but the Goldwater victory in South Carolina in 1964 began a political revolution. Now, Republicans have a super majority in the legislature, including all statewide officials such as Governor Henry McMaster, Lieutenant Governor Pamela Evette, Attorney General Alan Wilson, State Superintendent of Education Ellen Weaver, State Treasurer Guy Moore, and Secretary of State Mark Hammond, and six of seven members of Congress, along with very credible candidates for President, Ambassador Nikki Haley and Senator Tim Scott. His philosophy of limited government, expanded freedom, individual responsibility, and Peace Through Strength, has triumphed.

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Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. JACKSON for yielding. I am so happy to be joining him and Representative SHEILA CHERFLUS-McCOR- MICK and my colleagues. No one wants to be neglected. Not a single person in the United States Congress would want a child to be stuck in a home where they were being abused and neglected.

I am really astounded by what actually happens. What actually happens is there are a lot of people who have more month than money. If you come to June 26 and the resources for that household have dried up, with some of the most onerous policies that we have around who can get SNAP, also called food stamps, and when you think about parents living in situations where 48 percent of their income has to go to housing, and not necessarily good housing—houses with lead in them and lead pipes and vermin, and they are still paying almost half their income for housing, we see a situation where children can easily be loved yet neglected.

One of the things I am going to do is reintroduce, as I have done for several cycles, the Family Poverty is Not Child Neglect Act. I want to reinforce the notion that these agencies should not be snatching kids out of their homes when providing maybe some SNAP or other resources to the family could preserve that family.

It is in the best interest of children to be at home if they can be. My bill would make it so much harder for these agencies to use poverty as a rationale to pulling families apart.

I am looking for other ways to do it. I don't want to take up all the time, but I just want to mention a second reason that children are placed out of home, it is because of parental substance abuse. Mr. JACKSON, I have known you and your family for a long time, so I know that you recall how substance abuse has become a real curse in this country. Drug affliction and addiction happens in every corner of the United States. How is it treated?

In some communities where there are fentanyl addictions, which are tragic; meth addictions, which are tragic; opioid addictions, which are tragic; we are proposing government interventions to help people. But when children of foster families become addicted, they are treated often like criminals and have their children taken from them instead of them being offered treatment.

This year's theme for National Reunification Month is "We believe in the resiliency and strength of our families." If that is going to be our motto, Mr. JACKSON, we ought to do something to reinforce this strength and resilience and not just take them away from their birth parents, sometimes unnecessarily.

In a perfect world, no children would ever be separated. Of course, we understand that sometimes that is in the best interests of the children. Far too often, it is our policies under our child welfare system and our welfare system and our unwillingness to support parents where they are that are creating these out-of-home placements.

I want to talk about some very specific reasons that children are taken out of these homes, if you will bear with me.

Child neglect is the number one reason that children are taken out of homes. No one wants to be neglected. Not a single person in the United States Congress would want a child to be stuck in a home where they were being abused and neglected.
The White House has done a marvelous job, they estimated that as many as 50,000 youth who have aged out of foster care now belong, under onerous timelines which say that in the 3-year period you could only be eligible for SNAP for 3 months. In 3 years you can only get SNAP if you are an adult, but we have exempted foster youth from that provision because who do we have to say that this young person, who is 18 or 19 on their own and can figure it out? I know I was still eating at home when I was 19.

I am so proud, again, of you and Mrs. CHERFILUS-MCCORMICK for spending this time to lift this up to our community and our constituents. I am inspired by your dedication and committed to working with you as we move forward. I thank you for yielding to me, Mr. JACKSON.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honorable G WEN MOORE from Wisconsin, who so eloquently and passionately articulated the plight of reunification and the challenges that lie before us.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE).

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues, the gentleman from Illinois and the gentlewoman from Florida, for their leadership in the Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour this First Session of the 118th Congress.

They have demonstrated, even as freshmen, their leadership and breadth of knowledge of the issues that are important to the members of the Congressional Black Caucus. I thank both of them for their outstanding leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss June as National Reunification Month. It is an opportunity to recognize the people who work daily to help families stay together. I know this issue personally.

Last Wednesday, I had the honor of hosting a young constituent from my district during Foster Youth Shadow Day. We spent the day discussing legislative process and I showed her around Congress. I was impressed with her questions and intelligence. She serves to grow up in a loving and supportive household. She is one reason we must work daily to help families stay together in healthy environments.

There are anywhere from 300,000 to 400,000 children in foster care nationwide. Yet too many children are removed from households before parents receive the services necessary to avoid such an action. This situation is worse in Black communities.

Black families are more likely to be investigated by child protective services and lose children than White families. Black children spend more time in foster care, and they are less likely to be reunified with their families.

Family reunification is better for these children overall. The youth that shadowed me the other day talked about where her siblings were and that they weren’t together. Even though she is not with them, she tries to keep track of them, being the eldest, and has worked to make sure that she stays in touch with them.

Research shows that children have better outcomes in life when they grow up in families that nurture and care for them. There is hope for children in traumatic households before they even enter foster care. This marks the 5th anniversary of the passage of the Family First Prevention Services Act.

This law made funding available for resources and activities to make families healthier and safer for children. These programs include programs to address mental health and substance abuse issues in the home. Also, these programs help fathers and mothers become better parents.

Healthy families are at risk sooner so we can implement these programs before child removal becomes necessary. We need to increase funding for more preventative services, such as home visits. Studies show that home visits have a significant role in child maltreatment, the leading cause of child removal. In addition, there are kin placements.

Right now there are 2.5 million children who are being raised by relatives or close family friends. Research has found that children staying with a relative or a friend have better behavior, mental health, and physical health than children in foster care. They are allowed to grow up in their culture and stay connected to their families. Children do best with their own families.

That is why we must provide more resources to families to prevent children from being removed at all. Healthy families are better for children, and they are better for America.

As I stated, my colleague prior to me, the Honorable G WEN MOORE, has picked up the mantle from one of our great colleagues that of chaired on to lead the Mayor of Los Angeles, KAREN BASS, who did an outstanding job with this program, the Foster Shadow Youth Day on Capitol Hill. She was an outstanding leader in that, and Ms. Moore has picked it up and not lost a beat.

Mr. Speaker, it is an opportunity for us to do the best that we can to make sure that families stay unified and have a healthy outlook on life.

Mr. JACKSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honorable DONALD PAYNE, Jr., from the State of New Jersey for those eloquent words.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCormick).

Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, in honor of Caribbean American Heritage Month, I rise today to recognize Dr. Judith Joseph, who has helped shine a light on mental health issues and inspired countless others to seek support.

Dr. Joseph immigrated to the U.S. from Trinidad at the age of 4. After growing up in a religious community, with a father as a pastor, Judith became interested in exploring the intersection of spirituality and science.

Today, she leads a team of 10 talented women at the Manhattan Behavioral Medicine, who are dedicated to developing and exploring novel treatments for mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, and ADHD.

Dr. Joseph has shared her expertise with a wide audience, using social media as a positive vehicle for change in a digestible and accessible manner. I thank Dr. Joseph for her invaluable contribution to mental health research and education.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, June is National Reunification Month, an important designation that remains unknown to many, but one that warrants wider understanding and greater attention. In the grand tapestry of life, one universal truth weaves its thread throughout—that none of us can journey far or aim high without some form of familial structure to ground us. Family, in its various forms and definitions, provides the anchors we all need.

As we turn our attention to the realities underscored by the data from fiscal year 2021, a stark and uncomfortable picture emerges that further emphasizes the urgency of the matter at hand.

Over the year, investigations of maltreatment involved staggering 587,330 children in the United States.

Each of these represents a unique story, a child who has faced abuse or neglect severe enough that allegations of maltreatment were substantiated, and a life irrevocably scarred by these experiences.

Moreover, this vast number doesn’t tell the complete story. Over 200,000 children were placed into the foster care system in that same year, a heartfelt reflection of the gravity and complexity of the issues that we confront. While these numbers are staggering on their own, the statistics take on an even darker shade when viewed through the lens of racial disparities.

The overrepresentation of African-American children in the foster care system is a disturbing trend that we can no longer ignore.

Despite representing only 14 percent of the general population, African-American children accounted for 20 percent of the children entering the foster care system in fiscal year 2021. This disproportionate representation extends to multiracial children as well, revealing a systemic bias that must be addressed.

In certain States, this disproportionality is even more pronounced, spotlighting a deeply rooted racial bias that is pervasive and detrimental. The repercussions of these discrepancies stretch far beyond the immediate impact, creating a ripple effect that touches every aspect of these children’s lives, from their education and...
Perhaps it is time to look inward and address the root issues that plague our society. If we ensured a living wage for our workers, would we not see a reduction in the number of children entering the foster care system? If we understood that causes of addiction, would we not see fewer children that would need to be separated from their families? Moreover, if we could cease making assumptions on racial stereotypes about families different from our very own view, we might prevent the stigmatization of countless children. We might stop reducing them to mere cogs in the machinery of systemic racism and bigotry and instead acknowledge their individuality, their potential, and their dreams.

Today, I implore each and every one of us and you to present this to the House and to lend your ears to the fair and the approval, then listen to the stories of children and young people in the foster care system, their struggles, their hopes, and their dreams. Remember the dedicated caretakers who selflessly serve these children. Children who have been placed in the foster care system, for reasons reckless or legitimate, must never be rendered invisible or forgotten.

We must always remember that their lives matter. Their dreams are of critical importance to the tapestry of our future. Their spiritual, psychological, and emotional well-being is an essential cornerstone of the America we aspire to become.

A child living with criticism—we have heard—learns to condemn. A child exposed to hostility learns to fight. A child shunned in shame learns guilt. Children who have been placed in the foster care system, their struggles, their hopes, and their dreams. Today, I implore each and every one of us and you to present this to the House and to lend your ears to the fair and the approval, then listen to the stories of children and young people in the foster care system, their struggles, their hopes, and their dreams. Remember the dedicated caretakers who selflessly serve these children.

Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today not just as an elected Representative, but as a living testament to this profound truth. I am an embodiment of the power of familial support and a witness to the transformative impact it can have on a child’s life. It is within the secure confines of a loving family that a child can break free from the constraints of financial, existential, and emotional insecurity, daring to dream bigger, reach higher, and grow more fully.

A grim reality, however, casts a long shadow over our Nation—the practice of unnecessary family separations. This is not a side issue or a minor concern, but a grave matter that demands serious attention and conscious action from each of us.

The current system as it stands is marred by prejudice and arbitrariness, permitting the removal of children from their families without the absolute justification of immediate harm. This is a practice that we must challenge, question, and ultimately transform.

The era must come to an end when social workers and others were permitted to pass judgment on a family’s worthiness based on race, economic status, or cultural and religious beliefs. A family’s integrity should not be a matter for prejudiced scrutiny but respected as one of the sacred cornerstones of our society.

It is crucial to emphatically state that Black children, like all children, need the nurturing care of their parents. They need to experience life’s joys and challenges within the safety net of their own families, enriching their identity and strengthening their roots.

There exists a blatant contradiction when some claim to champion the cause of families while simultaneously supporting policies that splinter their very familial structures. How can one profess commitment to family values while advocating for policies that fundamentally undermine the very foundation of families?

Every family, regardless of their race, ethnicity, or geographical origin, has an undeniable right to raise their children in an environment free from undue governmental interference and unwarranted judgment from uninformed bureaucrats. Whether Black, Hispanic, indigenous, Asian, from the Appalachia, or from the South Side of Chicago, every family deserves this opportunity.

The Congressional Black Caucus members will not stand by and watch families be torn apart in America again. No child should be thrust into a system unless they are in immediate danger. This is our pledge, and this is our mission.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the life of my grandmother, Gertrude Brown, who was a foster child who was orphaned at the age of 14. I represent her indomitable spirit.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the honorable gentleman from Florida (Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK).

Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, I thank my co-chair, Representative JONATHAN JACKSON, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, in honor of Caribbean American Heritage Month, I rise today to recognize Phyllisia Ross, whose prowess as a musician has allowed her to create unique music that reflects her Caribbean heritage. Since the age of 12, Ross has developed her craft of singing and playing the piano. In 2006, Ross graduated from the world-renowned A.W. Dreyfoos School of the Arts in West Palm Beach, Florida.

Throughout her career, she has been able to incorporate several styles of genres in her music, ranging from classical to R&B, as well as world music in several languages. Her hit single “Konsa” is emblematic of her unique talents, paying homage to her Haitian roots with her kompa style.

Ross has brought her music around the globe—everywhere from the Ivory Coast to Jamaica—touching audiences worldwide. In addition, Ross also runs and operates her own independent music production company and has helped mentor young artists.

I am proud to represent Ross and her extensive artistic contributions to the Caribbean community and to the United States.

I thank the Congressional Black Caucus chairman, Mr. STEVE HORSFORD, I thank the Honorable SHEILA CHERFILUS-McCORMICK for her remarks.

Mr. Speaker, you have heard from my distinguished colleagues about family reunification.

I thank the Congressional Black Caucus chairman, Mr. STEVE HORSFORD. I thank the Honorable GWEN MOORE. I thank the Honorable DONALD PAYNE, Jr. I thank my honorable colleagues who joined us today on all issues of great importance to the Congressional Black Caucus, our constituents, Congress, and all Americans tonight.

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, June 2023 marks National Reunification Month, honoring those who work tirelessly to keep families together across the nation.

Here we are, recognizing the individuals and continuing initiatives that support keeping families together. This year’s focus for this year’s reunification is “Shifting Power and Reconnecting Families All Year Long.”

The three important themes during Reunification Month include:
1. The fact that we should celebrate parents and children who have successfully reunited and understand how challenging an accomplishment it may be.

2. Celebrate child welfare professionals, kin caregivers, and resource families who helped make reunification reality for parents and children. And lastly . . .

3. Inspire parents and professionals who are currently involved in child welfare to see that Reunification Matters and Reunification Happens.

It is also a good time to commit once more to supporting, enhancing, and intensifying these initiatives all year long.

By definition, the child welfare system is collection and services aimed at optimizing children’s well-being by ensuring their safety, establishing durability, and aiding their families.

The operation and provision of child welfare services may vary from state to state, but all states are accountable for adhering to federal and state laws.

And yet, the stress of involvement in the child welfare system and foster care placement instability can contribute to or exacerbate mental, emotional, and physical health issues.

Not only are child protective agencies more likely to investigate Black homes, remove their children, and place them in foster care, but Black children are prone to spend more time in foster care and are less likely to be reunified with their families.

Research tells us that Black children are less likely to be reunified than White and Hispanic children, older children are less likely to be reunified and children with health and mental health issues are less likely to be reunified.

In addition, more than 200,000 kids entered foster care, and 587,330 of those cases of maltreatment or neglect have been documented nationwide.

Every child deserves a village of support. In Houston, there are well over 2,000 children currently in the foster care system. Texas alone response times the hotline to report child abuse, neglect, or exploitation, increased five minutes, with callers waiting on hold an average of 5.2 minutes, since the January 2022 report.

Furthermore, research on kinship care has indicated that children placed with relatives have better behavior, mental health, and well-being than children placed in non-relative foster care, and that children placed with family have higher placement stability.

Older foster youth have the same needs as younger children for a safe and loving family that will support them into maturity.

It is extremely unfair that youth who age out of foster care are more likely to encounter homelessness, unemployment, early parenthood, and substance abuse. That is why I congratulate the House for using Federal Block Grant funds to build housing for aged out youth with wraparound services in Houston.

The needs, experiences, and voices of children and youth in foster care as well as their families and caretakers need to be lifted.

Everyone has a part to play in making communities and families stronger and lowering the need for foster care in a secure manner.

This year commemorates the fifth anniversary of the Family First Prevention Services Act’s passage.

I am astounded that the passage of this law, that emphasis on the child alone was replaced with one that included the family as well.

Family First made financing available for a variety of authorized evidence-based prevention-focused programs, such as those to address mental health issues, substance use disorders, and to offer building blocks.

Family First prevention plans have been filed by 45 states including Texas and 4 tribes to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and several have already started putting them in place.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought to light the need for more innovative ways, like telehealth, to provide mental health services to children, youth, and their caretakers.

Several state child welfare agencies are co-designing techniques to design with individuals and communities rather than for them. This method elevates the voices and experiences of adolescents, parents, relatives, and foster parents.

The Harris County Plan of Safe Care Steering Committee is a cross-sector group of organizations from academia, child welfare, healthcare, justice, public safety, and substance use disorder prevention treatment.

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services operates a “Treatment Foster Family Care” program to stabilize children at risk of placement in a congregate care setting or psychiatric hospital who experience emotional, behavioral, or mental health difficulties.

Transforming the child welfare system will require the development of new policies, practices, and infrastructures that prioritize prevention and the well-being of children and families.

As well as meaningful participation of those with lived experience in all stages of reform planning, development, implementation, and evaluation.

Many people find the process of receiving assistance to be unnecessarily difficult.

Not to mention the overwhelmingly horrifying number of children who are placed in unlicensed homes.

It is illegal to place children overnight in unlicensed facilities, but because of mounting demand, children are sleeping in such places anyway.

One of the things in life that goes beyond loneliness and missed meals.

It saddens me to know foster children have been subjected to physical and sexual abuse in these temporary placements.

Children have gone missing while in state care and some have been groomed for sexual trafficking.

CPS workers—trained for case management, not therapeutic care—have their hands tied in how to respond.

We are talking about traumatized children who have been subjected to abuse and neglect.

Children who are now being housed in temporary residential treatment centers or temporary group homes under the supervision of CPS staff.

Placement into foster care is a significant and traumatic experience in the life of a child, and for their family.

That is why we need to support and strengthen families and prevent unnecessary removals of children from their homes.

Too often, the perspectives of children, youth, and families, have been sidelined in debates about how communities may improve their approach to child and family well-being.

We should all believe in hope.

Hope is the belief by a family that despite the challenges they face, the strength and support of neighbors and others in the community will help them to overcome and thrive.

Childhood should be some of the most beautiful moments of your life.

No one person young or old should endure what many of our nation’s people are experiencing.

No child left behind means exactly that.

Our children are the future, the past and most importantly the present.

Do not take your focus off of the important and what some may deem “touchy” subjects, because they are the most pivotal in the end.

They are all of our children and every one of us is needed to safeguard and protect them.

As co-chair of the Children’s Caucus, I encourage all of us to continue to dig deeper, love more and reach out to children in need.

As Members of Congress, it is our duty to do even more to ensure all safeguards are in place and to uphold laws, and to create or amend laws where needed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o’clock and 24 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, June 21, 2023, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker’s table and referred as follows:

EC–1269. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department’s fourteenth Annual Report to Congress on the Prevention and Reduction of Underage Drinking for 2023, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 2560b(c)(6)(B); Public Law 106-359, Sec. 2; (120 Stat. 3692); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.