

By returning to the same conservative principles on which Reagan relied, I am optimistic that we can restore the honor, individual liberties, and economic prosperity that once defined our great Nation.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 514, EXTENDING COUNTER-TERRORISM AUTHORITIES

Mr. DREIER (during the Special Order of Mr. GALLEGLY), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112-8) on the resolution (H. Res. 79) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 514) to extend expiring provisions of the USA PATRIOT Improvement and Reauthorization Act of 2005 and Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 relating to access to business records, individual terrorists as agents of foreign powers, and roving wiretaps until December 8, 2011, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

D.C. VOTING RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DESJARLAIS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 30 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise to claim a half hour this afternoon to speak about the citizens of the Nation's Capital, who are full and equal citizens of the United States of America; that Nation's Capital that was born with the Nation itself, was born with the Constitution. Among the Nation's oldest citizens are the citizens of this very city where the Congress does its work.

□ 1600

Now, there is a complicated relationship between the Federal Government and the Nation's capital, but one thing has never been complicated: The Founders and every American ever since have understood that the citizens of the Nation's capital are entitled to the same constitutional rights and democratic rights as every other American citizen.

I have come to the floor because I think many Members who are incumbents may have forgotten, and the largest class of new Members may be surprised by what they may be about to experience on this floor with respect to a local jurisdiction that they know nothing of and that they have nothing to do with.

The new Members have come with a special distaste for Federal intervention, even into Federal affairs, and I respect that. I think that they, perhaps, would be among the first Members to recognize that the powerful Federal Government should never snatch local control from a local jurisdiction. Indeed, you may be about to experience

something that is so much of a surprise that it will be a kind of an out-of-body experience when you're asked to actually consider a budget that this Congress had nothing do with, a budget for which every living cent was raised by the people I represent. You may be asked to overturn local laws simply because they are different from the laws you would have passed in your own local jurisdictions and where there is no Federal imprimatur on these local laws at all.

Now, gradually, Congress has come to understand that the United States loses its own credibility as the leader of democracy around the world when it does not treat the citizens of a nation's capital as full and equal citizens. Congressional jurisdiction over the District of Columbia appears in the Constitution; but in 1973, Congress recognized that it was wrong—wrong—to rule the local jurisdiction from the Congress, so it delegated what we call home rule, or the right to self-government, to the District of Columbia. That marked a historic realization that local residents must govern themselves locally, that it was wrong that the Nation's capital was the only place—this place where Congress meets—with no local democracy, where hundreds of thousands of its citizens had no say on their own local affairs.

I know it's hard to believe that this could have ever occurred anywhere in the United States. Local control is among the very first principles of the founding of our country; but only in 1973 did your Nation's capital get an elected government, an elected Mayor, and an elected city council. A lot of that had to do with, to be fair, southern Democrats. Although the District for 150 years was a majority white district, the old-time southern Democrats saw the large African American population here as a reason to keep the District from having any local self-government. Republicans weren't much a part of that, and I hope they won't be much a part of it today.

The promise to delegate the same kind of local control to the residents of the Nation's capital, as we assume, even without thinking, is the case for every other local jurisdiction, has been mostly kept. Mayor Vincent Gray runs the city. The City Council passes the laws—except when Congress decides or, rather, when some Members of Congress decide to break the promise of democracy and intervene into the affairs of a local jurisdiction for one reason and one reason only: that they simply disagree with the decisions the local jurisdiction has made. Imagine if in your own districts, from this Congress, I disagreed with some of your decisions, and I could then overturn those decisions.

My colleagues, I am asking you not to do to us what you would not have done to you. We ask only that you apply the same standard of democracy here in the Nation's capital that you insist on in your own districts. You

cannot be for one standard of democracy for the Egyptian people, who are now rising up to demand democracy, without being for the same standard in your own Nation's capital. You wouldn't intervene and tell the Egyptians what to do even when you disagreed with it.

We ask you in the name of the Founders, in the name of American democracy: Do not do that to the residents of the District of Columbia. It is impossible to justify a standard for democracy that makes an exception when you disagree with the decisions that have been made.

I respect that new Members abhor Federal intervention even in areas of legitimate Federal concern. The new Members, some of them tea party members, would like to withdraw Federal intervention from areas long understood to be of some concern to the Federal Government. Their view is that, even in these Federal matters, there is too much Federal Government.

What about Federal intervention where there is no Federal concern whatsoever? What about Federal intervention where there is no Federal money whatsoever but only billions of dollars raised by the local taxpayers? What about Federal intervention where there is no Federal law involved but only the law of the local jurisdiction?

If you think there is too much Federal Government in what we do now, surely you would not tolerate any Federal Government in the local matters of a local jurisdiction, especially in your own Nation's capital. We raise our own funds, \$3 billion, which is more than that of several States. We want to spend it as we see fit, just as my colleagues do in their jurisdictions. Without any Federal intervention, they spend their own local funds as they see fit.

Yet, yesterday, there was a shameful, shameful experience here. There was a hearing on a Federal bill. The Federal bill had to do with restrictions on Federal funding for abortions, restrictions that some of us thought were airtight as it was. I happen to be for the right of a woman to choose, but I have always respected my colleagues who have another point of view. That matter is being decided, as it should be because it involves Federal funding, in several committees of the Congress.

What in the world was the District of Columbia doing in a bill having to do with Federal funding for abortions?

□ 1610

What was this language doing in that bill? And I am quoting: The term "Federal Government" includes the government of the District of Columbia.

It does not, my colleagues. We are a local government. We are not your colony. Declaring that the District of Columbia is part of the Federal Government for purposes of intervening into our local affairs, to tell us how to spend our local money, is an unprecedented violation of the District's right to self-government.