

WYOMING COUNTY, 2015 SADD NATIONAL CHAPTER OF THE YEAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. JENKINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Wyoming County, West Virginia, chapter of Students Against Destructive Decisions, also known as SADD.

The Wyoming County chapter has been named the 2015 SADD National Chapter of the Year. Consisting of 300 members from six different schools, these Wyoming County students work hard to encourage young people to avoid underage drinking, drugs, and other destructive activities.

Wyoming County and the surrounding area, like many parts of our State and country, are limited in the number of youth programs and social services leading to temptations for many teenagers. SADD helps fill the void and is a positive force in helping students make positive life choices and avoid destructive decisions.

These students represent our State's values and demonstrate compassion, commitment, and courage through their work. I know they will take the skills they have learned in SADD and become the next generation of leaders in West Virginia.

I congratulate these students and teachers and thank them for making Wyoming County a better place to live.

CONFEDERATE FLAG AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, as you pointed out, I am from Minnesota. Minnesota's Governor Ramsey was in Washington, D.C., shortly after the attack at Fort Sumter, and he was the first to offer up our support—1,000 Minnesotans—to keep our Union together.

Minnesota was at the Battle of Gettysburg. Our regiment suffered 82 percent in casualties, the greatest loss of any unit at Gettysburg on a single day.

So last night, when the Republican leadership put forward a last-minute amendment that would allow for the display and sale of the Confederate flag in our national parks, an amendment which we will vote on today that would allow this hateful symbol which evokes memories of racism and a painful period in our country's past to be displayed on public lands, I found myself shocked, outraged, and disappointed because the people in Minnesota sent me here to strive for what they strive for every day: to build a better, stronger America, an America in which we strive to give everyone hope and opportunity, that they too can pursue life, liberty, happiness, and justice.

So the flag that we are talking about is a symbol of a time when African Americans were enslaved, sold as

human commodities. It had been used as a rallying cry throughout our history for those who wish to keep our country segregated.

And we saw again last month in Charleston this flag being used as a symbol for many who carry hatred in their hearts, a man who carried so much hatred that he took the lives of nine parishioners because he viewed this flag as a symbol of his beliefs.

This flag should be no point of pride for any American, and we should take this flag down.

Just 2 days ago, without opposition, as I had the honor of being ranking member as we were doing the Interior bill, this body voted to adopt amendments which would prevent the sale or display of Confederate flags in national parks.

Those amendments were simple, commonsense efforts to place into law standards that the National Park Service had put forward last month. It was a moment of great pride for me.

All those new standards would do was bring the Federal Government in line with decisions made by many private sector retailers: Amazon, Wal-Mart, Sears, Disney. And other national retailers have all made the decision to take down this flag because of its racist history.

Private businesses are rallying behind a commonsense decision to stop peddling hateful symbols. So why in heaven and Earth is the House of Representatives, the Republican Caucus, working to ensure that the Federal Government allows them to be sold?

For House Republicans, it appears perhaps the cost of getting the votes to pass the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, which panders to polluters, is to wrap themselves in a banner of racism.

I think that is wrong, and I urge my colleagues to stand with people of great courage and great passion to say "no" to hate, "no" to racism, and "yes" to America.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the Calvert amendment.

CLEAR LAW ENFORCEMENT FOR CRIMINAL ALIEN REMOVAL ACT OF 2015

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia). The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to discuss H.R. 2964, the Clear Law Enforcement for Criminal Alien Removal Act.

This is a bill that I have had introduced every Congress since 2007. And we have many Members of this body, Mr. Speaker, who have joined as co-sponsors of this legislation.

What it would do specifically is this: It would ensure that State and local law enforcement officials have the tools necessary to help the Federal Government deport criminal illegal aliens from the United States.

□ 1100

My legislation would require the Department of Homeland Security, when a State or local law enforcement agency arrests an alien and requests DHS to take custody of that alien, to do a few specific things. Number one, they have to take the alien into Federal custody and incarceration within 48 hours and request that the State or municipality temporarily incarcerate the alien or transport the alien to Federal custody. This would allow them to remove this individual from the country and bar them from coming back.

Mr. Speaker, the bill also requires the DHS to train State and local police in enforcement of immigration laws, the Federal Government to reimburse local and State governments, and to withhold funds from sanctuary cities.

Now, we have heard a lot about these issues in the last few days, and one of the problems that we have is the sanctuary cities. Mr. Speaker, I have before my colleagues a map that was prepared by the Center for Immigration Studies. We now have in this country 200 sanctuary cities. I am reading from this map. More than 200 cities, counties, and States across the U.S. are considered sanctuary cities.

Now, what happens in these cities is they choose to work around and to circumvent or not to abide by Federal law when it comes to immigration policy. That is one of the reasons passing the CLEAR Act is so important, holding them accountable.

Also, reading from the map, I find it so interesting that the Department of Justice has never sued or taken any measure, including denying Federal funds, against the jurisdiction that is a sanctuary city. On the other hand, we know that the Department of Justice actually sued the State of Arizona for trying to strengthen its immigration laws.

Mr. Speaker, I would come to the floor today as we talk about dealing with the criminal illegal alien population and highlighting H.R. 2964. I would ask my colleagues: What does your vote record say about your actions? Are you strengthening Federal law and abiding by Federal law? Or do those actions strengthen sanctuary cities? Do they provide more accountability? Is that what you are providing through your vote actions? Or is it something that allows a violation of Federal law to continue?

I think it is imperative that we address the issue of criminal illegal aliens, that we address the issue of sanctuary cities; and, Mr. Speaker, I think that it is imperative that we move forward with passage of the CLEAR Act by this body. It is a simple bill.

I encourage my colleagues to read it. It is 21 pages, and you will find in there that it addresses these issues that are front and foremost in our minds this day.