

school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Rahul Nagvekar attends Dulles High School in Sugar Land, Texas. The essay topic is: majority rule.

Majority rule is an important principle in any democracy, but it is always crucial to preserve the rights of and consider ideas from minority factions. To improve our system of majority rule, I would seek to introduce legislation permitting binding nationwide referenda, consequently allowing proposals supported by an absolute majority of voters to be enacted independently of our party system.

Our current system of majority rule allows political factions to claim majority status even without the support of a numerical majority of voting-eligible Americans. In the last ten years, voter turnout has never exceeded 65% in a nationwide election. Even a party that wins 55% of the vote in an election with 65% turnout—almost always sufficient for a majority in a legislature or Electoral College—has been endorsed by just over 35% of eligible voters. Clearly, this does not indicate majority support for the winning party's policies and positions.

As an alternative, I believe America needs a nationwide petition-and-referendum system, some variant of which is already used in most states to consult voters about significant changes to legislation. Here is a basic framework for a nationwide referendum system, which can, if used correctly, bypass the party system and promote true majority rule:

1. Any voting-eligible American citizen can introduce a petition calling for a referendum, either to introduce a new law or to repeal an existing law. The petitioner should include the text of his or her proposed referendum question.

2. Once the petition is signed by 20% of all voting-eligible Americans, the proposal will be submitted to a Referendum Committee consisting of five constitutional law experts, all appointed by the Supreme Court. (The very high signature threshold should ensure that referenda are only used to resolve questions of genuine national importance.)

3. If the Referendum Committee unanimously concludes that the passage of the referendum will not violate the Constitution, the referendum question will appear on the ballot at the next available opportunity. Nationwide referenda will coincide with elections to the House of Representatives, but no more than three referendum questions will appear simultaneously on any national ballot.

4. If an absolute majority of voting-eligible Americans vote for the referendum proposal, the referendum will be binding and the proposal will be passed into law with a vote of Congress and the signature of the president.

This petition-and-referendum system enhance our current system of majority rule, first and foremost by allowing a proposal genuinely supported by a majority of voting-eligible Americans to be enacted into law even if it is not supported by the governing party. Additionally, by giving citizens a say in important national matters, a referendum system is likely to encourage increased turnout in future elections. I sincerely believe that this increased political participation

will lead to more vigorous debate, encouraging winning parties to consider ideas from their defeated opponents—making our majority rule system more functional and democratic.

RECOGNIZING THE OXNARD COLLEGE MEN'S SOCCER TEAM AS THE 2015 CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION STATE SOCCER CHAMPIONS

HON. JULIA BROWNLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2016

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the Oxnard College Men's Soccer Team for winning the 2015 California Community College Athletic Association State Soccer Championship. I commend the entire Oxnard College community on this monumental achievement and victory.

It is important to recognize that the journey for the Oxnard College Men's Soccer Team began far before they stepped on the field to practice. For the majority of these young men, their soccer careers began as young children playing in youth sports for fun. It was only a mere dream that one day these men would grow up to play for their college team and win the state title. Under the outstanding leadership of Coach Ross Greaney, a former Oxnard College player himself, the team was led to victory through hard work and dedication throughout the season.

Beginning with their initial home game, the Oxnard Condors worked diligently throughout their season up until the championship game on December 6, 2015. The Condors ended their season with 19 wins, 4 losses, and 3 ties. Facing Evergreen Valley College at De Anza College in Cupertino, California for the State Championship may have felt like a dream at one point, but their successful season had prepared the Condors well for this challenge.

From over 300 miles away, the Oxnard College community cheered and vigilantly watched as Cristian Guzman scored the winning goal for the Condors in overtime with the final score of 2–1. Through their perseverance and teamwork, the Condors returned home as state champions.

Through their sportsmanship and commitment, the Oxnard Condors brought home Oxnard College's first state title in almost forty years. With a leadership team of Head Coach Ross Greaney, Assistant Coach Bryan Hill, Team Manager Marc Pinlac, and Student Manager Oscar Martinez, the Condors had a strong support system to become champions. I would like to recognize the 19 players who deserve recognition for their victory including Eduardo Garcia, Saul Higuera, Daniel Aguilar, Mario Sermeno, Ricky Arroyo, Jorge Jimenez, Edwin Elizarraraz, Gustavo Navarro, Fernando Hernandez Puga, Christian Guzman, Jerry Orozco, Raul Gonzalez, Luis Cabrera, Andres Herrera, Damian Lopez, Matias Lopez, Keifer Cooksey, Joseph Hernandez, and Sergio Equivel.

I am confident this hallmark achievement is only the beginning of many more to come for this team. For these reasons, I am pleased to express my sincere congratulations to the

Oxnard College Men's Soccer Team for this great victory.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2016

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, on April 12, 2016 I was absent for recorded vote Number 139 and Number 140.

I would like to reflect how I would have voted if I were here:

On Roll Call Number 139 I would have voted yes.

On Roll Call Number 140 I would have voted yes.

RECOGNIZING THE 2016 TYSONS REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2016

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce and to congratulate the incoming 2016 board members.

Tyson's has drastically transformed during the past 50 years. This change began when the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved plans for the Tysons Corner Shopping Center in 1962. When the mall opened in 1968, it was hailed as the largest enclosed mall in the world.

Since then, there has been a dramatic influx of technology companies, government contracting firms, and other corporations. Tysons has become the premier business district of the Washington Metropolitan Area and is the 12th largest employment center in the United States. With the recent opening of Metro's Silver Line and ongoing redevelopment, the region is expected to continue adding not only businesses but also high-density residential housing.

The mission of the Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce is to be the unified voice of the business community in the area while ensuring that its ties and commitment to the community are strengthened. The Chamber actively promotes local non-profits and community organizations, as well as youth educational programs, and it sponsors multiple events each year in support of these activities. The growth of the Chamber has been the result of the diversity of its members and the leadership of its Board. I am pleased to submit the following names of the incoming 2016 board members:

2016 Chairman of the Board: Lori Lopez
2017 Incoming Chairman of the Board: Jeff DiMeglio

Incoming Board Members: William P. Daly, Jr., David MacGillivray, Peg McDermott, Stacy Bradford, Scott Finberg, Angela Inzerillo, Kathy Jensen, Kevin McCoy, Scott M. Ward, James Y. Boland, Carla Doyle, Matt Edgar, Maureen Loftus, Matt Evans, Jerry Ferguson, Shania Kapoor, Sopa Keo, Jeffrey B. Krashin, Shirley Luu, Cory Scott, Michele Weatherly, Peter Wynne, and Dean Xenos.