

Mrs. Urrabazo was born on February 12th 1947 to Juan and Carolina Urby in Del Rio, Texas. She was considered a miracle baby due to being born ten years after her nine siblings. Although her first language was Spanish, she quickly learned English and excelled in her studies. She received her bachelor's degree from Texas Women's University and then a master's degree in Spanish literature from The University of Texas-EI Paso. This enthusiasm for literature eventually led her to United High School in Laredo, Texas where she taught English literature for 32 years.

Yolanda's devotion to her students is shown by her long and passionate career in teaching. For over three decades she dedicated her life to educating generations of students. This commitment to education is an inspiration, and serves as a reminder for how important educators are. Her dedication to serving others will not be forgotten and will serve as a testament to what we should all strive for.

Mrs. Urrabazo is survived by her husband Ignacio, seven children, six grandchildren, and five siblings. Her legacy will live on in the countless people she helped shape. The mentoring and guidance that she provided will be shown throughout the community she touched. I have personally seen her impact through the great work her daughters Yolanda and Claudia provided when they worked in my office. It was clear through their hard work and ability that their mother had taught them very well. She serves as a reminder for how much one person can do to affect so many lives. The city of Laredo will miss her and cherish the kindness and care that she brought.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have the opportunity to remember the legacy of Yolanda Urby Urrabazo.

served as the Chief Operating Officer of Progressive Transportation Service, Inc., a company that provided local and regional transportation services to communities throughout the state of New York.

In 1997, Joe was appointed Commissioner of the New York State Department of Transportation where he became the longest-serving Commissioner in the department's history. He also served as the Chairman of both the Transportation Research Board Executive Committee, and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' Standing Committee on Rail Transportation.

Prior to joining Amtrak, Joe was the Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration and a member of the Amtrak Board of Directors. In November 2008, Joe was appointed President and CEO of Amtrak. Under his leadership and management, Amtrak greatly improved and expanded its operational and financial performance while providing a crucial service to the American people.

As President and CEO of Amtrak, Joe implemented a corporate strategy that resulted in record-setting ridership and revenue, as well as an expansion of customer services and infrastructure projects. He was instrumental in a major planning effort to develop a next-generation high-speed rail system, an extensive employee safety program, enhanced security initiatives, and improved maintenance of Amtrak's infrastructure. Joe was a visionary leader at a pivotal moment for Amtrak and for the country's railway system.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring and commending Mr. Boardman for his unwavering dedication to public service and his contribution to our transportation infrastructure.

EDITORIAL BY MR. WADE  
HENDERSON

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 21, 2016*

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD an opinion editorial that appeared in the Washington Post on August 26, 2016.

This piece is authored by Mr. Wade Henderson, who serves as the president and chief executive of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the national coalition of more than 200 organizations committed to a fair, open, and inclusive America:

THE PURSUIT OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT FOR  
DYLANN ROOF IS A STEP BACKWARD

(By Wade Henderson, August 26)

On Nov. 7 in Charleston, S.C., a federal court will begin selecting a jury in the death penalty prosecution of Dylann Roof, the accused killer of nine African American worshippers at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church. At first glance, the notion of a white man facing the death penalty for murdering black people in the South—in a killing inspired by the murderer's racist views—may seem like a marker of racial progress.

It isn't—and those who champion civil rights should not celebrate this moment. Roof's crime was surely heinous, and his racism was repugnant. But supporters of racial equality and equal treatment under the law should support Roof's offer to plead guilty and serve a sentence of life without the possibility of parole.

How can it be that a lifelong civil rights lawyer such as myself would take this position? Because the death penalty cannot be separated from the issue of racial discrimination, especially in the South. The history of slavery and lynching left deep scars in the black community, and the current death penalty does not fare much better. More than 8 in 10 of the executions carried out since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976 have occurred in the South. Blacks make up more than one-third of the 1,170 defendants executed in the region, with most convicted of murdering a white victim.

Given the racial disproportion inherent in the modern application of the death penalty, it is no surprise that most African Americans (including me) oppose the death penalty, a position that would also disqualify most of them (and me) from serving on the jury in Roof's case.

As a result, if the Roof trial continues on its present course, a jury will be chosen that represents only part of the community. Those who oppose the death penalty on principle will be struck from the pool of jurors by the presiding judge. Those who express doubts about the death penalty will likely be struck by the prosecution. The resulting jury will have fewer blacks, fewer women and fewer people of faiths that oppose the death penalty than a jury selected at random from the residents of Charleston. That cannot be a desirable outcome in such an emotional and racially charged case.

Neither would the adversarial proceeding necessitated by a refusal to accept Roof's offer to plead guilty and accept a sentence of life without the possibility of parole. Once the trial begins, there will be a detailed recounting of the worst day this community has ever experienced. It will be the prosecution's duty to portray this multiple murder as gruesomely as possible in order to secure a death sentence. Family members may be called to the stand to describe precisely what they went through that day and how it affected them.

Likewise, the defense will be obligated to do everything in its power to lessen Roof's culpability. This is how our adversarial process works, but it is not necessary here. Without the agony of trying to decide between life and death, a sentencing proceeding that followed a guilty plea could pay tribute to the victims, focusing on the value of their lives and the consequences of their loss. All family members could voice their pain, regardless of their view on the death penalty. It would not be an easy day, but far better than months of focusing only on Roof, followed by years of appeals and uncertainty.

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch has allowed this case to proceed as a capital prosecution until now, but a new decision point is coming soon. Most criminal cases settle before trial because it is in the best interests of the entire community. That could happen here; the offer is already on the table. The attorney general need only agree.

After the racially inspired attack on the parishioners of Mother Emanuel, as the church is known, South Carolina took the bold and important step of permanently lowering the Confederate battle flag from the state capitol grounds. This powerful symbol—perceived by many as the embodiment of racism and discrimination—had to go.

With the death penalty, the Justice Department now has the power to lower another flag that has torn communities apart along racial lines. Capital punishment in this case may appear to be just retribution for Roof's unfathomable crime. Yet the real-life operation of the death penalty suggests that its application to Roof would only pave the way for future cases in which the death penalty is invoked to harm the very community on which he inflicted so much pain.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL  
DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 21, 2016*

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$19,524,335,895,543.03. We've added \$8,897,458,846,649.95 to our debt in 7 years. This is over \$8.8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING JOSEPH BOARDMAN

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 21, 2016*

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, Congressman CAPUANO and I rise today to extend my sincerest appreciations to Joseph Boardman for his tireless effort and contribution to our nation's railroad system.

For over forty years, Joe has been actively involved in the transportation industry, working at the local, state, and federal level. Before starting his career in public service, Joe