leader about adjourning. I pointed out to the majority leader at that point in time that there were a number of critical health issues pending that needed to be addressed by this House. Frankly, we should not be adjourning without doing so.

Zika is a threat to young women, to young men, and to our populations in Puerto Rico and in the Virgin Islands, and we should have responded to the President's supplemental request so that it could be effectively responded to.

In addition, we still have the ongoing Flint water crisis, caused by the negligence, frankly, of the Governor and the Department of Environmental Quality in Michigan. Thousands of young people have been put at risk.

We also, of course, have the opiate addiction crisis with which we ought to be dealing. It is an immediate threat to each and every one of our communities.

Lastly, I am pleased that the Speaker and the majority leader are working towards an early consideration, as soon as we get back, of legislation which will allow Puerto Rico to face the financial crisis that confronts it.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, I will not object, but it is lamentable that we have not dealt with these four critically important issues before we adjourn.

I withdraw my reservation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The reservation is withdrawn.

Without objection, the concurrent resolution is concurred in.

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WHEN THE LAW DOES NOT FOLLOW THE CONSTITUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF ISAAC LOWE

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for yielding to me so I may pay tribute to a great, stellar woman from northern California. This can't be done in a 1-minute speech, so a little extra time is very, very fitting in recognition of her work and her life.

In rising today, I join with many northstate residents in honoring the life and legacy of Isaac Lowe, an incredible woman and a prominent civil rights leader, who passed away just a few weeks ago in Redding, California.

She was born in 1921 in Wharton, Texas. Isaac was the second youngest of nine children, learning early the importance of hard work. She attended Tillotson Business College in Austin, Texas, and Prairie View A&M in Prairie View. It was during a visit to check up on a sick friend in California when she met her future husband, Vernon Lowe, whom she married soon after and started her family in Redding, California.

Being an African American woman in the 1940s, unfortunately, racism was no stranger to Isaac. Despite holding a business degree, she was denied jobs because employers chose to judge her skin color rather than her impressive credentials. Isaac did not give up. She started a catering business in Redding, and she eventually became the first Black woman to be hired by the County of Shasta, working in social services for 17 years and helping others. However, Isaac's most noble work was through her plight to advance racial equality in her own neighborhood.

Upon first moving to Redding, all but one of the Black families lived on the same street and were segregated from the community. This was a status quo that she didn't accept. Isaac joined her husband in founding the Redding chapter of the NAACP and began her 65-year journey of advocating for civil rights and worked very hard in order to hold onto that charter of the NAACP when times got a little leaner back in the seventies. She lobbied city and county lawmakers for safe and affordable housing for Black families. She worked with local school officials for the equal treatment of Black children in the community's mainly White schools. She fought for fairness and justice under the law for all citizens in the judicial system. She raised funds and successfully sought approval from city hall for the construction of the only Martin Luther King, Jr., community center between Sacramento and Oregon at that time.

It was her compassionate advocacy and her resiliency that helped change Shasta County for the better. Some of her most notable accomplishments included being the first Black woman to serve on Shasta County's grand jury, where she served as a founding member of the Shasta County Citizens Against Racism and was awarded the Redding Citizen of the Year in 1992. Her proudest moment was in getting the Redding City Council members to recognize Martin Luther King Day as a holiday.

Her legacy speaks volumes of the person she was and of the impact she had on so many lives. One of the anecdotes I know about her informally is that she was fairly commonly referred to as the ''Rosa Parks of Redding, California.'' She was a deeply caring friend, a loving wife and mother, and a selfless advocate.

I had the chance to meet Isaac personally on different occasions—some positive and one, actually, a very negative occasion, but it was made positive by how the community responded to a very ugly racial incident that took place against a Black family in their home. Many of us in the community joined together in a march in solidarity, protesting, that we were not going to tolerate this in our community in northern California. Isaac was there, being strong but also being that smiling, positive voice. You could see her strength. You could also see the light shining from within her as she advocated for what was right for everybody, really, at the end of the day.

If we had more people like her and if we had more harmony instead of the divisiveness that we see so badly affecting this country today, we would be much better off. Northern California has lost a gem, but her legacy will live on, and we all recognize that. I am honored to be able to note that here today on the U.S. House floor and to properly show that. Her legacy even lives on in the papers she published and that are right over here in the Library of Congress, which note some of her work in the past for the NAACP. Indeed, it is a rich legacy that reaches all the way to Washington, D.C.

I appreciate my colleague from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for allowing me to make this special tribute to Isaac Lowe today.

Mr. GOHMERT. I thank my friend from California (Mr. LAMALFA). I did not realize I should have been joining in that tribute with the gentleman. Her being born in Wharton, Texas, and going to college in Texas, we share her as a real gem that the Lord provided to both of us. I thank the gentleman for sharing that with us.

Mr. Speaker, I had the honor of being allowed to attend oral arguments at the Supreme Court, and I appreciate their staff and their accomodation. Not everybody over there recognizes that there are three independent, coequal branches of government the way the Founders intended, but I am extremely grateful for those who do, and we afford the mutual respect between us. That is a good thing.

So, to the clerk of the Court and to Perry and others, I thank you for your accomodation.

I am a member of the Supreme Court Bar, which allows attorneys, as far as seating, to come sit in front of the bar, on the side of the bar with the litigants, and to get a real ringside seat—actually, inside the ring.

The case today was, actually, a consolidation of a number of cases. Probably most well-known—probably that should be most well-known—was the Little Sisters of the Poor. We had representatives from East Texas Baptist University in my district in Marshall, Texas. It is just a super school. They are a religious school, and they are not ashamed, because they are East Texas Baptist University, to teach what religious convictions inform them are the right things to do. They follow the law. The problem is when the law does not follow the Constitution, and that is what has gotten us into the problem that was faced today and is being faced at the Supreme Court.

It is amazing. I was telling a group here just recently that, in east Texas, we call it ''common sense,'' but when I get to Washington, we usually just

have to call it ''sense'' because it is not common at all. I found that to be the case at the Supreme Court during oral arguments. I do have great sympathy for all of the eight remaining Justices in this regard.

□ 1200

Once the Supreme Court issues a ruling that clearly violates the Constitution, for all who truly have eyes and truly have ears to hear not clouded by secular humanism, but informed by the Constitution's words itself, then they see that, when a court rules against the Constitution, violating the Constitution by its very ruling, it creates a terribly difficult situation for itself.

Because once the bold, visible lines that are spelled out in the Constitution are violated and erased, the Court is charged with an ongoing impossible task of trying to find a place to redraw those lines.

Now, it is unfortunate that some of the Justices—in fact, four of them—kept trying to draw a line in a manner that was not before the Court. They showed themselves to be not necessarily very able jurists who loved justice, but, in fact, very experienced politicians.

Because politicians know, if you are wrong on an issue and somebody brings up the issue about which you are wrong, the thing to do is change the subject and make it about something that you are not wrong about.

You point to something that is a very difficult question and say that that is a very difficult question and, as good magicians do, divert the attention away from the wrong that you have already done and that you are about to complicate.

Mr. Speaker, the wrong about which I speak was the violation by Congress coupled with the violation by the Supreme Court itself.

For the first time in our Nation's history, having the United States Federal Government with all its powers, its guns, its ability to take people's homes—well, that is the IRS. Most folks can't take homes.

But to just wreak havoc on the well-being of a family, of a business, the Federal Government says for the first time: You have to purchase a product. It is required.

There is nothing in the Constitution that either allows or encourages the United States Government to order all American citizens to buy a product.

As we went through discussion on ObamaCare back during 2009 until it passed in 2010, at first, the President and his minions were saying that, well, clearly this is not a tax. It was a mandate.

It says: You must buy a product and, if you don't comply with our Federal order to buy this product, this health insurance—and it has to be what we say health insurance is, not some idea you have—we will dictate what the health insurance is, and you have to provide it. If you don't, it is not a tax.

There is a penalty for violating the law, the mandatory obligation that we have imposed on every American. Well, nothing allows that and many things prohibit it.

Over the years, Members of Congress and even the Supreme Court and Presidents have used the Commerce Clause, that we have the right to control interstate commerce, as the basis for which to get involved in matters of commerce that lie within a State.

In this case, Chief Justice Roberts in this part of the opinion very correctly states that, if you allow the Federal Government to say we have jurisdiction to mandate people buy health insurance and not just any health insurance. It has to have the things in it that we dictate, then there is no place you could ever draw a line and say the Commerce Clause does not allow for this and ultimately decided that, under the Commerce Clause, ObamaCare was unconstitutional.

Simply citing the fact that everybody, at some point, seeks health care—and most people have some form of health insurance at some point—that does not give the Federal Government the right to come in and take over and even dictate the purchase of a product.

We had some in this room and at the other end of this building in the Senate who furthered the argument that this is old news, that the Government has been able to do this for many years. It is called car insurance or automobile insurance. Governments have been requiring insurance and penalizing if you didn't buy insurance for years. This is not a new concept.

The trouble is that was not an appropriate comparison at all. For one thing, that is activity within the State. It was not the Federal Government that required an insurance policy. And there was no mandate that everyone within a State had to have that car insurance.

Courts have long held that driving on a highway built by the State or Federal Government or county is a privilege. You do not have a constitutional right to drive a car on a government road. But if you choose to drive a car, a vehicle, on a government road, in that case, then you must have insurance.

The difference is driving on a road is a privilege. In the case of ObamaCare, the Federal Government said just breathing, walking around living or even lying prostrate in your bed, even if you are confined to your bed—it doesn't matter—just being a living person we will say under our Constitution is a privilege that the government giveth and the government taketh away.

Therefore, we are saying that, if you are going to exist, breathe, live, you must have health insurance, and not just any health insurance. It has to have the provisions we say and those will not necessarily include the things you need in your life.

We, as the omniscient, ubiquitous government—of course, it may be more ubiquitous than we know—we have a right to tell you what is good for you and what isn't. Once the government can tell you what you have to have or have not in the way of health care, they have the right to control your life.

So it was interesting, for one thing, that, in this case, the government had conceded that these were sincerely, deeply held religious beliefs of all the plaintiffs. So that was not an issue.

It was not an issue like some people who were trying to dodge the draft, except for religious purposes when sometimes it was and sometimes it was not. It was conceded in this case all of the deeply held religious beliefs were very sincere by the litigants.

I heard something I don't know that I have heard before in a Supreme Court argument when Justice Sotomayor made a statement of fact about the case.

One of the litigants who may not have been politically astute, but, apparently, accurate, said that, factually, Justice Sotomayor, that is just not the case. That is just not true here.

Where four of the Justices showed incredible aptitude for being politicians and not Justices, they diverted attention—as I said, good magicians do this. Good politicians do this.

They diverted attention away from the real problem and diverted away from the actual question before the Court and kept digging and pointing to a question that was not before the Court.

That point was that the four Justices kept wanting to talk about objections to objecting on the basis of religious beliefs.

They kept wanting to talk about the difficulty in drawing lines, that: ''Gee, what do we do if the plaintiffs or the defendants''—the litigants in the particular case—subjects would probably be more accurate under ObamaCare—the subjects of the United States—it used to be U.S. citizens—''are not objecting to objecting on the basis of religious beliefs?''

That has come up in cases before where someone would say: ''I believe my religious belief is so personal. You should not make me object on the basis of religious beliefs because then I would have to reveal what my religious beliefs are and that is none of your business. So we object to objecting.''

So the four most liberal Justices kept wanting to talk about: ''But where do we draw the line in this issue if there is an objection to objecting on the basis of religious grounds?''

The able attorneys for the American subjects to the fast-growing monarchy here in the United States kept trying to bring them back to what was before the Court: ''Justices, none of these clients, none of the litigants, object to objecting on religious grounds. They have no problem with objecting on religious grounds. They have objected on

religious grounds. They filed objections both administratively and in court when they filed for injunction. They have had no problem objecting to objecting on the basis of religious beliefs. So that is not really an issue.''

Once again, when Justices are in the wrong, they don't want to talk about the issue before the Court. They want to talk about the issue that is not before the Court. Let's talk about how many angels you might could get on the head of a needle. Let's talk about anything but the elephant in the room.

The real elephant in the room and the reason for which I have sympathy for all eight Justices is that, once they violated the Constitution by saying ObamaCare was constitutional, they created so many scenarios that are going to be nightmares for the Court to try to figure out where we stop the flood as it overwhelms the rights of Americans.

It is just a massive—like that 1950s movie or maybe it was early '60s—''The Blob.'' You just couldn't stop it. It would go out one place and come out another.

And that is the problem when the Supreme Court violates the Constitution in the case of ObamaCare, saying: You can dictate to American citizens. You can make them American subjects to this all-powerful, dictatorial Federal Government. You can tell them what to buy. You can punish them for not buying it.

And, of course, we know that—although Chief Justice Roberts was exactly right and on point when he said: Gee, if you try to use the Commerce Clause, jurisdiction over interstate commerce, to justify the takeover of health care and a mandate to buy something the Federal Government says you have to buy, then there is no limit ever that can be drawn on the Commerce Clause.

□ 1215

So it is not constitutional under the Commerce Clause. It certainly appeared accurate when Chief Justice Roberts went through an explanation of the initial issue that they had to take up on ObamaCare, and that was the anti-injunction statute, which basically requires that, before a litigant in Federal court can have standing to be before the court and if it involves a tax, then the litigant must be someone against whom the tax has already been levied and the tax has already been paid. Only if the tax has been levied against the litigant and the tax has been paid do the courts recognize standing by that litigant to be before the court to make argument over any complaint.

So they had to deal with that issue because not only does a litigant not have standing to even stay in court if they are arguing about a tax and the tax has not been levied and the tax has not been paid, but the Federal court itself has no jurisdiction to even hear the controversy until the tax is levied and the tax is paid.

So Chief Justice Roberts had the difficult problem of investigating and ruling on whether or not the mandate and the penalty that comes if you don't purchase what is required by the Federal Government—is that a penalty or is that a tax?

Because if it is a tax, the law is very clear. We will have to rule that the plaintiffs do not have standing and their case be thrown out. And, similarly, we will rule that the Court does not have jurisdiction. The case, as it is said in court, is not ripe for litigation. So it will have to be thrown out.

If the court found that the penalty imposed by the Federal Government for not being a loyal American subject and buying a product that the monarchy or the growing dictatorship here says you have to buy—if it is a penalty, then you can come to court. We do have jurisdiction, and you do have standing.

So Chief Justice Roberts went through and ably explained how Congress called it a penalty. At that time, of course, the Democrats were in the majority here in the House as well as the Senate. The Democratic leadership, the Democratic supporters in favor of ObamaCare, had made it clear this is a penalty.

Chief Justice Roberts cited that, that Congress should know better than anyone else whether this is a penalty or it is a tax. Because if it is a penalty, again, the litigant can be here and have standing. We have got jurisdiction. But if it is a tax, we have to throw it out. We can't hear the case, not now.

He said Congress should know better than anyone. They decided it was a penalty. Not only that, but it really does appear to be a penalty because ObamaCare says: You have to buy insurance and you have to buy a product we say is okay. You can't buy what you want. You have to buy what we say you must buy. And if you don't do that, we will impose a financial penalty on you.

I am hearing more and more young people who are really perplexed: Yes. The government is giving me a subsidy to help me pay for my insurance, but my insurance has 5-, 6-, 7-, $8,000 of a threshold that I have to meet before it ever helps me with a dime of insurance help. So am I better off getting the government subsidy, paying all this money that is really making my life miserable, or should I go ahead and pay the new income tax that I have added on to me for not having insurance as is dictated?

I think Chief Justice Roberts came to a proper conclusion. This truly is a penalty. It is not a tax because it is only paid if you violate the mandate that the Federal Government dictated. So, clearly, it is a penalty.

So there at page 1415 of the opinion, Chief Justice Roberts concludes: Okay. Congress says it is a penalty. It obviously is a penalty. If you don't want to pay the penalty, then buy the insurance. You won't have the penalty. It is clearly a penalty. Since it is a penalty, the Anti-Injunction Act does not apply. Therefore, the plaintiffs do have standing, and not only do they have standing, but this court has jurisdiction. Now, because it is a penalty and not a tax, we have jurisdiction. So now we will proceed to consider the primary cause before us, whether or not the Federal Government can mandate for the first time in history that all of the American people buy a product that it dictates.

Then he went through and determined, if you say the Commerce Clause justifies Federal jurisdiction here, then the Commerce Clause has no limits, has no meaning. And we choose to find that the Commerce Clause has meaning. Therefore, this is unconstitutional under the Commerce Clause.

But, then again, about 40 pages after he says it is not a tax, it is a penalty, Chief Justice Roberts plays the mental gymnastics of arriving at saying: You know what. It turns out this really is not a penalty. It is a tax. And since it is a tax, a majority of us will find that it is constitutional. And so the Federal Government can impose a mandate requiring that all American citizens be loyal subjects, subject to the dictatorship here in Washington, buy whatever product we tell them to buy. And all of that is because the Supreme Court rewrote the law and called it a tax.

That is why the Supreme Court is struggling the way it is today. Because when you create an abomination, you violate the Constitution to the extent, you violate your conscience the way it was before it got so clouded with politics. You violate the Constitution and then you create the kind of mess that is before the Supreme Court today.

It is incredible to sit and listen to the Supreme Court struggling over this issue of just how far we can go to violate someone's religious beliefs. I didn't hear any one of the Justices refer to the First Amendment, that the government will establish no religion and not violate—or not prohibit the free exercise thereof.

My friend, KEITH ROTHFUS, a fellow Member of Congress, was sitting beside me. He got sworn in as a member of the Supreme Court bar today. KEITH ROTHFUS was pointing out that, in one of the prior Supreme Court decisions back in the 1960s, they actually had a footnote where they listed a lot of the religions that they found currently in the United States. It was a fairly full list.

But one of the religions in the United States recognized by the Supreme Court in the early 1960s was secular humanism. As KEITH ROTHFUS and I agreed, we have now come to the point where we are violating the First Amendment of the Constitution.

And not only are we violating the restraint against the Federal Government prohibiting the free exercise of religion, as it is doing for East Texas Baptist University, Houston Baptist University, Little Sisters of the Poor,

so many organizations that are religious in nature, but they have violated the part that said we will have no establishment of religion.

The Founders were thinking specifically about the Church of England and how the King didn't like the way the Vatican was ruling. And so he just created his own church, the Church of England. He said: Everybody has got to participate in my church now.

They didn't want that to ever happen where the government of the land could dictate the religion that people had to practice. Yet, that is what the Supreme Court has now done because it has now recognized secular humanism—not just recognized, but established secular humanism—as the State-sponsored religion in America.

With the ruling last summer, the Supreme Court, in effect, said: Since the 1960s, we have been limiting people's ability to use the word God, to pray to God, to read God's word, the Bible. We have been prohibiting that for 40 or so years, 50 years maybe, and we have been protecting what Moses said was the Word of God and what Jesus said was the Word of God for far too long.

They basically established secular humanism as the official religion of the United States. By their pronouncement, they were saying to forget what Moses said God said, forget what Jesus said.

When Jesus actually was asked about marriage and divorce, he quoted Moses verbatim: A man shall leave his father and mother, a woman leave her home. The two will become one flesh.

Then Jesus added, not just quoting Moses as to what Moses said God said about marriage: And what God has joined together, let nobody take apart.

The Supreme Court last summer said: The effect of the ruling is not only can you not talk about God publicly or pray or read the Bible, thank God we have speech and debate clause privileges here on this floor where I am actually free to even mention the word God. We pray every day to start our official day here in session. But the Supreme Court ruled, in effect: We are your God. The five of us in the majority of the Supreme Court are now your God. Forget what we said in our prior decisions about marriage. It was not mentioned in the Constitution. Therefore, under the 10th Amendment, it is reserved to the States and the people.

Forget the fact that we have talked before about the States will decide what marriage is. Forget our ruling on DOMA, the Defense of Marriage Act, passed by Congress, where we made very clear that the States only have the right to decide what marriage is.

Forget all that. Now we five majority Justices are your God. And forget the fact that we—at least two of us have violated the Federal law in order to reach this decision. Because the Federal law is very clear. If a judge—a Federal judge, magistrate, Justice might have their impartiality—his or her impartiality questioned, then they should disqualify—they shall disqualify themselves from sitting on the case.

So we had two Justices. Not only was their opinion and their impartiality in question, there was actually no question that they were not impartial because they had both participated in same-sex wedding ceremonies. And Justice Ginsburg, who is a very nice lady, actually said—as Maureen Dowd pointed out in her article, she emphasized as she pronounced them married by virtue of the laws of the—and she said she really hammered the words—by the Constitution of the United States.

□ 1230

So, clearly, we had Justice Kagan and Justice Ginsburg perform same-sex marriages before they were not impartial. The law required them to disqualify themselves.

I have had some people say: Well, wouldn't it have disqualified any of the other judges if they had ever participated in a marriage between a man and a woman?

The answer is very easily and clearly no, because that was the law.

The question is: Can a government prohibit same-sex marriage?

It was same-sex marriage that was before the court, not can a government prohibit marriage between a man and a woman.

If the question had been: Can a government prohibit marriage between a man and a woman, then that might be a different story. But that was not the issue before the court. Two Justices were disqualified. They had made their opinion clearly known in advance.

There were other judges who had been asked, as I understand it, to do weddings, but they said: No, that might create a question of my impartiality and would require me to disqualify myself.

Well, their participation did certainly disqualify them. They refused to disqualify themselves. So two Justices, as a minimum, were disqualified as they participated in the majority of five.

So when you have an unconstitutional ruling by the United States Supreme Court, when the Chief Justice has to commit to the mental gymnastics, the loop-the-loops that he has to try to do to get around saying the mandate to purchase a policy that carries a penalty, is a penalty, and then over here we know he said it is a penalty over there, but now we are saying it is a tax, not a penalty, they created a nightmare for any legitimate judge with a conscience in trying to decide: Now that we have blown apart any constitutional lines, where do we draw the lines now?

It is rather tragic. Justice Kennedy was questioning one of the religious litigant's attorneys and made the statement, basically, that the court would find it very hard to write an opinion saying that if we give an exemption to a church, we then have to give it to all other religious institutions.

Well, that statement deeply troubled me as well because it means that Justice Kennedy does not understand the constitutional prohibition in the First Amendment. You are not on the Supreme Court or in Congress or in the Presidency to ever establish a religion. And it has been established. It is called secular humanism, which the Supreme Court has recognized as a religion. That is what is being established now.

You are also not to prohibit the free exercise of religion. When the Supreme Court gets to the point, as Justice Kennedy is, that we on this court—at least a majority—will find it very hard to say that if you are not a part of a church and acting as that church, then you have no right to practice any of your religious beliefs that five of us don't like, that is tragic.

I keep coming back to that prophetic statement by Benjamin Franklin when he was asked after the Constitutional Convention by a dear lady: What did you give us?

''A republic, madam, if you can keep it.''

Why would he say ''if you can keep it?''

The reason he said that is—as he knew—the nature of government is to take more and more power and authority over individual rights and individual liberties. And in order to keep a republic, as Ben Franklin called it, you have to teach generation after generation that there are responsibilities that come with citizenship. Because if you don't live up to those responsibilities, you will lose the republic, madam. You can't keep it.

We have done a miserable job of teaching the next generation about how you would keep a republic. Instead of being taught, as I was, in school the dangers of socialism, the dangers of communism, and that it always has to result in a dictatorship or a totalitarian government, that it requires people's rights be taken away, our Founders say that we have to recognize these rights are a gift from our Creator, from God, because if we say they are a gift of the government, then what the government giveth, the government can taketh away.

We have legislators and judges who have not been properly educated on the manner in which you keep a republic, madam.

It really has been heartbreaking when very smart young people ask sincerely: I understand socialism is supposed to be wrong, communism is supposed to be wrong, but it really sounds nice. Can you explain why it would be wrong? Because I don't get it. It sounds nice.

As the New Testament Church started out, as the Pilgrims' Compact started out, you bring into the common storehouse, and then you share and share alike. You share from those according to their ability to those according to their need.

Of course, more than one parent has explained socialism to their children

by saying: Look, you got an A. I know how hard you were working every night doing your homework, but your friend over here got a C. I saw her out partying a lot of times when you were here studying. And she is not maybe quite as smart as you are, so she got a C, you got an A.

The socialist notion is that we have to give everybody a B. So we will make this A a B, we will make this C a B, and everybody will feel better for it.

Mr. Speaker, I have shared this before, but it was such a lesson to me as an exchange student to the Soviet Union being out at a collective farm. The farmers were sitting in the shade in midmorning, when anybody back home in east Texas knows that—especially in July, like it was—you start early and you try to finish early before the sun gets too hot. It is midmorning. This is prime time to be working before it gets too hot. And here are all the farmers sitting in the shade in the middle of their village.

Trying to use the best Russian I could—I had 2 years, which meant I could converse ably with a 4-year-old—I asked: When do you work out in the field?

I couldn't tell what they cultivated and didn't. It all looked brown. None of it looked very good. I would have expected in Texas that those fields would have been green, looking good, and the weeds out. You couldn't tell what was weeds and what wasn't.

I said: When do you work out in the field?

They laughed, and I thought I must not have translated that right. Then one of them said in Russian, basically: I make the same number of rubles if I am out there in the field in the sun or if I am here in the shade. So I am here in the shade.

I have carried that with me all these years. That is why socialism can't work. It is why socialism or communism—again, bringing all into the common storehouse, share and sharing alike—can never work on this Earth, in this world. Because the only way you will ever have share and share alike, as they found out in the New Testament Church, the only way you can make it work is if you have a totalitarian government that says: you will do what we say. And then there goes your freedoms.

So the only way to have the maximum amount of freedom is to have a self-governing republic so people can govern themselves by electing people that they have interviewed, they have read all about, done plenty of research on, and then they come forward on hiring day—otherwise known as election day—and they vote to hire the person that they want for their public servant. That is the way it is supposed to work.

People have not obliged themselves of the need that in order to keep a republic, you have to do the research on the candidates that have applied for your job. You have a requirement, a need, for you to actually come out and vote. Look, I get it. There are so many I have heard from that are disenfranchised voters. They say: We hear about all these people.

John Fund has a great book out on the fraud that has been in so many of our modern elections that is not being dealt with, despite what the government says. It is a great book.

People find out there is fraud. Since they didn't have to have a photo ID like you have to have to buy cigarettes or alcohol or get on a plane or anything else, you can manipulate the system, you can vote more than one time.

My friend from south Texas told me about some of the people who were illegally in the country being approached with voter registration forms, saying: Fill these out. If you don't want to use your own address here, just use one central address. You can all use the same address.

Some of them were worried about showing an ID. They will figure out we are illegally in this country and we are not supposed to vote. They were assured: No, no.

President Obama's lawyer—Eric Holder at that time—has gotten a judge to rule that they can't require an ID and, therefore, all you have to do is fill this out. But if you don't fill this out, then Republicans are going to take away your welfare, they are going to take away your health care, and they are going to try to make you leave the country.

So you have got to fill this out. And even though it is illegal, there is nothing wrong with doing it. You will get the voter registration card in the mail to the address you give them, and then you just go vote and that is all you have to show them.

Thankfully, we have voter ID now in Texas. But there are so many people who have been disenfranchised, because they say: There is so much voter fraud going on. Why should I even bother? My vote doesn't count like somebody that votes more than once.

We are in grave danger of losing this republic. We are not going to keep it much longer the way we are going. We haven't educated future generations to how you go about keeping a self-governing republic. Some have been miseducated to think socialism, which has failed every single time it has ever been tried—it will always fail. We haven't educated them about the truth of freedom and what is required to keep it.

Justice Scalia told a group from my hometown that was here that the reason we are the most free Nation in history is not because we had the best Bill of Rights, but because the Founders didn't trust government. They wanted gridlock. They wanted it as difficult as possible to pass laws, because with the passage of every law is the risk that some freedom will be taken away by the Big Government.

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The Founders knew that, and they made it hard to pass laws. That is not a bad thing. It is a good thing.

But when he mentioned that the Soviet Union had a better bill of rights than we had, I remembered, I did a paper back in college when I was at Texas A&M. After I had visited the Soviet Union as an exchange student, I wrote a paper on their system. But I had done a paper on their bill of rights, their Constitution. I was shocked at the extent of the rights that were guaranteed to the Soviet Union citizens.

I was also surprised to find that, in the early sixties, the Premier, Khrushchev, in the Soviet Union, had set up a commission, because those that had truly been educated on the different forms of government and governing know that, actually, true communism is only when there is no government, that it is like reaching for nirvana. You eventually reach the point where everybody is so sharing and so giving—taking from their ability, giving to the need—they are so giving that you don't even need a government anymore.

So Khrushchev set up a commission basically charged with coming up with a plan to reach that ultimate goal where someday there will be no government and we will have true communism in its purest form, no government, everyone giving, sharing, lovingly.

And I read that, after a couple of years of that commission trying to figure out, ''How are we ever going to come up with a plan that eventuates in having no government and everybody always sharing equally? How are we going to ever pull that off?'' they couldn't come up with a way to reach that in this world, in this life, and so Khrushchev disbanded the commission. There was no way to get there.

They were right. If you are going to have communism or socialism, you are going to have to have a totalitarian government, whether it is an individual dictator or a political group like they have or used to have at the Kremlin. You have got to have ruling autocrats, an oligarch, monarch, in order to force everybody to take from those who have worked hard, according to their ability, and giving to those who either can't work or choose not to work. The only way you can maximize freedoms is when people in the country understand what Franklin understood: you have got a republic if you can keep it.

We are not being vigilant to keep our Republic, and that is why so many are desperate now as they vote for a Presidential candidate.

And even Christian friends have said, you know, I understand there is a time and place for a David with a slingshot, complete faith in God, and a clear great ability with a slingshot. I know there is a time for that. But right now, our freedoms have been so badly eroded, we are losing the government. We are having people come in and start voting without understanding how you preserve a republic. We are losing the country. We are losing the melting pot that we once were, welcoming people

from all over and coming together and being molded into one thing, not a hyphenated American, but an American. We are losing that.

You see many voters standing in lines now. They didn't used to ever do this, stand in line for hours. You found people do that in Africa when they are finally afforded an opportunity to vote for the first time in their lives. But now, in America, some people are waiting hours to vote because they see that we have not been vigilant in protecting our Republic, and just as Franklin worried, we are about to lose it.

We are already losing it when the government can dictate that individuals buy a product, when the government can say you can only practice your religious beliefs if you are within the confines of a church, but if you are an individual, like the Founders were, who held tightly to their religious beliefs—they talked about it as they passed legislation; they talked about it as they created our Constitution—the Supreme Court is now saying: Secular humanism is what we must have; it is what we demand. And since we are in charge and we are moving toward being socialistic, you have got to have an oligarchy, and we are it.

Obviously, they don't say it in those words, but that is what their actions say, and that is why, when a Justice says: Well, this Court would find it very hard to write an opinion saying that we were moving the line from beyond a church and extending that line out to other religious institutions—like the Little Sisters of the Poor, these wonderful, superb Christian women who have given their lives doing what Jesus said, ministering to others, feeding His sheep, ministering to their physical needs, their healthcare needs—and the Supreme Court says: We have a lot of trouble. See, they are not actually a church. They are a religious institution, and we are going to have a hard time writing an opinion that moves the line to protect religious opinions.

My word, shouldn't have any trouble drawing a line at individuals. Any individual in the United States of America who has a deeply held, sincerely held religious belief, it was meant to be protected, unless it is completely anathema to our Constitution.

Sharia law is anathema; and to the extent that some believe they should replace our Constitution with their sharia law, then that is treason if they are here in this country. But otherwise, their religious belief should be recognized, and God help us if the Court doesn't do it right.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution 34, 114th Congress, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 52 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until Monday, April 11, 2016, at 3:30 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

4714. A letter from the Regulatory Review Group, Farm Service Agency, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's correcting amendments — Direct Farm Ownership Microloan; Correction (RIN: 0560-AI33) received March 21, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4715. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Admiral Mark E. Ferguson III, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of admiral on the retired list, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 1370(c)(1); Public Law 96-513, Sec. 112 (as amended by Public Law 104-106, Sec. 502(b)); (110 Stat. 293); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4716. A letter from the Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Calendar Year 2015 reports to describe activities under the Secretary of Defense personnel management demonstration project authorities for the Department of Defense Science and Technology Reinvention Laboratories, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2358 note; Public Law 110-181, Sec. 1107(d); (122 Stat. 358); and Public Law 113-66, Sec. 1107(g); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4717. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting the Bureau's 2016 annual report to Congress on the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1692m(a); Public Law 90-321, Sec. 815(a) (as amended by Public Law 111-203, Sec. 1089(1)); (124 Stat. 2092); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4718. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility (Harford County, MD, et al.) [Docket ID: FEMA-2016-0002] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8425] received March 21, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4719. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility (Lancaster County, PA, et al.) [Docket No.: FEMA-2016-0002] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8423] received March 21, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4720. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulations, Office of the Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's final rule — Streamlining Administrative Regulations for Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher, Multifamily Housing, and Community Planning and Development Programs [Docket No.: FR 5743-F-03] (RIN: 2577-AC92) received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4721. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's Fiscal year 2015 Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Parts A and B Supplemental Awards Report to Congress, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 300ff-13(e); July 1, 1944, ch. 373, title XXVI, Sec. 2603 (as amended by Public Law 109-415, Sec. 104(e)); (120 Stat. 2776) and 42 U.S.C. 300ff-29a(d); July 1, 1944, ch. 373, title XXVI, Sec. 2620 (as amended by Public Law 109-415, Sec. 205(2)); (120 Stat. 2798); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4722. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Office of the General Counsel, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Toys: Determination Regarding Heavy Elements Limits for Unfinished and Untreated Wood [Docket No.: CPSC-2011-0081] received March 22, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4723. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Office of the General Counsel, Consumer Product Safety Commission, transmitting the Commission's direct final rule — Amendment to Clarify When Component Part Testing Can be Used and Which Textile Products Have Been Determined Not To Exceed the Allowable Lead Content Limits [Docket No.: CPSC-2011-0081] received March 22, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4724. A letter from the Acting Division Chief, Competition Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Implementation of Section 224 of the Act [WC Docket No.: 07-245]; A National Broadband Plan for Our Future [GN Docket No.: 09-51] received March 18, 2016, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4725. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Commerce, transmitting a report certifying that the export of the listed items to the People's Republic of China is not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2778 note; Public Law 105-261, Sec. 1512 (as amended by Public Law 105-277, Sec. 146); (112 Stat. 2174); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4726. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser, Office of Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report prepared by the Department of State concerning international agreements other than treaties entered into by the United States to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b(d) Public Law 92-403, Sec. 1; (86 Stat. 619); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4727. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's Atrocities Prevention Report to Congress, pursuant to Public Law 114-113, Sec. 7033; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4728. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's FY 2015 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4729. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's FY 2014 No FEAR Act report, pursuant to Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4730. A letter from the Co-Chief Privacy Officers, Federal Election Commission, transmitting the Commission's Fiscal Year 2015