

this body about the institutions in their districts and—perhaps they don't have any institutions in their district—about institutions across America that are HBCUs and what they have done for their communities and what they have done for the United States of America and continue to do every day.

I am very blessed to have been able to work with a number of HBCUs in Alabama in my prior positions in the State school board and as a chancellor of post-secondary education. I must admit I didn't know very much about them before I was in those positions.

But as I learned about them, as I got to know the administration and the faculty, but, most importantly, the students at those institutions, I realized what a rich resource that is for those students and for the communities that they are founded in.

You look around the country at some of the great graduates of these institutions and you realize where would we have been without the HBCUs, particularly during a period of time when African Americans were denied access to regular institutions of higher education because of discrimination in American society.

Just because we have made progress in that regard doesn't mean that we have ended the need for HBCUs. In many ways, the need has never been greater, because what we need in our society from the people in our society—in order to perform at the levels that our economy requires, it requires ever greater levels of education, training, and expertise. What might have been enough to know 50 years ago, we need to know far more now and we need to know it at every level of education.

We are here today to talk about colleges and universities. Some of the great colleges and universities in America have understood the importance of this and have rallied around our cause. I will never forget our kick-off day when we had the chancellor of the University of North Carolina system here, one of the great university statewide systems that we have in this country, as a recognition of those universities and the role that HBCUs play along with them in providing higher education to people throughout the United States of America.

The United Negro College Fund says that a mind is a terrible thing to waste. A great country cannot waste any mind. We need every mind in America to get whatever they need to become the person that they want to become, to realize their dreams, as I said earlier, not only to lift themselves up, but to lift the rest of us up with them. That is what we are talking about when we talk about HBCUs.

I thank the gentlewoman from North Carolina again for her leadership, for her inspiration, for her continuing to be somebody out there to tell us that we need to keep pushing, we need to keep pushing. As long as she is willing to continue to do that, I am willing to continue to do that with her.

I yield back the balance of my time.

THE DISPARATE IMPLEMENTATION OF AMAZON.COM'S PRIME FREE SAME-DAY DELIVERY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH) for 30 minutes.

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because, despite our best efforts, racial redlining is still alive and well today. I come to this Chamber because racial redlining has once again reared its ugly, evil head across our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, on April 21, Bloomberg published an analysis entitled "Amazon Doesn't Consider the Race of Its Customers. Should It?"

Bloomberg explains how amazon.com discriminates against mostly African American communities nationwide by shutting them out, shutting them off from receiving its Prime free same-day delivery service.

Mr. Speaker, it must be understood that mostly predominantly African American ZIP Codes in this Nation have been excluded from receiving Amazon's Prime free same-day delivery service. It must be understood, Mr. Speaker, that this is absolutely unacceptable.

Amazon's vice president for global communications, Mr. Craig Berman, feebly attempted to justify this by saying that "demographics play no role" in the determination by which neighborhoods have access to Prime free same-day service.

□ 1630

He goes on to state that distance matters and that in terms of determining factors, close proximity to a warehouse is certainly one of the factors that they consider.

Well, Mr. Speaker, on the face of it, that seemingly appears to be both logical and understandable. However, when viewed through a sharper lens, there are some glaring, flagrant inconsistencies.

In my hometown of Chicago, Illinois, just for example, same-day service is available to a majority of the city and its surrounding suburbs. This free, same-day delivery service is not available to my constituents in predominantly African American ZIP Codes.

Mr. Berman, the article explains, again, feebly blames this on the distance of these ZIP Codes from a distribution center that is located in Kenosha, Wisconsin. That would be understandable if not for the fact that this free, same-day Amazon delivery service is available to residents in Oak Lawn, Illinois, which is a community that is also in the district that I represent, but Oak Lawn is even farther south, farther away from Kenosha, Wisconsin, a greater distance from the distribution center in Kenosha, Wisconsin, than all these African American-pre-dominant ZIP Codes.

Mr. Speaker, because I live in a predominantly African American ZIP Code, I cannot be served by the Amazon Prime free, same-day delivery service, but my White constituents can be served by Amazon with their Prime free, same-day delivery service.

Simply put, Mr. Speaker, despite amazon.com's assertions of impartiality and a strictly numbers-based approach to the availability of this Prime free, same-day delivery services, Amazon's implementation of this service has been disparate, disappointing, disgusting, and apparently discriminatory.

Mr. Speaker, not only does this occur in the city of Chicago, but also Bloomberg found similar situations existing in five other cities. Not just Chicago, but Atlanta, Boston, Dallas, New York City, and Washington, D.C., all across our great Nation.

Mr. Speaker, historically and unfortunately, the situation with amazon.com is not a unique experience for people of color. Today, in the year 2016, too many Americans still are denied services and access to goods based off the color of their skin and where they reside or the location of their ZIP Code. This is redlining. This practice is known as redlining. This redlining has been a major, significant obstacle to communities of color to gain access to the fullness of their American Dream, to the fullness of their American ideal.

For decades now, despite efforts during the civil rights era of our Nation, during similar efforts, not only before, but even after the civil rights era of our Nation, despite many multiple legislative attempts to stamp redlining out, this very injustice continues to spread, even among some of my corporate citizens who, on the face of it, would never accept the fact that they engage in discriminatory business practices.

But when you look at it from my perspective, look at it from my vantage point, look at it from the experience of my constituents who are African American, Amazon fails to meet the acid test. Its Prime same-day delivery service is far less than prime for too many of my constituents and too many American citizens.

Mr. Speaker, Members of this body of the U.S. House of Representatives, we cannot allow businesses in this country to discriminate against any particular group of Americans. We cannot allow businesses in this country to discriminate against neighborhoods, against communities based on their business's race-based perceptions.

Mr. Speaker, this body, this U.S. House of Representatives cannot allow the Amazons of the world, amazon.com to violate laws of our Nation, laws like the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Amazon cannot violate the laws of our Nation with impunity and without accountability.

Mr. Speaker, I must call upon amazon.com and its CEO, Jeff Bezos, to come and do what is right, to come and

right this wrong. Make Amazon's Prime same-day delivery service a prime service that is available to all the citizens of this Nation and not just to the White citizens of this Nation.

People all across this Nation like amazon.com. I am a customer of amazon.com, and amazon.com benefits from Black Americans' dollars because Black Americans' dollars are just as green as any other Americans' dollars. White Americans' dollars are not more powerful, aren't colder or hotter. These are Americans' dollars, greenbacks, and Amazon must respect the buying power, the consumer right of African American consumers just as it does all other American consumers.

Mr. Bezos, again, I appeal to you, do what is right and right this wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I must call upon our colleagues in the executive branch to ensure that the laws of our Nation passed by this U.S. Congress are faithfully and equally executed so that communities of color get equal and fair treatment by its corporate citizens all across this country.

Redlining is an evil that has ripped apart the dreams and the aspirations of African American citizens and other minorities.

□ 1645

It is high time now. The hour has passed. It is time now to put redlining and all the vestiges of it aside, buried deep. Take it out of the consciousness of the corporate decisionmakers in this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, our economy is a service economy. Our economics are based on service. Our social contract means that all Americans should have access and a level playing field when it comes to getting service and being serviced in this service economy.

Now, amazon.com's Prime same-day delivery service stands as a stark example of how much still needs to be changed in our society. No matter how much things change, so much remains the same. Let us rise up to the call. Amazon, do what is right, and right this wrong.

Mr. Speaker, we can do no less than our best for all American citizens. This is an extraordinary violation of not only the civil rights laws of our Nation, but it stands as a significant barrier to greater economic opportunities, to a greater sense of being treated equally and fairly. There is something called justice in our society, and any injustice must be courageously confronted. Any injustice.

Amazon.com, your Prime same-day delivery service is not so prime until all your customers are treated fairly and equitably in your business model. No excuses.

This is shameful. It must be corrected. Make the Amazon Prime same-day delivery service available for all Americans because we live in a society where being prime really should mean something—this America that we live in.

Mr. Speaker, again, I call upon Mr. Jeff Bezos, Amazon's CEO, to do what is right and right this less than prime wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the article: "Amazon Doesn't Consider the Race of Its Customers. Should It?"

[From www.bloomberg.com, Apr. 21, 2016]

AMAZON DOESN'T CONSIDER THE RACE OF ITS CUSTOMERS. SHOULD IT?

(By David Ingold and Spencer Soper)

For residents of minority urban neighborhoods, access to Amazon.com's vast array of products—from Dawn dish soap and Huggies diapers to Samsung flatscreen TVs—can be a godsend. Unlike whiter ZIP codes, these parts of town often lack well-stocked stores and quality supermarkets. White areas get organic grocers and designer boutiques. Black ones get minimarts and dollar stores. People in neighborhoods that retailers avoid must travel farther and sometimes pay more to obtain household necessities. "I don't have a car, so I love to have stuff delivered," says Tamara Rasberry, a human resources professional in Washington, D.C., who spends about \$2,000 a year on Amazon Prime, the online retailer's premium service that guarantees two-day delivery of tens of millions of items (along with digital music, e-books, streaming movies, and TV shows) for a yearly \$99 membership fee. Rasberry, whose neighborhood of Congress Heights is more than 90 percent black, says shopping on Amazon lets her bypass the poor selection and high prices of nearby shops.

As Amazon has expanded rapidly to become "the everything store," it's offered the promise of an egalitarian shopping experience. On Amazon and other online retailers, a black customer isn't viewed with suspicion, much less followed around by store security. Most of Amazon's services are available to almost every address in the U.S. "We don't know what you look like when you come into our store, which is vastly different than physical retail," says Craig Berman, Amazon's vice president for global communications. "We are ridiculously proud about that. We offer every customer the same price. It doesn't matter where you live."

Yet as Amazon rolls out its upgrade to the Prime service, Prime Free Same-Day Delivery, that promise is proving harder to deliver on. The ambitious goal of Prime Free Same-Day is to eliminate one of the last advantages local retailers have over the e-commerce giant: instant gratification. In cities where the service is available, Amazon offers Prime members same-day delivery of more than a million products for no extra fee on orders over \$35. Eleven months after it started, the service includes 27 metropolitan areas. In most of them, it provides broad coverage within the city limits. Take Amazon's home town of Seattle, where every ZIP code within the city limits is eligible for same-day delivery and coverage extends well into the surrounding suburbs.

In six major same-day delivery cities, however, the service area excludes predominantly black ZIP codes to varying degrees, according to a Bloomberg analysis that compared Amazon same-day delivery areas with U.S. Census Bureau data.

In Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, and Washington, cities still struggling to overcome generations of racial segregation and economic inequality, black citizens are about half as likely to live in neighborhoods with access to Amazon same-day delivery as white residents.

The disparity in two other big cities is significant, too. In New York City, same-day delivery is available throughout Manhattan,

Staten Island, and Brooklyn, but not in the Bronx and some majority-black neighborhoods in Queens. In some cities, Amazon same-day delivery extends many miles into the surrounding suburbs but isn't available in some ZIP codes within the city limits.

The most striking gap in Amazon's same-day service is in Boston, where three ZIP codes encompassing the primarily black neighborhood of Roxbury are excluded from same-day service, while the neighborhoods that surround it on all sides are eligible. "Being singled out like that and not getting those same services as they do in a 15-minute walk from here is very frustrating," says Roxbury resident JD Nelson, who's been an Amazon Prime member for three years. "It's not a good thing, and it definitely doesn't make me happy." Rasberry was excited when Amazon announced Prime Free Same-Day was coming to Washington. But when she entered her ZIP code on the retailer's website, she was disappointed to find her neighborhood was left out. "I still get two-day shipping, but none of the superfast, convenient delivery services come here," she says. Rasberry pays the same \$99 Prime membership fee as people who live in the city's majority-white neighborhoods, but she doesn't get the same benefits. "If you bring that service to the city," she says, "you should offer it to the whole city."

There's no evidence that Amazon makes decisions on where to deliver based on race. Berman says the ethnic composition of neighborhoods isn't part of the data Amazon examines when drawing up its maps. "When it comes to same-day delivery, our goal is to serve as many people as we can, which we've proven in places like Los Angeles, Seattle, San Francisco, and Philadelphia." Amazon, he says, has a "radical sensitivity" to any suggestion that neighborhoods are being singled out by race. "Demographics play no role in it. Zero."

Amazon says its plan is to focus its same-day service on ZIP codes where there's a high concentration of Prime members, and then expand the offering to fill in the gaps over time. "If you ever look at a map of service for Amazon, it will start out small and end up getting big," he says.

This is a logical approach from a cost and efficiency perspective: Give areas with the most existing paying members priority access to a new product. Yet in cities where most of those paying members are concentrated in predominantly white parts of town, a solely data-driven calculation that looks at numbers instead of people can reinforce long-entrenched inequality in access to retail services. For people who live in black neighborhoods not served by Amazon, the fact that it's not deliberate doesn't make much practical difference. "They are offering different services to other people who don't look like you but live in the same city," says Rasberry.

Amazon cites several reasons a ZIP code within a city may be excluded: too few Prime members to justify the expense of sending out trucks and drivers, or the area is too far from the closest Amazon warehouse. "Distance matters," Berman says. "At some point, with the math involved, we can't make it work—in time or in cost for the carrier. There is a diminishing return on orders." In some cases, Amazon says, it's difficult to find delivery partners willing to serve the area. "We deliver same day up till 9 p.m.," says Amazon spokesman Scott Stanzel. "There are a lot of carrier partners. A lot of variables."

Amazon won't reveal specifics about how it decides its same-day delivery areas—the competition would kill for that info, says Berman. Broadly speaking, it comes down to cost. Same-day delivery is expensive to provide, in part because Amazon can't rely on

the built-in infrastructure and low negotiated rates of United Parcel Service and the U.S. Postal Service, which shoulder the retailer's standard and two-day Prime deliveries. To get packages out within hours, Amazon uses a mix of its own drivers, local couriers, and independent contractors making deliveries in their own vehicles through an Uberlike service called Amazon Flex.

Cities where Amazon offers broad one-day coverage appear to have something in common: close proximity to product warehouses, making it less expensive to reach all areas. "It's not the only variable. It's certainly one of them," says Berman. "It definitely has an impact if we have a fulfillment center that's outside a city, or we have a fulfillment center that happens to be on one side of it." Amazon declined to reveal the locations of its same-day hubs, so it's difficult to tell how that works. In same-day cities Amazon hasn't yet surrounded with warehouses, the company must decide which neighborhoods are worth the cost of service and which aren't. That's where things get complicated.

ATLANTA

Amazon's Prime Free Same-Day Delivery closely mirrors the city's historical racial divide. The largely white northern half is covered, while the largely black southern half isn't. The company extends the service 35 miles north of downtown but excludes Norcross, a less distant eastern suburb where blacks and Hispanics outnumber whites, and Redan, with a black population of 94 percent.

BOSTON

Although Amazon's same-day service is available to most addresses in Boston and reaches almost to New Hampshire, the centrally located neighborhood of Roxbury, with a population that's about 59 percent black and 15 percent white, is excluded. The residents of the ZIP codes that border Roxbury on all sides are eligible for the service. Amazon's Berman calls Roxbury "an anomaly."

CHICAGO

Amazon's same-day service area includes about 2.2 million people in the city but excludes about 472,000 people in Chicago's predominantly black South Side. Berman says the South Side ZIP codes are beyond the reach of the company's distribution center in Kenosha, Wisconsin, about two hours north of the city. Yet same-day service is available to Prime members in Oak Lawn, which is eight miles farther south than the excluded portions of Chicago and has a white population of about 85 percent. The company does offer the service in largely black neighborhoods in the city's center, including Austin.

DALLAS

Amazon's same-day service area includes suburbs between Dallas and Fort Worth, but about 590,000 residents of eastern and southern Dallas, where a majority are black or Hispanic—such as Oak Cliff—are just outside the delivery area. Amazon cited distance from the company's warehouses and a low concentration of Prime members as reasons those areas were left out.

NEW YORK CITY

Amazon's same-day coverage area extends, unbroken, from New York City all the way south to Philadelphia, with one notable exception: The largely black and Hispanic borough of the Bronx, which is excluded from the service. The Bronx has the lowest percentage of white residents of the five boroughs at about 33 percent. Berman says the Bronx is difficult to reach because the warehouses that serve the area are in New Jersey.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

One of Amazon's largest same-day service coverage areas extends from Washington, D.C., north to Baltimore and encompasses

much of the Maryland and Virginia suburbs. Yet all neighborhoods in the capital's predominantly black southeast quadrant are excluded, along with several largely black Maryland suburbs to the southeast—notably Suitland and Silver Hill, which have average income levels comparable to those in some ZIP codes between Washington and Baltimore that do have same-day coverage.

Some excluded ZIP codes correspond with higher crime rates. Amazon won't say whether concerns about stolen packages or the safety of drivers figure into its decisions about where to deliver, saying only "the safety of our employees is a top priority."

Income inequality may also play a part. Many excluded areas have average household incomes below the national average. And households with Prime memberships skew wealthier—not surprising given the \$99 membership fee. An April study of families with teenagers by investment bank Piper Jaffray estimates 70 percent of such U.S. households with incomes of \$112,000 per year or more now have a Prime membership, compared with 43 percent for households with incomes of \$21,000 to \$41,000. Income differences alone don't explain the gaps in service, however. In Chicago, New York, Boston, Atlanta, and other cities, some areas that are excluded have household incomes as high or higher than ZIP codes Amazon does cover.

Berman points to cities where some black ZIP codes get same-day service and some white ones don't. In Los Angeles, black and Hispanic communities south of downtown have same-day service, but mostly white Malibu, on the far side of the traffic-clogged Route 27 and Pacific Coast Highway, doesn't. In several cities where the same-day service area encompasses the vast majority of all residents, including Los Angeles, San Jose, and Tampa, a higher percentage of blacks live in ZIP codes eligible for same-day delivery than whites. Overall, though, in cities where same-day service doesn't extend to most residents, those left out are disproportionately black. (In the six cities with disparities, Asians, on average, are as likely as whites to live in an area with coverage; Hispanics are less likely than whites to live in same-day ZIP codes, but more likely than blacks.)

"As soon as you try to represent something as complex as a neighborhood with a spreadsheet based on a few variables, you've made some generalizations and assumptions that may not be true, and they may not affect all people equally," says Sorelle Friedler, a computer science professor at Haverford College who studies data bias. "There is so much systemic bias with respect to race. If you aren't purposefully trying to identify it and correct it, this bias is likely to creep into your outcomes."

Amazon says it's misleading to scrutinize its current delivery areas so closely, because the service is new and evolving. Eventually, coverage will extend to every ZIP code in same-day cities, says Berman. The service is indeed expanding. Since Bloomberg first contacted Amazon for this article in February, the company announced 12 new same-day cities. As it adds locations, however, Amazon has yet to extend coverage to excluded majority-black ZIP codes in the existing cities with gaps in service. How long will those customers have to wait to get the full benefits of their Prime membership? Berman says there's no set timetable: "We'll get there."

Juan Gilbert, chair of the University of Florida's department of computer and information science & engineering, says Amazon has an opportunity to use its data resources to correct its oversight and avert falling into the retail patterns of the past. "I think it was a mistake, and it never crossed their mind," he says. "This is a perfect example of how Amazon had a blind spot."

Update, April 21: Corrects the number of New York City residents who live in ZIP codes eligible for Amazon same-day delivery; updates the article and final chart to indicate cities where black residents are more likely than whites to live in zip codes eligible for same day service.

METHODOLOGY

Amazon's website allows users to type in ZIP codes to see where Prime Free Same-Day Delivery is available. Bloomberg entered every U.S. ZIP code into the tool, and mapped the results on top of a complete U.S. ZIP code shape file, provided by ESRI, to produce a coverage map of Amazon's Prime same-day delivery areas. Coverage maps show Amazon data as of April 8, 2016.

Population data were compiled using block group figures from the 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year estimates tables. Table B03002—Hispanic or Latino Origin by Race—provides population figures by racial category, including the following subsets: white alone, black or African-American alone, Hispanic or Latino, Asian alone, and other races. The data were released on Dec. 3, 2015 and are the most recent local population data available from the ACS. All ACS figures are estimates with a 90% confidence interval and are subject to a margin of error. City-level figures presented in the graphics and charts are compilations of individual block group estimates, and share the same 90% confidence level.

Each population dot represent 100 residents, and are evenly distributed across each block group. They do not represent exact addresses, and populations below a 100-person threshold within an individual block group are not shown.

In some cases, individual block groups straddle multiple ZIP codes or intersect a city boundary. Often these block groups feature clear divisions between residential areas, and nonresidential areas made up of parks, lakes, or empty land. In these cases, a block group was included in the ZIP code that included the residential area. When a block group was not clearly separated in this manner, the population was proportionally distributed based on the area of overlap.

Mr. RUSH. I yield back the balance of my time.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 53 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, April 29, 2016, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

5187. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a report entitled, "Five-year Comprehensive Range Plan for Melrose Air Force Range (AFR)"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5188. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the report to Congress on Personal and Home Care Aide State Training (PHCAST) Demonstration Program Evaluation, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1397g(b)(5)(B)(ii); Public Law 111-148, Sec. 5507(a); (124 Stat. 667); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.