

in northeastern California. He was killed in the line of duty while responding to an early morning call.

When I heard of this tragic killing, I was stunned for many reasons, part of which, Modoc County is a very quiet, rural place, about as far as you can go in California and still be in California. It just doesn't seem like the place to keep adding to the story of our officers being killed in the line of duty all over this country.

Deputy Hopkins began working with the Sheriff's Office in 2015, and previously had worked for the Alturas Police Department in Modoc County. He was born in Livermore, California, named after his grandfather, who was the first mayor of Rolling Hills Estates.

He grew up in Montague, which is in neighboring Siskiyou County, with his five siblings: Samuel, Christina, Amanda, Josh, and David Cooksey. Also, he is survived by his parents, Lance and Carol; his grandmother, Twila; his wife, Janet; and three children.

He attended Butte College, my alma mater, in their Law Enforcement Academy, along with his brother Sam. Hopkins also earned a black belt in karate and won a world championship title in 2011.

He is honored by hundreds of law enforcement and emergency personnel, local residents, and many, many others who recognized his sacrifice in a procession from Alturas to Reading, and then another one from Reading up to his final resting place in the Yreka area in Siskiyou County.

What this points out is that our sheriffs and our officers in rural areas often patrol hundreds of miles alone, with the closest backup, at times, maybe even being hours away. Indeed, a lot of times they are working alone.

In memory of Deputy Jack Hopkins, we need to do much better as a country in supporting them and stop this rhetoric that is against our officers.

God bless him. God bless his fine family.

#### HONORING OUR VETERANS ON VETERANS DAY

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, on Veterans Day, I was pleased to join my many friends and colleagues honoring our veterans, our soldiers, and their families. We stood in front of the Houston City Hall with many, many veterans and their families, local elected officials and Members of Congress, United States Senate, and many, many soldiers and veterans. And we simply said thank you, thank you to them for putting on the uniform.

A number of us mentioned that it was only days away from a contentious election, and I specifically said how grateful I am that I live in a nation that allows a contentious election but

yet to have the right to peacefully transfer power.

Let me also take note of some of the seismic changes that we faced in Texas. I am excited about the newly elected officials in Harris County, the new district attorney, the new sheriff, tax assessor, the new judges that will come, all of them elected by the people.

To my community, from Dallas to San Antonio, Galveston and Beaumont, with a new sheriff, the first African American woman, I say that this is democracy. In an hour or two, I will discuss some of the elements that undermined democracy.

But I celebrate our soldiers, Mr. Speaker. I honor them for wearing the uniform to give me a sense of freedom and to allow democracy to work.

□ 1930

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS: CBC TO REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP—DO YOUR JOB

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BLUM). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and add any extraneous materials relevant to the subject matter of the discussion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening along with my coanchor of the Congressional Black Caucus' Special Order hour, with my classmate and my colleague, Congressman HAKEEM JEFFRIES from the Eighth District of New York. It is an honor for me to stand here and be a coanchor with him.

Tonight's topic, Mr. Speaker, is the Congressional Black Caucus' Special Order hour entitled "Unfinished Business: Congressional Black Caucus to Our Republican Leadership—Do Your Job."

As the Congressional Black Caucus comes to the House floor this evening as voices to be heard on unfinished congressional business, let me pause for a moment first to pay respect to Gwen Ifill, who passed away earlier today.

Ms. Ifill, an award-winning television journalist for NBC and PBS, helped pave the way for both women and men and African Americans in the field of journalism. Her voice will be missed. Her voice was a voice that we listened to as members of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, today, the House of Representatives returned for the first day of the lameduck session of the 114th Congress. As the conscience of the Congress, the Congressional Black Caucus is committed to advocating for

change to policies that adversely impact African American communities. Yet, Mr. Speaker, over the past 2 years, the 114th Congress has been highly unproductive, passing one partisan bill after another, which then languishes with no chance of being passed by the Senate or being signed into law by President Obama. In fact, as of November 2 of this year, only 244 bills have been signed into law, and only 20 of those bills have been significant pieces of legislation.

The American people really deserve more from their elected representatives. But the 114th Congress is not over, and we should use the remaining time wisely. The list of legislative items that this House should consider before going home for the year is robust—legislation to fully fund the government's fiscal year 2017 for one. The American people deserve a fully funded government that invests resources in people, reduces poverty, and safeguards the social safety net programs.

We are currently operating under a continuing resolution, Mr. Speaker, as you know, through December 9. While the current funding mechanism has been keeping the Federal Government doors open, it fails to fully recognize the importance of investment in programs which would benefit not just a few, but all Americans.

In addition to the omnibus, we should bring to the floor legislation providing reform for the criminal justice system, voting rights, and gun violence prevention, just to name a few.

You are going to hear from several members of the Congressional Black Caucus who have spent an inordinate amount of time crafting legislation, sitting in their committees, and going back home to their district and making promises that the American people are asking for.

Mr. Speaker, we have the opportunity starting today to use the last few weeks of the 114th Congress in a productive way to stand up for the constituents and to pass bipartisan legislation.

Mr. Speaker, how many times have we been in this Chamber and someone in that chair has said that we are going to work together for the good of the country or our constituents?

That is what our constituents expect us to do.

So let me just briefly take a moment to remind you, Mr. Speaker, why it is so important that we have a fully funded Federal Government and provide funding for critical programs—critical programs—like those that address ethnic and racial health disparities by improving diversity in the healthcare workforce and increasing the number of health professions in underserved communities, for example.

Mr. Speaker, we have my colleague and friend who has served as our Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust chair, Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY, who is with us today and has fought tirelessly for health care.

You are going to hear from her tonight.

It is well known that poverty and social economic status and health disparities are closely linked and latched together. Many of these gaps are shaped by generations of cultural biases, injustices, and inequality. In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: "Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane."

Mr. Speaker, for years, I have had the honor of serving on the American Heart Association Board where researchers have shared the alarming statistics of how African Americans are 30 percent more likely to die of heart disease and 60 percent more likely to be diabetic than white Americans. The cost of these types of health disparities is simply too high. Estimates indicate that health disparities cost our Nation as much as \$300 billion a year, which results in too many Americans suffering unnecessarily because they do not have access to the care they need.

Statistics such as these illustrate the increased need to address healthcare disparities by continued investment in Federal programs such as the Office of Minority Health at the Department of Health and Human Services and the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities at NIH.

We cannot shortchange these important Federal programs by putting them in neutral or on pause, Mr. Speaker. We must enact a fully funded omnibus spending bill for fiscal year 2017 before leaving Washington—a real simple request of doing your job. This has to stop, Mr. Speaker.

I am privileged to be joined this evening by so many members of the Congressional Black Caucus. I am joined by my coanchor, as I mentioned, and you will hear from him shortly.

At this time, it gives me great pleasure to have the privilege of yielding to Congressman G.K. BUTTERFIELD. He is the Congressional Black Caucus chair from the First District of North Carolina. He is someone whose history and past leadership in fighting for justice and against disparities are far too long for me to appropriately say tonight. So, Mr. Speaker, with that, I yield to Congressman G.K. BUTTERFIELD.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Let me begin, Mr. Speaker, by thanking the gentlewoman so very much for yielding time tonight. I thank the gentlewoman for her friendship. Most of all, I thank the gentlewoman for her extraordinary leadership here in the Congress. I have been observing the gentlewoman's work since the first day that she came to this House, and I can tell my colleagues that she has worked relentlessly on behalf of the people of the Third Congressional District of Ohio. I thank the gentlewoman for anchoring this Special Order hour tonight.

Mr. Speaker, before I get into the other part of my remarks tonight, I just want to digress for a moment to

recognize a great American that we lost today. I recognize the life and legacy of a dear friend, a friend of the Congressional Black Caucus and a personal friend of mine, Gwen Ifill. She was one of the Nation's leading journalists, regarded as one of the most prominent African American journalists in the country, and indeed a prominent journalist among all journalists.

Mrs. Ifill began her career in the 1970s during a time when there were very few African Americans and very few females in journalism. Gwen was a trailblazer in her profession. She was a bestselling author and moderator of two vice presidential debates. Gwen Ifill was among the Nation's finest political correspondents as she was gracious and poised when addressing some of the most pressing issues facing our country. Her voice will be missed in the media, but her legacy—her legacy—will continue to have a lasting impact on how we view news broadcasts. We offer our sincere condolences to Ms. Ifill's family, her friends, her followers, and colleagues all around the world.

Mr. Speaker, we are at a crossroads right now in our great country. That is undisputable. But I want my colleagues to know that the Congressional Black Caucus is up for the challenge. The CBC is poised in the 115th Congress to have a record number of 49 Members of Congress. Currently we have 46. Their number will go to 49. The CBC vows to continue to be the voice of our communities, representing more than 30 million Americans.

We will continue to have conversations in all of our communities, and we will zealously represent our constituents. We will stand strong as a caucus. We will stand strong against any Republican effort to reverse the progress that we have made over the past few decades. We are facing some tough times ahead, Mr. Speaker, but we are going to continue to be clear on our priorities.

We are going to continue to talk emphatically about promoting economic growth that will create jobs and stability in our communities. We are going to continue to talk about the need—the critical need—for criminal justice reform. We will continue to debate and talk about and to legislate on creating educational opportunities and reducing student debt.

Don't you think that we have forgotten about the Voting Rights Act. We will continue fighting for the full restoration of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Sadly, Mr. Speaker, this was the first election that we have had without the protection—the full protection at least—of the 1965 Voting Rights Act since it was implemented. Finally, we are going to continue to ensure diversity in the corporate arena, the workforce, and even in classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, there are peaceful protests taking place in many communities across America.

□ 1945

As I drove into Washington, D.C. this afternoon, I even saw some here in

Washington. We understand the protests, we understand the pain, and we understand the pain in all of our communities due to the negativity and the division that they have seen over the last 12 months.

We say to House Republicans that our communities are reeling with discontent and you need to understand this discontent. Now is the time to take up legislation that will help to lift those around the country that need us desperately to act. We have unfinished business presently before this Congress. Let us act and let us move legislation that will help those that need our voices the most.

Mr. Speaker, we have the capacity to do this. Congresses in past years have worked in a bipartisan manner, and they have succeeded. We can do the same. We must work together as Democrats and Republicans on behalf of the American people. Compromise, Mr. Speaker, is not a bad word.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman BUTTERFIELD not only for his words but for his leadership as our chair of the Congressional Black Caucus.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), another member of the Congressional Black Caucus, who stands strong and surefooted with us as we talk about our unfinished business, a member who has no problem coming to the mic and sharing her intellect and giving us a direction of where we should go. It is, indeed, my honor to yield to Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE, a leader on criminal justice reform and judiciary issues, from Texas' 18th Congressional District.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) for her leadership and dynamic message she gave this morning when we were discussing in the district and the area of our colleague Congressman HANK JOHNSON and JOHN LEWIS the issue of economic empowerment and economic empowerment as it relates to women, and particularly women of color. Let me thank the gentlewoman for that, and as well for leading today, along with Mr. HAKEEM JEFFRIES of New York, this very important Special Order of unfinished business.

Let me say that all of us, and you will hear certainly this repetitive refrain, have been challenged in this last election. Now, let me be very clear for those of our colleagues who may be listening or those who may be hearing, I am by no means whining. What I do speak to, of course, however, is, and will be over a period of time, whether or not there were fractures in the Democratic process that were driven not by candidates, for candidates can say and do, as much as you may be offended by them saying or doing, but whether or not there were actually systems that undermined the voting process. Starting first, of course, with the Supreme Court's extinguishing of section 5 of the Voting Rights Act and the

long, how should I say, journey of members of the Congressional Black Caucus and the Democratic Caucus and others of goodwill to restore section 5 or, in essence, a fix to section 5, and the long period of time that we had, Congresswoman BEATTY, to fix it, but it never got fixed before the election, which means that there are a number of jurisdictions that face a high mountain of trying to be able to vote. People were purged off of lists in a number of States. Individuals, unfortunately, had challenges with respect to what local officials may have been doing.

We will get all of this out in the wash, but we would have been much better off if we had section 5 of the Voting Rights Act. In my own jurisdiction, even though it ultimately was fixed under the auspices of they were not ADA compliant, we consolidated and closed a lot of precincts that we had to correct because on election day people were going to their home precincts and they didn't exist.

So clearly fixing section 5, fixing the Voting Rights Act, is not unfinished business. It is a requirement. It is adamantly necessary to do. Let me quickly say that we only did one out of the 12 appropriations bills, so Agriculture is not done, Commerce-Justice is not done, Defense, Energy and Water, Financial Services. All of these impact the lives of Americans.

We are still in the dilemma of the Flint water crisis. We have gone to Flint. We as members of the Congressional Black Caucus have spoken to those people who are hurting. They have various ailments—one woman with a rash, hair loss, children with cognitive issues—and we have still not resolved that. Protecting children with disabilities, access to public education.

My State alone has been an embarrassment for they were only providing for 7 to 8 percent of children with disabilities as opposed to the national average of 13 to 14 percent. We need to make sure that we ensure that those children are protected under Federal law. My State says they are immediately stopping the capping, but I prefer that we have it institutionalized into law and make sure it works.

Immigration reform. We have to worry about the DACA young people who are working in our economy and now with the potential that they may be on the deportation list.

Funding for the Louisiana flooding is crucial, whether those dollars have gotten—after our colleague, Congressman RICHMOND, worked so hard and told us of the trillions of dollars of flooding that occurred in his constituency. They need help, and we must get them help.

Funding for the damage caused by Hurricane Matthew. That is, of course, in Princeville, North Carolina, areas that I remember going to with my colleague, the Honorable G.K. BUTTERFIELD, the great chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, and, nonetheless, improving cybersecurity of the Nation's critical infrastructure.

I finish on this point, and that is on criminal justice, which I know a number of members will speak of. As the ranking member on the Criminal Justice Committee, I want to thank all of the many members who have offered legislation and thank the members on the Judiciary Committee, particularly under the leadership of JOHN CONYERS and certainly those who have worked with the chairman. We must pass police reform and accountability, the law enforcement trust and integrity bill. We must pass the sentencing reduction bill that will codify some of the work that needs to be done, prison reform that will turn prisons into true institutions of rehabilitation, and also a new matrix in juvenile justice to stop punishing our young people, but to provide a corrective rehabilitative approach, which is reauthorization of the juvenile block grant legislation, along with antibullying and bullying intervention.

We must do these things because the American people have sent us here to do our job. We must do these things because they are right. We must do these things because the American people need this legislation. We must simply do these things because, Mr. Speaker, we must do our job.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

Mr. Speaker, it is now my honor to yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS), from New York's Fifth Congressional District. There are so many things that I could say about him. I am honored that I serve with him on the Financial Services Committee. I am honored that he is a soldier in the battle. When I think of some of the words that President Barack Obama said, it reminds me of Congressman MEEKS when President Obama said, "Justice is not only the absence of oppression, it is the presence of opportunity."

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Black Caucus is often called the conscience of the Congress—the conscience of the Congress. They don't say we are just the conscience of Black people. They don't say we are just the conscience of some people. We say that we are the conscience of the entire Congress because we want to work to help all of Americans, particularly the least of these. Many of us run around and we talk about our various religious beliefs. And no matter what your religious belief is, it teaches us that we need to take care of those who do not have.

So we are here in what we call the people's House, and one of the things that we should make sure that happens with the people's House taking the lead is that we end poverty. Poverty does not discriminate. Poverty does not look at which section of the country you are in or what religion you have. You can find poverty in rural America and urban America. We should be here to do our jobs to help all Americans.

When, in fact, you have individuals who are still drinking bottled water,

we need to pass a water resources bill, not only for a small section of individuals but for everyone. Because when we look at what is taking place now, we see and we are finding—we even found it right here in the United States Capital—a problem with water. Water equals life, and everybody's life is important. Why we have got to pass this budget is so that we can make sure that everybody has certainty that they receive the items that they need.

What are the most basic needs of any human being? You cannot live without health care. So we have got to continue to make sure that we are providing for health care. I know some were talking about eliminating ObamaCare, but 20 million Americans who did not have any health care at all now for the first time in their lives have the same or have access to health care. We cannot end that.

Education. We know today that education is more important than ever before. We must pass this budget that has education at its core to make sure that every American has a chance to live up to her or his dreams.

Criminal justice reform. We have got to make sure that it is fair and equitable for everyone.

When you think about this budget, stability is important. The government relies on stability. We must fund the government so that we don't have short-term uncertainty. We have got to take care of our military. We have got to take care of emergencies like storms that hit my district. We are still recovering from Sandy. There must be stability in the budget and not these short-term things that we continue to do so our country can move and prosper.

So let's stay and do the job that the American people have elected us to do. Let us understand, even though this election, that there has to be, as Chairman BUTTERFIELD said, compromise because the majority of the American people voted one way, the electoral college had another decision, which means that we have got to all work together to move this country forward. We can do that, and we will be stronger doing that together.

So I want to thank Congresswoman BEATTY for engineering this evening because we must meet with our voices louder. We know the members of the Congressional Black Caucus will talk loudly and clearly to make sure that we represent the people that vote for us every 2 years, but we know that we are the conscience of the Congress and that we have a responsibility to the American people.

And I say to my Republican friends, you too have a responsibility, and that responsibility is to come and let's pass this budget so that we can keep this government moving and keep it stable moving forward. We can do that because this Congress is stronger if we work together.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman GREG MEEKS for lending

his voice to tonight's Special Order hour.

□ 2000

It is now my honor to ask Congressman DONALD PAYNE from New Jersey to come and lend his voice tonight. He is someone who brings a message to us. He is someone who advocates for our financial needs; he advocates for our children; he is a father; he is a husband; and he is someone who understands, in the time that we are having now, the value of quality education and the value of removing our children from poverty because he understands that all lives matter.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, let me first thank the gentlewoman from Ohio for this opportunity to speak during this Special Order hour and to also thank my other classmate, the Honorable HAKEEM JEFFRIES from New York, for this opportunity to speak at this time on unfinished business.

Mr. Speaker, it has been my great honor to represent the 10th Congressional District of the State of New Jersey for the past two Congresses, and I have seen a great deal of angst. I have seen some accomplishment, but not as much as the American people are due.

We come here week after week. We get here on Monday nights, like tonight. We come in and meet with our staffs, and then we are told of the proposed votes that we have that evening. On most nights, it is two. Now, I understand it is a night of travel and of making sure all Members have the opportunity to get here; but what does it say about Tuesday when there could possibly be two or about Wednesday morning when there will only be two votes? There is unfinished business, Mr. Speaker, in the House of Representatives. There are so many issues that we could discuss, and I think they are all being hit by my colleagues.

Zika is a frightening prospect for this Nation in its moving forward. Yet and still we are unable to get the level of funding that the President has asked for to try to understand and stop this disease, to do the research needed to figure out what is going on or how to prevent it. We just go home for recess. Not until it enters the continental United States or certain Members' States will they take it seriously. There is the whole issue around gun control, of commonsense gun legislation—unfinished business.

My colleague Mr. MEEKS spoke about the issue of water, the most basic necessity of life. We traveled to Flint as the Congressional Black Caucus, along with Leader PELOSI and Mr. HOYER. We talked to that community about what they were going through, about how they didn't know who to trust anymore because their elected officials had misled them to believe that something with a brown discoloring was drinkable. We found out, Mr. Speaker, that it was not drinkable. In fact, it was poisonous. How do we do that to American citizens? We are given the obliga-

tion to stand in the gap for them, to make sure that we take care of them at every turn; but yet and still, because it was cheaper to use another water source, it was done to these people.

I traveled back to my district in Newark, New Jersey, and I talked to several mayors in my district.

I said: You know what I saw in Flint? You need to pay attention to what is going on with your water source.

That was on a Friday evening. By Tuesday morning, they had found lead in 88 schools in Newark, New Jersey, so they had to switch over to bottled water. The testing continued, and more schools were involved. I created legislation for testing for lead in school systems around the country, because it is not legislated anywhere in the country to test for lead in school systems. I moved forward on that legislation, but one wouldn't know it because the majority wouldn't allow it to hit the floor.

So here we are, going back to our offices in the Cannon House Office Building, frustrated with this issue in our knowing that it is just going to continue to grow. Lo and behold, 5 months after my legislation is suggested, we find there is lead in the water in the Cannon House Office Building, where the Members of Congress' offices are; so now there is bottled water, and water fountains have been sealed off. This is something that we need to understand, that needs to be addressed—unfinished business.

I could just go on and on and on. Mr. Speaker, we will continue to raise these issues for as long as it takes. We are part of this body, and we are not going anywhere. Our voices will be heard on the unfinished business of this House.

Mrs. BEATTY. I thank so much the gentleman—my classmate and colleague—from New Jersey's 10th Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, it is, indeed, my honor to yield to Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY from the Second District of Illinois. We have heard that common creed that says, "I am my brother's keeper." She is my sister's keeper. When I think about her work, I am always so happy because I admire her. I remember the day that she sat down when we stood up. She reminds me of what Rosa Parks did in 1955 when she decided, if she sat down, it would start a movement. ROBIN KELLY sat down on the House floor because she said we should do more than just stand up when someone loses his life to gun violence. So it is, indeed, a great honor for me to yield to Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. I thank Congresswoman BEATTY and Congressman JEFFRIES because they have held it down for a long time now and have made us proud to be members of the Congressional Black Caucus because of how they present themselves in the Special Order hours and how they have taken on the responsibility. I thank both of them so very much.

When I think about unfinished business, one knows where I am going. I think about the gun violence that is still occurring in, what I represent, the Chicagoland area. We are up to 618 deaths and 3,273 shootings. Now, I don't know about today, because it is occurring every day. I know it is not just about the legislation, but we do need background checks; we do need a national straw purchasing bill and bills that pass; we need gun trafficking bills.

We need to improve, as you have heard, police-community relations, but we also need to invest in people. We need to invest in underserved communities: we need to make sure that people have decent housing, decent educations, that they get the job skills they need so that they can have jobs. There are too many who are still unemployed, and that is why the violence occurs. We need more mentors.

I have a bill like my past colleague just said, the Urban Progress bill. The bill was presented, but it never went anywhere, which was just like the background check bill. It is a bipartisan bill—190 cosponsors—but the bill never gets called to the floor. We have spent time—I believe 68 times—in trying to repeal the Affordable Care Act, but we have never sat down to see: What are the problems? Where do you think it should be improved? No. We just tried to repeal everything. There are great things about that bill. There are so many more people covered who would not have been covered.

I am the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus' Health Braintrust. African Americans die from 8 of the top 10 diseases, and that is because of a lack of access to places. The Affordable Care Act has definitely helped in that arena, but we need to do more. We need to send funding to NIH, and we can do more.

We are the wealthiest country in the world, yet we have the amount of homelessness we have and the amount of violence we have. We have a lack of affordable college education. Our students are suffering. They cannot live the American Dream because we are not doing the right thing in Congress—so much unfinished business. We talk about people pulling themselves up by the bootstraps, but they have to have the straps on the boots to be able to pull themselves up. It seems like we don't have the American heart, that we don't have the caring.

Immigration—there was a bill we could have passed in the House, but we just don't call the bills to the floor. We are just, really, ignoring so many things, and I don't see how we could feel proud when we go back to our districts when there are so many things that we haven't done. I hope in this, as we call it, lameduck session it is not too late and we can call some of these bills to the floor. We can save lives by calling bills to the floor.

In Flint, they can drink clean, quality water if we do what we are supposed to do. We cannot sit and rest on

our laurels. When we go into 2017, if we want cooperation and if we want the spirit of unity, we need to see that cooperation and unity now, not just in 2017.

I thank the gentlewoman for giving me the opportunity. Let's do our jobs.

Mrs. BEATTY. I thank so much Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY.

Mr. Speaker, I now yield to Congresswoman BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN from New Jersey's 12th District. I am so honored to serve with her. She stands in this same space as the Special Order hour chair for our Progressive Caucus.

Earlier today, I benefited from her wisdom as she said to me: I am used to being in charge and I like being in charge, so I am going to stay tonight and lend my voice to the Special Order hour on our unfinished business.

□ 2015

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honor to be here and standing with Congresswoman BEATTY and with Congressman JEFFRIES as you bring forth truth to power here in what you speak of. It is definitely a timely topic to be discussing unfinished business, what we can do.

People need to realize that we have but 15 legislative days left in this congressional session, and there are so many things that need to be done that haven't been appropriately addressed.

I want to associate myself with the comments that were made by those who came before me as it relates to gun safety. I want to remind us that back in 2012, in Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, someone went in there and killed 20 children and 6 adults and killed himself. Since that time, there have been at least 1,100, close to 1,200 mass shootings, at least 1,300 deaths, and at least 4,700 that have been wounded; and that is just since November 6th.

There are so many commonsense gun safety bills that are just waiting to be voted on. I know that, if given the opportunity, the majority in this House would vote appropriately and properly, taking into consideration the safety and security they represent to our communities.

There are other things that we need to be thinking about. We need to ensure that we are protecting the environment; that we are protecting the environment against unnecessary fracking and unnecessary pipelines. We need to make sure that we are reforming criminal justice, that we are educating, not incarcerating; that we are putting our resources where we get the best value.

We need to increase the minimum wage so that people can have a livable wage, raise their families, take care of their homes, and ensure that they have a little bit of money to spend so that they can churn up this economy.

We need to restore the Voting Rights Act. We need to ensure that voting is accessible; that people have the oppor-

tunity and the encouragement to vote when they are supposed to and when they could.

Finally, one last thought from me, we need to look at the kinds of protections that we have had in our banking system, protect just everyday families with their investments. We need to make sure that we are investing in the 21st century Glass-Steagall Act. Those are the things that the people, everyday working families, look for us to do our work. Together, we can do those things and make it better for each and every one of us.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN.

Mr. Speaker, it is indeed my honor to yield to my coanchor, my classmate, my friend, the Congressman from the Eighth Congressional District of New York.

I wanted to pause for a moment and think about what I would say as he will come as the coanchor, an individual who serves in this Congress, one of Congress' best orators.

When I think about him, I thought I would introduce him this way, Mr. Speaker: He is brave and brilliant. He is strong and strategic. He is always prepared and persistent.

I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES), my coanchor.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I thank my distinguished colleague and good friend from the Third Congressional District (Mrs. BEATTY). She is always elegant, eloquent, and effervescent, an erudite, anchor of the CBC Special Order who has made us all proud in the manner in which she has conducted herself on behalf of the people that she represents, as well as the entire Congressional Black Caucus and, of course, the class of 2012.

Once again, it is my honor and my privilege to stand on the House floor and participate in the Congressional Black Caucus' Special Order hour where for 60 minutes we have an opportunity to speak directly to the American people about issues of great significance. I can think of no more profound moment by which we need to address the people throughout this country, who we are privileged to represent, than in the aftermath of the most recent election.

I think it is important first to reflect upon the fact that in this country we already have made significant progress over the last 8 years. A lot of folks—some of our friends on the other side of the aisle—they don't want to acknowledge that fact. The reality of the situation quantitatively is very different.

Under 8 years of George W. Bush, this country lost 650,000 jobs. In almost 8 years of Barack Obama, we have gained more than 15 million private-sector jobs, 79 consecutive months of private-sector job creation. The deficit has been reduced by more than a trillion dollars under the Presidency of Barack Obama.

When President Barack Obama came into office, the unemployment rate was

at 10 percent. Now, it is at 5 percent. When Barack Obama took office, the stock market was at 6,000. Now it is over 18,000. More than 20 million Americans who were previously uninsured now have health coverage, and more than 300 million Americans don't have to worry about being denied health coverage because of a preexisting condition, all as a result of the Presidency of Barack Obama. I could go on and on, but America is a better place today because of the 44th President of the United States of America.

Of course, now we find ourselves in a situation where we have to continue to address the issues of great importance to the American people. In this democratic republic, time marches on. As Abraham Lincoln once referenced, we are in a constant march toward a more perfect union.

So the question, of course, is: Well, what are some of the issues where we can find common ground here today?

In the aftermath of one of the most divisive elections in our Nation's history, let me suggest that there are a few CBC priorities where some of my good friends on the other side of the aisle seemingly should take interest in addressing.

The first thing, of course, relates to poverty. Despite what we have heard from the President-elect throughout the campaign, poverty is not simply an inner-city problem. Congresswoman JOYCE BEATTY is a testament to the fact that so many folks who live in great cities like Columbus are incredibly professional, built wonderful lives, pursued the American Dream.

Poverty is not an inner-city problem; it is an American problem. In fact, a majority of persistently poor counties in this country—parenthetically, that is defined as counties where 20 percent or more of the population has lived below the poverty line for 30 or more years—are represented by House Republicans. I don't know if the President-elect realizes that.

So poverty and making sure that every single person in America has an opportunity to pursue the American Dream isn't a Democratic issue or a CBC issue. It is an American issue. Maybe we can figure out a way collectively to deal with this problem because it doesn't just impact the people I represent back home in Brooklyn.

The second issue that I think we can find common ground on, hopefully, is criminal justice reform. The House Judiciary Committee has already passed bipartisan legislation unanimously to deal with our unjust sentencing laws, as well as to make sure that everyone has an opportunity for a second chance in life once they have paid their debt to society.

There has been great cooperation from many of my friends on the other side of the aisle, leaders on criminal justice reform, people like JASON CHAFFETZ, TREY GOWDY, and RAÚL LABRADOR. These are people where there may be issues that we don't have a lot

in common, but who recognize, along with a whole host of other folks, that we have an overcriminalization problem in America when we have 5 percent of the world's population, but 25 percent of the world's incarcerated individuals.

We incarcerate more people in this country than any other country in the world. And if you take China and Russia's population combined, it is in excess of a billion individuals. Yet, we incarcerate more than those two countries put together.

I would say to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle: I think that dealing with mass incarceration in America fits squarely within your philosophical approach to a whole bunch of things. I am not asking you to become a Progressive Democrat.

Fiscal Conservatives should object to the fact that we spend 80-billion-plus dollars a year wasting economic resources, opportunity, and human capital, as States in places like Texas, Kentucky, Georgia, and Louisiana have done, not blue States like New York or California; red States who recognize that the fiscally conservative thing to do without sacrificing public safety is to deal with overcriminalization in America.

I would also suggest that many of my friends, Christian Conservatives—I am a Conservative, I guess, in the sense that I am a proud member of the Cornerstone Baptist Church. I don't know what the distinction is, but Christian Conservatives, I guess, is the lingo and the language that is often used—all of us who believe in some form of religion, particularly those, of course, who define themselves as Christian Conservatives should embrace the notion that you should have a second chance in life. Because theologically underpinning your religious beliefs is the notion of redemption, that we are all sinners in the eyes of God, with the exception of one person who has walked this Earth. And once you pay your debt to society, you shouldn't have a permanent scarlet letter that prohibits you from being able to experience the American Dream.

So I think criminal justice reform fits squarely within the philosophy of my fiscal Conservative friends, my Christian Conservative friends. I would also suggest that my Libertarian friends, as RAND PAUL and RAÚL LABRADOR have already illustrated, should also object to the mass incarceration problem that we have got in America.

I understand you don't like overtaxation. We can argue about what is the appropriate rate. I understand you don't like overregulation. This is all about government overreach. You should have a problem with overcriminalization because there is no area where the government can do more damage than when they have the ability to take away your life or your liberty.

So we stand here as members of the CBC talking about unfinished business,

not urging you to cross over and adopt our philosophy. Adopt your philosophy and apply it to criminal justice reform.

The last issue I would suggest as we talk about unfinished business is the notion of the Voting Rights Act having been decimated. I am disappointed that so many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle think that this should be a partisan issue. If there is a Republican advantage, let's be honest, that is why we don't want to do anything to fix it. Because when you look at the proud history of the Voting Rights Act, it has always been bipartisan in nature. It would not have passed this Congress without support from moderate Republicans in the House and in the Senate. That is a fact. There were Members of the Democratic Party, so-called Dixiecrats, that opposed it with everything they had. It would not be law today without Republicans.

Every time the Voting Rights Act was reauthorized, it was signed back into law by a Republican President: 1970, Richard Nixon. 1975, Gerald Ford. 1982, Ronald Reagan. 2006, George W. Bush.

We are not asking you on the House floor to act like Progressive Democrats. Just act like Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush, who recognized that voting rights is not a Democratic issue or a Republican issue; it is an American issue.

So, with that, I would just conclude by saying this: It would be a mistake for my friends on the other side of the aisle to interpret too much from this election. I am trying to figure out what exactly is the mandate when it appears that more than 2 million Americans will have supported, in terms of the popular vote margin, the candidate who lost.

□ 2030

And it was a mistake when others interpreted too much from an electoral college victory. Hubert Humphrey won the popular vote in 1968. The electoral college sent us Richard Nixon, and we got Watergate. Al Gore won the popular vote in 2000, and I think there was too much of a mandate interpretation. We got two failed wars and the worst economy since the Great Depression.

So the question is: Are you going to learn from recent history or are you just going to celebrate this unexpected victory where you lost the popular vote? I would suggest let's just find common ground, maybe on some of the areas that we have laid out here today.

We are not asking you to change your philosophy, change your ideology; but in areas like poverty where you have got just as much at stake based on your constituents as we do, or criminal justice reform where your philosophy is consistent with dealing with mass incarceration and overcriminalization in America, or the Voting Rights Act, which has a proud bipartisan history, let's start there and see what we can do as it relates to addressing the business of the American people as we go into the next Congress.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, let me just end with these words. This may be my last time as the lead anchor, so I cannot leave this Chamber without saying thank you, thank you to President Barack Obama for giving us 8 years of changing this country; thank you to President Barack Obama, whose legacy 10 or 20 years from now will go down in history as one of our greatest Presidents for making change.

Mr. Speaker, let me now say thank you to Congressman JEFFRIES for reminding me of where we are now. If we really are going to finish our unfinished business, the President-elect, who said, as I paraphrase, gangs roaming the streets, African American communities being decimated by crime, you walk down the streets and you get shot, well, Mr. Speaker, we could take care of that in the 114th if we really believed that. We could do a crime bill; we could do a voters' rights bill; we could do 10–20–30.

Mr. Speaker, as my time comes to an end, I include in the RECORD statements from Congresswoman TERRI SEWELL and Congresswoman EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, with just sixteen legislative days remaining during the 114th Congress, there is still plenty of work that the Republican leadership must accomplish during the lame duck session. The House and Senate will need to finish its work on the FY2017 Omnibus before the continuing resolution expires on December 9. However, this Congress can also work to pass comprehensive gun violence prevention measures, pass tax reform legislation, or tackle the ever-important criminal justice reform bills that this Congress has pledged to consider.

Serious criminal justice reform in the United States is long overdue and I fear that with the new administration, our opportunity to pass real reforms is closing fast. I do not believe that it is in the national interest to doom many of our people to a lifetime of suffering and condemnation for one or two poor life choices. Effective criminal justice reform will focus on reintegrating people back into society and reducing recidivism rates across the country. Instead, the United States has one of the highest per capita incarceration rates in the world.

The costs to our society are too great. It is not only the financial burden on our country to put people in jail, it is the opportunity costs and futures that we are denying to our youths and others. Even more alarming is the fact that mass incarceration has been shown to disproportionately impact minority populations. For example, African Americans are incarcerated for drug offenses at a rate ten times greater than that of whites. This is in spite of the fact that both segments of our population—blacks and whites—use drugs at roughly the same rates. Today, roughly half of the 205,000 inmates currently in federal prison are serving there due to drug offenses. This is bad policy.

Mr. Speaker, true systemic reform will be multifaceted in its approach. This includes not only reforming our criminal justice system, but also community resources and education

available to individuals. The Republican Congress has an opportunity not only to address these issues now during the lame duck, but will also be uniquely positioned during the 115th Congress to make good faith efforts and bring about real reform across our country.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I stand in solidarity with my colleagues to demand that the Republican Leadership do its job and prioritize the needs of the American people.

The criminal justice system is desperately in need of reform, gun violence has become an epidemic problem in America, the FY2017 Omnibus is inexcusably incomplete and the American vote is still not protected.

I have only begun to name the extensive amount of work that has been left undone by the Republican Leadership and the American people are suffering because of it. The people of this country who rely on this Congress to fight for them will continue to suffer because of the inaction, indifference and insolence of the Republican Party.

Congress has repeatedly failed to pass legislation to help make the citizens of this country feel safe from violence and secure in their rights and liberties. We need greater investment in higher education and our HBCUs. We need more anti-poverty programs and we need to address the problems of the rise of drug costs and access to healthcare facilities.

There is simply too much incomplete work that cannot be ignored. There has been too much suffering, sadness, blood and tears—and we need action now.

As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. famously said, “The time is always right to do what is right.” Now is the time to take action to unite as one great nation and work together to secure liberty and justice for all Americans. Unfinished business cannot become “business as usual.”

#### REMEMBERING THE LATE, HONORABLE STEVE LATOURETTE

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

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to honor our late colleague Steve LaTourette, who served in this body for 18 years, and who, sadly, passed away after a heroic battle with pancreatic cancer. He died on August 3. Steve will be sorely missed by those of us who had the pleasure and the honor to work with him and to know him.

Steve and I were elected to Congress together in 1994 as part of the Republican Revolution, or so it was called in those days. It was the year of the Contract with America. We were two of the four Republicans from Ohio who were

first elected that year. The other two were Frank Cremeans, who has also passed away a number of years ago, and Bob Ney. Steve and I served the longest and worked here together for 16 years, and over that time we became good friends.

While Steve was an esteemed colleague, respected by both sides of the aisle, I will always remember him as one of those people who was truly a great person on a human level. He had a gregarious personality, a very wry sense of humor, and he shared it with us many times, those of us in this body, again on both sides of the aisle. We are a better institution because Steve LaTourette served here among us. He will be greatly missed and long remembered.

Steve LaTourette had the rather endearing ability to take his job and his responsibilities very seriously while at the same time poking fun at himself. Perhaps most importantly, I think Steve will be remembered because of how much he believed in bipartisanship. He truly did not care which party you belonged to. If you had a good idea, he would support it, and he would get into the trenches with you and fight to get that idea enacted into law.

Sadly, it was the lack of bipartisanship that affected his decision to retire back in 2012. In his parting speech on this floor, he said:

For a long time now, words like “compromise” have been considered to be dirty words. I have always believed that the art of being a legislator is finding common ground.

When Members from both sides of the aisle paid tribute to him upon his departure, The Plain Dealer reported that Steve, in his characteristic humor, joked that it was fitting that bipartisanship would only break out when he had decided to leave. I hope that Steve is looking down on us here this evening so that he will know that he has truly brought us together in a bipartisan manner because we have a number of our colleagues here on the other side of the aisle who would also like to speak in his memory and in his honor.

I hope that we make Steve proud here this evening when he sees the bipartisanship that is going to be taking place on this floor, and maybe, just maybe, we can bring a little of this bipartisan spirit with us into the next Congress. We could certainly use it, considering the challenges that this institution and we as a nation face after a very divisive—let’s face it, very divisive—election where about half the people were ecstatic and about half the people are very depressed right now.

So it is certainly a time for us to come together. It is going to be a little bit tougher to come together because Steve is not with us, but we can keep in mind what he would have done, what he would have said, and how he could have brought us together. So I think it is fitting that we join together in a bipartisan manner in this tribute to our former colleague Steve LaTourette this evening.

I would like to yield at this time to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), the longest serving Member from the Ohio delegation.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman CHABOT for yielding. It is really a pleasure to be here with him this evening and to pay tribute to a wonderful, wonderful Congressman, Steve LaTourette, from the great State of Ohio.

Obviously, we return here this evening to Congress following an election in which new depths of feverish partisanship were reached in the country, and I feel humbled to speak in tribute to our late Republican colleague and friend, Ohio Congressman Steve LaTourette.

He was a lawyer’s lawyer. He was very, very intelligent and a very effective lawmaker, and he remained a loyal Republican. But at the same time, he exemplified, as Congressman CHABOT has said, the importance of compromise and negotiation to the political process for the sake of the Republic and the American people.

He always prioritized his constituents over partisan concerns, and he built alliances with House Members of all stripes in pursuit of the common good. He always conducted himself with a warm smile and a witty manner throughout, and he always had a good word. I remember how he sort of looked at you from above his glasses when he would get out of a committee meeting, always with a broad smile.

It was an honor and a privilege to have served for so many years in the same Ohio delegation as Steve. He exhibited so much love for our State and endeavored to help all Ohioans, even those not in his constituency. In many ways, he was not just a representative for the 19th and then the 14th District of Ohio, but a representative for all of Ohio, as he effectively worked on our Committee on Appropriations.

One of my fondest passions has been to champion the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative that focuses on the Great Lakes region, and it often brought us together to work to promote investment in the world’s largest freshwater ecosystem, with 95 percent of our Nation’s freshwater and serving over 30 million Americans; 1½ million jobs, and \$62 billion in wages are generated in this Great Lakes nation each year. Steve understood the immense environmental and economic importance of the Great Lakes to the region and our Nation because he came from northern Ohio. It was a real pleasure to work with Steve to champion our Great Lakes issues.

I recall on another front, in 2005, following cuts to the Pentagon’s budget, it was announced that 1,200 jobs at the Defense Finance and Accounting Service in the Federal office building in Cleveland, Ohio, were to be cut and shipped out to Indianapolis. Steve was able not only to successfully lobby the Defense Department to preserve the jobs, but with his great chutzpah, he