

Micah 6:8, And what does the Lord require of you? To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

DISAPPROVING THE ACTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COUNCIL IN APPROVING THE COMPREHENSIVE POLICING AND JUSTICE REFORM AMENDMENT ACT OF 2022

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 298, I call up the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 42) disapproving the action of the District of Columbia Council in approving the Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. C. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida). Pursuant to House Resolution 298, the joint resolution is considered read.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

H.J. RES. 42

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Congress disapproves of the action of the District of Columbia Council described as follows: The Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022 (D.C. Act 24-781), enacted by the Council of the District of Columbia on January 19, 2023, and transmitted to Congress pursuant to section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act on January 26, 2023.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The joint resolution shall be debatable for 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Accountability or their respective designees. The gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) each will control 30 minutes.

The chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COMER. 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 measure under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1215

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.J. Res. 42, a joint resolution disapproving of the District of Columbia Council's Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022.

The men and women of the Metropolitan Police Department serve their community every day to help keep the District safe and secure. In doing so, they routinely place themselves in dan-

gerous situations to protect others. Yet, progressive policies from the D.C. Council continue to hamstring District officers and needlessly place them in unsafe situations.

The D.C. Council's Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022 does just that. For example, it requires burdensome and time-consuming approval hurdles before officers may put on riot gear for their own protection. It creates new mechanisms for activists to harass officers and their families by obtaining personal information on the officers. It also creates additional liabilities for officers that are not found in other police departments.

These are just a few of the many impractical and outrageous proposals of the legislation.

The D.C. Metropolitan Police Department has seen over 1,190 police officers leave the force since the beginning of 2020. That is about one-third of the police department. Nearly 40 percent of those officers resigned. That means they chose to leave the department instead of dealing with the increasingly impossible burdens placed on them by the council.

Since then, crime has been soaring in the District. Compared to this time last year, homicides are up 25 percent, motor vehicle theft is up 106 percent, and all crime is up 25 percent.

These troubling statistics cannot be allowed to continue. The council has continued to overlook its law enforcement officers in favor of progressive, soft-on-crime policies that only benefit criminals. The almost 700,000 residents of D.C. and approximately 20 million annual visitors to our Nation's Capital deserve to feel safe.

Ensuring a vibrant and safe National Capital for all Americans to visit is a key ingredient of the District's future financial health and a necessity for the Federal Government workforce, and our police deserve to have the resources to ensure the safety of all.

The D.C. Council's Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act does neither of those things. If the D.C. Council wants to continue down this path, they will have to answer to this Congress.

We are not alone. The D.C. Police Union, representing 3,500 members, and the U.S. Capitol Police Labor Committee have both endorsed this resolution of disapproval. D.C.'s reckless reforms have also caught nationwide attention, with the National Fraternal Order of Police and the National Association of Police Organizations both asking Congress to block the D.C. reform package. Additionally, the California Coalition of Law Enforcement Associations, the Fullerton Police Officers' Association, and the Las Vegas Police Protective Association are all strongly in favor of H.J. Res. 42.

We see such broad national support for this disapproval resolution because other jurisdictions know just how awful the D.C. Council's anti-policing

so-called reforms would be as a precedent for America's cities.

Additionally, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser declined to sign this legislation into law. That should be a signal of how extreme it is. The D.C. Council did not listen and proceeded to pass it anyway.

We also have a recent precedent to consider. Recently, 31 House Democrats and 31 Senate Democrats joined President Biden and House Republicans to block the D.C. Council's Revised Criminal Code Act of 2022 from becoming law. Congress successfully blocked the District's attempt to lessen penalties on dangerous criminals, and now we must act again to address the D.C. Council's reckless attempt to weaken local law enforcement.

The dangerous policing reforms addressed by H.J. Res. 42 are even worse for the current crime epidemic in D.C. We must ensure that these pro-crime, anti-police policies are not allowed in our Nation's Capital City, which Congress has a special interest in overseeing.

If the D.C. Council wishes to engage Congress to seek reforms addressing specific problems in local law enforcement, then the Oversight Committee stands ready to have those conversations with D.C. leaders and my colleagues in the House.

This police reform package, which D.C. has presented to Congress for approval, does far more harm than good and must be rejected. To be clear, this is precisely the role of Congress when it comes to matters of the District's governance. Under the U.S. Constitution, Congress is granted "exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever" over the District.

The Home Rule Act does establish a degree of local governance, but under the Home Rule Act, Congress maintains a role to scrutinize and approve of District legislation. Just because Congress has not been fulfilling this role in recent decades is not a reason to avoid this responsibility now, especially when we know the Nation's Capital City is plunging into a crime crisis. Now is the time for Congress to lean in and provide the oversight the District so badly needs.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support my colleague Mr. ANDREW CLYDE's resolution of disapproval, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The good chairman of the committee invoked the name of Mayor Muriel Bowser, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, who sent us a letter with the chairman of the D.C. City Council, Phil Mendelson, which closes this way: "Not only should our policy decisions not be overturned by officials not elected to represent our residents, but piecemeal interference hurts our ability to confront crime and improve public safety in the District of Columbia."

What is this about, Mr. Speaker? H.J. Res. 42 seeks to nullify a law passed

unanimously by the Council of the District of Columbia to promote accountability for police officers who use excessive force or abuse their power, a goal that the vast majority of Americans share.

The D.C. law banned the use of choke holds and other dangerous neck restraints and set reasonable standards on the use of deadly force. It required the public release of body-worn camera footage and created a police officer misconduct database for officers who have been convicted of a crime or had allegations against them civilly or administratively sustained. It prohibited D.C. from hiring officers who have engaged in criminal or official misconduct.

Most importantly for these purposes, Mr. Speaker, the new law empowered the chief of police to fire or discipline officers who break the law by removing police disciplinary matters from the control of arbitrators under collective bargaining. This is the provision that galvanized opposition to the bill from the police union, the key provision that has now led our colleagues to want to convert the Congress of the United States into the largest city council in the world, a 535-member city council with the job of micromanaging and superintending the work of the 13-member Council of the District of Columbia.

The local police union hates this provision, which is their right, of course. Their chief has been the chief lobbyist against Washington, D.C., on this law. He was the key GOP witness in the Oversight Committee hearing on the law.

His union sued when the legislation was first passed, asserting that it violated the U.S. Constitution not to subject the discipline of police officers to an outside arbitrator. They lost in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, they lost in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, and the Supreme Court did not grant cert. Still, the union is running TV ads against this law and has obviously found friends on that side of the aisle.

Now, in their eagerness to kick around the more than 700,000 taxpaying American citizens who live in Washington, D.C., but have no voting representation in the House of Representatives or in the U.S. Senate, our colleagues are embracing a claim that puts them in favor of an extreme police union position on discipline that jurisdictions across America are debating and many of them are rejecting.

Why? Well, D.C. is a good example. Before passage of this law that they propose to repeal, the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department had been forced by labor arbitrators to rehire a significant number of policemen and -women who had been fired for engaging in serious criminal misconduct. Here are some examples of the officers who were fired but the department was forced to reinstate by an arbitrator.

One officer illegally struck a suspect multiple times in the head. The officer

was criminally tried and convicted of criminal assault, sentenced to 30 days in jail, 3 years of probation, and 500 hours of community service. Despite strong opposition from the police department, he was reinstated by an arbitrator.

Another officer, off duty at the time, sexually assaulted a woman and was convicted of misdemeanor sex abuse and sentenced to a 100-day suspended sentence and a year of probation. Despite strong opposition from the department, he was reinstated to the force by an arbitrator.

Another off-duty police officer confessed to abusing a child. The officer was convicted of child abuse and sentenced to 5 years of probation. Despite strong opposition from the department, he was reinstated, as well.

Every D.C. police chief for at least the last 25 years has expressed outrage about the old system of having to rehire bad cops after they had been fired for perpetrating serious misconduct against the people of Washington, D.C.

Former D.C. Police Chief Peter Newsham openly lamented that he had to allow "very bad police officers back onto our department."

Former Police Chief Charles Ramsey said this: "It is demoralizing to the rank and file who really do not want to have those kinds of people in their ranks. It causes a tremendous amount of anxiety in the public. Our credibility is shot whenever these things happen."

The current D.C. Police Chief, Robert Contee, says that giving the police the power over discipline reduces the risk of returning poor performers to the force.

Forcing police chiefs to reinstate bad cops fired for breaking the law is bad for public safety, it is bad for community morale, and it is bad for the morale of the vast majority of good cops who are doing their job.

It is also bad for taxpayers. Between 2010 and 2020, The Washington Post found that D.C. paid out \$91 million to resolve claims of police brutality and misconduct. The taxpayers are also on the hook for backpay that was paid out to bad cops who were fired for this misconduct when they were rehired following the ruling of an arbitrator.

In a recent 5-year period, the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department was forced to rehire 36 officers. According to an Office of the D.C. Auditor report, D.C. had to pay \$14.3 million in backpay to these convicted and disciplined officers.

The question of whether police chiefs or arbitrators should be the ones to decide to put disciplined cops back on the force is a matter for local decision-making in Washington as it is in every other jurisdiction in the country.

Mr. Speaker, 700,000 taxpaying American citizens have decided through their elected representatives that the chief of police, who is appointed by the Mayor of the District of Columbia, should be the one to be able to discipline bad actors within the police department.

Reversing the D.C. government on this local matter is outrageous interference by Congress to impose a bad public policy on the Capital City.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CLYDE), the sponsor of the resolution.

Mr. CLYDE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman COMER for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful that today we are considering my common-sense resolution, H.J. Res. 42, which would block the implementation of the D.C. Council's so-called Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022.

H.J. Res. 42 is essential to both increase public safety and combat rising crime in our Nation's Capital City. For far too long, Washington, D.C., which is supposed to represent a beacon of freedom, patriotism, and prosperity for all America, has been overrun by violent criminals.

As millions of people visit D.C. every year, it is imperative that our Nation's Capital is safe for all residents and visitors. Unfortunately, this simply is not the case.

While many local Democrat officials continue to bury their heads in the sand, such as D.C. Council Chairman Phil Mendelson, who insists there is "not a crime crisis in Washington, D.C.," the data reveals the inescapable reality of an out-of-control crime wave taking over our city.

According to the Metropolitan Police Department, so far this year, there have already been more than 60 homicides, nearly 50 cases of sexual abuse, 2,000 incidents of motor vehicle theft, over 750 robberies, 300 burglaries, and more than 2,200 cases of theft from auto. The list goes on and on. In fact, crime overall is up 25 percent from last year.

These dangers are widely known across the District, but especially here on Capitol Hill. In the last few months, both a congressional reporter and a Member of Congress had the wheels stolen off of their cars. One of Senator RAND PAUL's staffers was horrifically stabbed in broad daylight. A Member of this body, Congresswoman ANGIE CRAIG, was violently assaulted in an elevator in her apartment building.

□ 1230

Crime is clearly out of control in our Nation's Capital. Who is charged with protecting the people and streets of Washington?

The Metropolitan Police Department. Instead of providing MPD officers with the resources, support, and political backing required to combat crime, the D.C. Council is determined to kneecap MPD's capabilities, subsequently emboldening dangerous criminals.

The council's anti-police law creates undue burdens on the MPD. A few of these policies include: Limiting physical contact with the suspect. They

claim it bans choke holds, but choke holds have been banned for decades, since 1985. So this ban is really just a cheap attempt at a political talking point. It goes further, placing liability on officers just for touching near the neck area without any intent whatsoever.

Additionally, this legislation sets MPD officers up for failure by prohibiting officers from viewing body-worn camera footage when writing initial reports. This reform requires the Mayor to publicly release the names of officers in all instances of serious use of force, allowing radical activists to target officers and their families.

The D.C. Council bill strips the D.C. Police Union of collective bargaining rights.

It repeals the D.C. code provision that requires the Metropolitan Police Department to commence disciplinary action against an officer within 90 business days. This means that officers could be placed under investigation for an indefinite period of time, which strips their right to timely due process of law.

Notably, since this legislation has been in effect under emergency legislative powers since 2020, the MPD has lost almost 1,200 officers and currently operates at a 500-officer deficit. Officers are expressing their great concern with their feet and are leaving faster than they can be replaced. The D.C. police force has been depleted to an astonishing half-century low.

Undoubtedly, the D.C. Council's misguided legislation has driven out men and women in blue who protect us, while disincentivizing individuals to join the force.

Honestly, who can blame them? Who wants to put their life on the line in a city where local officials continue to put criminals first and police officers last?

Back in 2020, Mayor Bowser allowed a painted message, "Defund the Police," to remain on a street near the White House for more than 2 months. Clearly, D.C. officials have made their message abundantly clear, and they continue to fail the men and women of the Metropolitan Police Department.

In response, we must be united in supporting MPD officers and restoring law and order in Washington by blocking the D.C. Council's legislation. We have both the authority and the responsibility to do so, just as we repealed the D.C. Council's soft-on-crime Revised Criminal Code Act just a few weeks ago.

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 17 of the Constitution grants Congress exclusive legislative authority over Washington's affairs. It is time to effectively exercise this power yet again to ensure our Nation's Capital City is safe for all Americans. After all, the heart of our Republic, Washington, D.C., should be the safest city in this great Nation.

Public safety is not a partisan issue. It is a commonsense one.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to

support my resolution, H.J. Res. 42, so we can take the necessary steps to turn our crime-ridden Capital City into a safe, free, and prosperous city.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, just a few points about the last contribution from the gentleman from Georgia.

Georgia reported 892 murders in the last year, the fourth highest in the country. He said that Washington, D.C., is overrun by violent criminals. The only time I have seen an institution overrun by violent criminals was here in the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, an event that that gentleman described as a tourist visit and has consistently likened to a tourist visit. I don't know that he is going to be the best and most reliable witness for determining when an institution is being overrun by violent criminals.

The rhetoric I hear from the Freedom Caucus is about defunding the FBI and defunding the ATF. No one on our side of the aisle is talking about defunding any of them or defunding the police. On the contrary, we have advanced initiatives to increase local government funding for police and other services.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I strongly oppose this profoundly undemocratic, paternalistic resolution. The House of Representatives, in which the nearly 700,000 District of Columbia residents have no voting representation, is attempting to nullify legislation enacted by D.C.'s local legislature, whose members are elected by D.C. residents.

By scheduling this vote, I can only conclude that the Republican leadership believes that D.C. residents, a majority of whom are Black and Brown, are unworthy of governing themselves.

The dictionary defines democracy as "a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections."

D.C.'s lack of voting representation in this Congress and Congress' plenary authority over D.C. are the antithesis of democracy.

The legislative history and merits of D.C.'s Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022, which is the subject of this disapproval resolution, should be irrelevant since there is never justification for Congress nullifying legislation enacted by the District of Columbia.

I would like to set the record straight. D.C.'s Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022 is consistent with House Democrats' George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, President Biden's executive order on policing and police accountability and transparency legislation enacted by dozens of States, both red and blue, to improve public safety and public trust after the murder of George Floyd.

D.C.'s Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022 would, among other things, make it easier to fire officers for misconduct; prohibit the hiring of officers with prior misconduct; require the release of the names and body-worn camera recordings of officers directly involved in an officer-involved death or serious use of force; strengthen civilian oversight of police; establish a public database of sustained allegations of officer misconduct; make officer disciplinary records subject to release under the D.C. Freedom of Information Act; and prohibit choke holds and asphyxiating restraints.

Congress requires D.C.'s local legislature, the D.C. Council, to pass the permanent version of legislation twice, separated by at least 13 days. The Council passed the Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022 by votes of 11-0 and 13-0. While the legislation was enacted without the D.C. Mayor's signature, the Mayor has urged Congress to oppose this disapproval resolution.

The D.C. Council has 13 members. The members are elected by D.C. residents. If D.C. residents do not like how the members vote, they can vote them out of office.

Congress has 535 voting Members. The Members are elected by residents of the States. None are elected by D.C. residents. If D.C. residents do not like how the Members vote, they cannot vote them out of office.

The Revolutionary War was fought to give consent to the governed and to end taxation without representation. D.C. residents cannot consent to any action taken by Congress, whether they are national or local matters, and they pay full Federal taxes. Indeed, D.C. pays more Federal taxes per capita than any State, and more total Federal taxes than 23 States.

Mr. Speaker, I say to every Member of Congress: Keep your hands off D.C. If you want to legislate on local D.C. matters, become a D.C. resident and get elected Mayor or councilmember.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to vote "no."

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from the District of Columbia for her eloquent remarks and also for making the specific point that the D.C. reform legislation is perfectly congruent with the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, which we passed in the 117th Congress.

In fact, the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act goes further than D.C. went. D.C. did not touch qualified immunity, which was something that was dealt with in the Federal legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I also wanted to correct one other piece of misinformation that was left by the gentleman from Georgia. He said that it is against the law under the D.C. law for a police officer to touch someone's neck. That is not the definition of the law against choke holds and neck restraints.

It requires the use of any body part or object by law enforcement against a person with the purpose, intent, or effect of controlling or restricting the person's airway or severely restricting the person's breathing. That does not involve just touching a person's neck.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, how much time do we have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maryland has 16 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Kentucky has 19 minutes remaining.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in solidarity with the almost 700,000 residents of the District of Columbia that this Congress seeks to disenfranchise once again.

D.C. voters and councilmembers saw the problem of police perpetuating different forms of violence plaguing not only their city, but the entire country, and they chose to act.

They saw the reports of fired officers being rehired, cases dropped for faulty evidence and excessive use of force. They saw that marginalized folks were bearing the brunt of the violence and were being disproportionately prosecuted.

What are we doing here today?

Debating a resolution that seeks to circumvent the will of those D.C. voters. Congress does not have the authority to pass a disapproval resolution such as this for any other State or municipality. The principle of no taxation without representation helped launch the American Revolution and is enshrined in the Declaration of Independence. D.C. residents drive around with that on their license plates.

Yet, this joint resolution is telling all 670,000 taxpaying residents that their voices don't matter. I am sure it is no coincidence that those residents are over 45 percent Black. We must affirm their right to self-determination.

D.C. residents have been petitioning for voting representation in Congress for over 200 years. In 2016, they approved a referendum for statehood by 85 percent. Instead of acting on that, this Republican-led Congress has taken every chance to strike down the will of the people. You cannot support self-rule for jurisdictions as long as they don't make choices you oppose.

The bill this resolution seeks to strike down mirrors the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act that this Congress passed last year. Among other things, it prohibits choke holds, removes military-grade weapons from officers, bans the hiring of officers with prior misconduct, and requires officers to inform people of their rights.

Frankly, the bill doesn't go far enough, leaving out crucial reforms such as ending qualified immunity.

None of these reforms are radical anti-police measures. None of them are particularly transformative. They are the first, small steps toward justice.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to reject this joint resolution and allow the will of the D.C. people to stand.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentlewoman from Pennsylvania for her remarks, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from D.C. (Ms. NORTON).

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding, and I would like to respond to something that was said on the other side of the aisle.

Both public- and private-sector employers across the country have had difficulty recruiting and retaining employees in recent years. In fact, the difficulty law enforcement agencies across the country have with recruitment and retention predate the police reforms enacted after the killing of George Floyd.

□ 1245

Prior to the killing of George Floyd, a 2019 survey conducted by the International Association of Chiefs of Police found that "the challenge of recruiting law enforcement is widespread and affects agencies of all types, sizes, and locations across the United States."

The survey also found that "the difficulty in recruiting law enforcement officers and employees is not due to one particular cause. Rather, multiple social, political, and economic forces are all simultaneously at play."

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her point, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, control over local police is an essential facet of political self-government and home rule. The people of Washington, D.C., through their representatives, need to be able to control their own local police. They also need to control their judges.

The problem, of course, is that right now the District of Columbia is caught betwixt and between. The people have made clear that they want to become a State. They organized a State and constitutional convention. They have petitioned for admission to the Union and are asking the Congress of the United States under Article IV of the Constitution to exercise our powers to admit them as a State and to redraw the boundaries of the Federal District given our exclusive power and our comprehensive power under the District clause to do that.

In fact, in 1846, Congress redrew the boundaries of the District of Columbia in order to retrocede to Virginia lands there, and that was perfectly constitutional. Today Congress can exercise its powers under Article I, section 8, clause 17 to modify the boundaries of the Federal District to cede the resi-

dential lands to the new State that is petitioning for admission to the Union.

The House of Representatives in the last two Congresses voted to admit the District of Columbia, or Washington, D.C., as the new State. The Senate did not act, yet their statehood drive continues.

Alas, our colleagues, rather than trying to help propel another State into the Union and to allow them to gain equal footing with all of the other States instead decides to try to micro-manage their local affairs and to drive them back into some kind of semi-colonial status that they thought they had left behind many decades ago.

So the real question for the Congress of the United States is: Will we do for the people of Washington, D.C.—taxpaying, draftable citizens who have served in every war that the Republic has ever fought going back to the American Revolution—will we treat them the same way that we treated the people of 37 other States who were admitted by the original 13?

That is the dynamic of enlargement of democracy that was contemplated by the Framers of the Constitution and the Founders of the country. They did not want there to be large, colonized, and subjected populations subject to the will of other people for precisely the kind of reason that is on display today.

There is no reason why the local government of Washington should be lorded over and superintended by other people's Representatives no matter how well-intended they may be or how politically intended they may be or how malevolently intended they may be. The Framers of the Constitution and the people who fought the American Revolution rejected the idea of virtual representation.

That was the claim of the crown and the Parliament. They said: You don't need your own representatives because you are represented by people in Parliament who will be able to take into account your interests.

The revolutionaries rejected that saying that in real democracy people get to choose their own representatives, and those representatives elect their own council and their own mayor, and they get to choose their own police chief. They get to make their own decisions.

So really what we see today is a drama that reenacts the basic struggle for democratic self-government in our country. This is a chapter in that drama, but it will lead eventually—it must lead—to the admission of Washington, D.C., as a new State the way that 37 other States were admitted by the original 13, including my own Maryland, because those original States understood the logic of democratic equality and freedom in our country.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the multiple provisions constituting the D.C. police reform law are mainstream, commonsense reforms unanimously passed by the Council of the District of Columbia which enjoyed strong public support and are perfectly congruent not only with the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, which passed the House in the 117th Congress, but also with police accountability laws enacted by dozens of States and localities in recent years in the wake of notorious episodes of police brutality like the murder of George Floyd.

For example, since May of 2020, at least 24 States have enacted legislation to limit the use of dangerous neck restraints against citizens. Thirty-nine States have passed reforms related to officer education and training. Since May of 2020, 26 States have enacted laws to improve data collection and police transparency. At least seven States, including Arizona, Colorado, and Wisconsin, have enacted laws requiring the creation of public databases on use-of-force information.

States like Colorado, South Carolina, and Maryland have mandated adoption of body-worn cameras statewide. At least 20 States have enacted laws that address State-level use-of-force standards.

This joint resolution of disapproval is an attack on local decisionmaking, federalism, and the policies of oversight and accountability that Americans clearly want and that our committee as the oversight committee should be championing.

This resolution would result not only in less political democracy in America but less official oversight and accountability over policing in the Capital City. It is amazing to me that our colleagues will not even have a hearing on the desire of Washington with 700,000 taxpaying but unrepresented Americans to join the Union as a State, but they will mobilize all their energy to strip from the local D.C. police chief the power to discipline cops who commit crimes.

There seems to be no end to our colleagues' willingness to undermine good police work in Washington. Last month the most memorable thing they have done so far in the new Congress, Committee Republicans visited more than 20 January 6 insurrectionists living in D.C. jail—the vast majority of whom are there because they were convicted of or charged with violently assaulting our police officers. Our colleagues liken the extremists who attacked our police officers to political prisoners—people like Nelson Mandela, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, and Alexei Navalny. Those are people charged with ideological offenses against authoritarian regimes.

These prisoners they visited were charged with, and in many cases convicted of, violently assaulting American police officers.

This month now Republicans want to overturn a local law that allows the chief of police in D.C. to keep cops who commit crimes like drug dealing or sexual assault off the force. I don't blame the people of Washington or Ms. NORTON for telling them to keep their hands off D.C.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. PRESSLEY).

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this measure because it is nothing more than an attack on D.C. statehood and a barrier to confronting the crisis that is police brutality.

When I hear from D.C. residents on this vote, they all tell me the same thing: Republicans need to keep their hands off D.C.

The residents of the District of Columbia elected the members of their council to determine what laws will govern their city. D.C. residents did not elect the sponsor of this bill or any of the Republicans who are in favor of violating D.C. home rule.

Unanimously, those duly elected council members passed police reform legislation and the Mayor signed it into law. It is clear why: because it will help save lives.

Now Republicans are violating the District of Columbia's right to self-govern. It is hypocrisy. It is cruelty. It is another demonstration of Republicans standing in the way of progress, especially when Black lives are in danger.

The families and friends who are robbed of loved ones at the hands of police deserve laws and policies that hold officers accountable and improve public safety.

That is why I oppose this measure and urge my colleagues to vote "no." Democrats are already on the record supporting these modest, commonsense reforms. Your constituents are taking note. Do not be misled by the misinformation and fear tactics on the other side of the aisle.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maryland has 5 minutes remaining.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for his leadership on this important committee and for giving all of us the opportunity to express our support for the District of Columbia.

I come to the floor with great pride on this. As Delegate ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON knows, I take pride in the fact that my father, when he was a Member of Congress many, many years ago from Baltimore, was the chair of the Appropriations Subcommittee on the District of Columbia.

He was a big supporter of home rule which didn't exist at that time and then, of course, we saw home rule, then

we saw Mayor, and we see the District of Columbia. Now our aspiration for statehood has always been but continues to be.

So when we hear this debate on the floor, what are we talking about here?

Has this become the city council of the District of Columbia that we are debating issues?

That is up to the District of Columbia. What we do is respect their ability to make their own rules whether we like them or not.

So the point is that this is sort of a gotcha kind of an amendment that I think is most unfortunate and unworthy of the debate on statehood and representation for the people in the District of Columbia who fight our wars, pay our taxes, contribute to the greatness of our country, but do not have representation in the Congress of the United States and fall victim to any criticism of their individual legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a "no" vote on this.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the work of law enforcement across America. As a senior member of the Judiciary Committee, I have had the privilege of working with the FBI, the DEA, the ATF, the United States Marshals, and an array of law enforcement officers along with the Department of Homeland Security which we oversee as a member of the Homeland Security Committee.

I am wondering what is the basis of the intrusion in D.C. home rule with my friends who thought there was nothing more important to do than to intrude on a fully comprehensive police reform bill that was supported by the chief of police and others as it relates to addressing those who have involved themselves in conduct that police officers would not support.

That is the only reason that there is even an iota of opposition.

The bill tracks the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act with changes that are applicable and relevant to the people of the District of Columbia. It is non-offensive legislation.

I would wonder why my friends on the other side of the aisle would, in fact, be so against this bill when they did not help us with the Invest to Protect Act and the VICTIM Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. They didn't help us with the assault weapons ban that we are fighting, if I may call the roll: Uvalde, Nashville, Louisville, and in Alabama and on and on and on.

Mr. Speaker, I support the work of the District of Columbia, the Mayor,

and the city council. I support their reform bill that is supported by police officers, and also, I support home rule.

Let us vote not to uphold the Republicans' legislation of disapproval.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my strong opposition to H.J. Res. 42—Disapproving the action of the District of Columbia Council in approving the Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022.

This outrageous resolution would nullify the Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022, enacted by the Council of the District of Columbia.

This resolution is a bridge too far. While Republicans continue to put forth legislation that further divides our country and puts lives at risk, Democrats have continuously supported funding for law enforcement and putting Americans safety over politics.

For two congresses, Republicans have blocked the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, preventing us from making any substantive changes in policing accountability that would improve public safety nationwide.

In the absence of federal action, dozens of states and D.C. have taken steps to improve their law enforcement agencies since the death of George Floyd. These reforms have included restricting the use of neck restraints, improving standards for the use of force, and reforming police certification.

This resolution blatantly undermines Home Rule, and if my Republican colleagues really cared about the safety of the American people and law enforcement, they would have voted with Democrats on the various bills we previously put forth to improve public safety.

Now, Republicans are going a step further by seeking to undo D.C.'s work to improve law enforcement and Policy/Community relationships and promote public safety. They want to roll back all of the progress that has been made in police accountability.

While states, D.C., and House Democrats have consistently stood up for accountability in policing, advancing public safety, and improving the public's trust in law enforcement, Republicans are again defending rogue, lawless police officers who act with impunity. These rogue officers take lives and make all of us less safe as they erode public trust.

Take for instance, the recent case of Tyre Nichols in Memphis, the startling facts set forth in the Department of Justice's report on the Louisville Metro Police Department, or the audio recordings of McCurtain County Sheriff Kevin Clardy, Sheriff's Captain Alicia Manning, and Jail Administrator Larry Hendrix discussing killing journalists and lamenting that they could no longer lynch black people.

If Republicans cared about public safety and law enforcement, they would have supported the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act because we cannot have public safety without trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

Democrats don't just talk about law enforcement; we invest in law enforcement. Democrats have supported funding for law enforcement while Republicans have repeatedly voted against it.

Democrats have advanced the Invest to Protect Act which would have authorized \$300 million in grants for law enforcement agencies with fewer than 125 officers. This legislation

passed with bipartisan support, but 55 Republican members voted against it.

Democrats also advanced the VICTIM Act, led by Congresswoman and former law enforcement officer Val Demings, which would have provided grants—totaling up to \$100 million per year—to law enforcement agencies to help them solve violent crimes. 178 Republicans voted against it.

My bill on supporting more money for victims, VOCA, is what we should be doing more of.

If Republicans really supported law enforcement, they would have joined Democrats in passage of the Assault Weapons Ban, which would take the weapons most used to target law enforcement off our streets. 208 Republicans voted against it.

Assault weapons pose a significant risk to law enforcement—one out of every five law enforcement officers killed by guns are killed by these weapons of war.

The Violence Policy Center performed an analysis of unpublished information from the FBI and determined that one of five law enforcement officers slain in the line of duty in 2016 and 2017 were killed with assault weapons. They found that, during attacks in which multiple officers were killed, 75 percent of the officers were killed with an assault weapon.

But that's not it. There are many pieces of legislation that Democrats have offered that Republicans could have supported if they really supported law enforcement.

The Fighting Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Act of 2022; the Law Enforcement De-Escalation Training Act of 2022, the Active Shooter Alert of 2022, and the Federal Extreme Risk Protection Order Act of 2022.

I must also remind this body that when right wing extremists descended on the nation's Capital city, attacking citizens, and burning flags in church yards, Republicans stood back and stood by.

This resolution is yet another example of Republicans forcing their failed policies on all of us by any means they can, particularly in black and brown communities nationwide.

Whether it is unfairly blocking home rule and police accountability, hijacking the courts to restrict abortion access and bodily autonomy, taking over school districts, banning books, or attempting to overturn a fair election, we must hold the line and defend DC's right to self-governance. That is why I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to oppose this resolution.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RASKIN. May I inquire how much time is remaining, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maryland has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, the gentlewoman from Texas I think makes the essential point which is the people of Washington and their representatives are governing in their best interests. That is the essential gamble of democracy.

This is why American federalism is such a beautiful thing. The laws in Kentucky passed by the colleagues of my friend, the chairman of our committee, the laws in California, the laws in Alaska, the laws in South Carolina,

and the laws in Washington, D.C., differ in certain ways. That is how federalism works.

It is a massive insult, indignity, and affront to the people of Washington, D.C., to pull the rug out from beneath their comprehensive effort to develop good policing in Washington, D.C.

There are lots of States and jurisdictions with higher crime rates. There are lots with lower crime rates. That is neither here nor there. Democracy is not something you earn by virtue of the crime rate or the inflation rate or the employment rate. Democracy is something you earn by virtue of natural rights that we have recognized under our Constitution, which is why our Constitution begins with the words "We the People."

The people of Washington, D.C. don't have complete rights yet, which is why they are fighting for statehood. The last thing we should be doing is driving them back to the worst days, which as former Speaker PELOSI evoked, when Congress micromanaged every little thing that took place in Washington.

□ 1300

It is not fair to the people of Washington, and it is a waste of our time.

If they think they have a good proposal that will end crime in America, let's do it nationally and make it apply to everybody. Otherwise, let's agree with the people from D.C.: Hands off Washington.

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

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, the D.C. Council's Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act is irresponsible.

It prioritizes the leftist defund the police movement over public safety and law enforcement of our Nation's Capital.

It is playing with the livelihoods of all who live in or visit D.C. by rolling back policing in the District. This will only embolden criminals and demoralize D.C. police officers who put their lives on the line every day.

The U.S. House must swiftly exercise its constitutional responsibility to oversee the District of Columbia and reject this misguided legislation from going into effect.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to unite in support of a safe National Capital City and support this necessary resolution of disapproval.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 298, the previous question is ordered on the joint resolution.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on passage of the joint resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SPORTS ACT OF 2023

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 734.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COMER). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 298 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 734.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Florida (Mr. C. SCOTT FRANKLIN) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1303

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 734) to amend the Education Amendments of 1972 to provide that for purposes of determining compliance with title IX of such Act in athletics, sex shall be recognized based solely on a person's reproductive biology and genetics at birth, with Mr. C. SCOTT FRANKLIN of Florida in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce or their respective designees.

The gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 734, the Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act.

The Democrats have gone to great lengths to call this bill extreme. The Democrats have gone to great lengths, being almost hysterical, to call this

bill discriminatory. It is neither of those things.

It is a one-page bill, which is rare in Congress, that strengthens existing protections for women, ensures a level playing field for female athletes, and protects women and girls from the Biden administration's radical regulatory scheme.

It is quite telling when the other party attempts to tear things down without offering an alternative vision. Democrats refuse to posit a reason for allowing biological men to compete in women's sports that comports with principles of athletic competition like fairness and integrity.

Democrats also refuse to address the implications of their position. If men can compete in women's sports, should they be able to take roster spots from women, to rob women of hard-earned achievements?

Instead, they appeal to emotion and call the other side bigots. It is such a tiring act, Mr. Chair.

How about providing evidence that self-identification is rooted in biological truth? Explain that a post-adolescent male athlete has zero physical advantages over women.

Democrats like to pretend they are the party of science. Where is the data?

The Democrat vote against this bill, including Biden's threat to veto it, is a vote against continuing to give women and girls equal opportunity to participate and compete in athletics.

We on the Republican side are grounded. We live in reality. So does the rest of America. Ask working-class Americans if Muhammad Ali should have been allowed to box women in his heyday or if Usain Bolt should have run the women's 100 meters.

It is not about callousness or lack of emotion. This is about grounding a leftist ideology that has lost its collective mind back in reality. In fact, Republicans are teeming with admiration and support for the women and girls who have come so far to get much-deserved recognition for their athletic achievements.

The left wants to talk about erasure. Let's talk about how American female athletes are being erased. We are not sensationalizing this problem. It exists. Females are being hurt by it, and action must be taken to stop that.

Mr. Chair, I hope this debate and the eventual passage of H.R. 734 help bring sanity to women's sports, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I speak in opposition to H.R. 734, the politics over participation act.

We can all agree on the need to address the challenges facing our education system, issues like gun violence, academic achievement gaps, and the lack of mental health support for our students. These are serious challenges that demand serious action.

Unfortunately, my Republican colleagues have used their first 100 days in

the majority to pursue a radical education agenda that prioritizes political points over students' safety and success.

Today, we are considering another piece of this extreme agenda, one that again targets transgender kids.

School sports activities offer fundamental life lessons—such as leadership, self-confidence, and teamwork—that every child should be able to enjoy. As Members of Congress, our responsibility is to ensure that student athletics are, above all, fair and safe.

H.R. 734 does the exact opposite. It makes school sports less fair by singling out and banning transgender women and girls as young as kindergarten from participating on school sports teams with their friends. We know transgender students already face widespread bullying and discrimination. Adding to their pain by targeting their participation in school sports is both wrong and dangerous.

Furthermore, contrary to my Republican colleagues' claims, H.R. 734 actually makes school sports less safe for women and girls. To enforce its ban on transgender student athletes, the bill would require all girls as young as their preteens to "prove their gender."

For example, under Utah's blanket ban on transgender student participation in school sports, parents of the second- and third-place finishers in a State-level girls' competition complained to the Utah High School Activities Association that they suspected the winner of the event was trans. Following the complaint, the school was forced to investigate the student by combing through her records going back to kindergarten. She was, in fact, not transgender.

The association has received other complaints about supposed trans competitors, sometimes with the reasoning being simply that a girl doesn't look feminine enough.

Simply put, H.R. 734 does not protect women and girls. It only makes school sports less safe and less fair.

There are schools, States, and sports associations that have been allowing transgender people to play equitably and consistent with their gender identity with no issues for decades.

This bill doesn't address the most elite level of athletes. Yet, even at the most elite level, organizations like the International Olympic Committee have frameworks for transgender inclusion in sports. They reject the type of categorical blanket ban Republicans are pushing for kids as young as kindergartners in schools.

Congress has no business targeting transgender women and girls and imposing a nationwide ban on their participation in school sports. We need to refocus on our job in Congress to address the most pressing issues facing students and parents and ensure that every child in America can reach their full potential.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 734, and I reserve the balance of my time.