

Fast forward 12 years, it's mid 1996, and I'm still a nurse in Nassau County and still not thinking about politics whatsoever. Something happened to my life, as it does to so many other lives. An event happens, and all of a sudden you change and become an activist. Gun violence was unfortunately the issue that hit my family and many families on the Long Island Railroad. My husband was killed. My son was seriously wounded. I decided that I was going to do something about it. Geraldine Ferraro, the person that I saw on TV, called me. She said, "Carolyn, you should really think about running for Congress." There were other people calling me, too. And I'm thinking, "I'm a nurse. What do I know about politics?"

But you know what? If I was going to try and do something, then I had to run. Everybody told me I was going to lose. Maybe I would have. But I didn't. I won. But Geraldine was always there to give advice. Just because you're a woman doesn't mean you can't be tough. Just because you're a woman, you can be tough and you can be gentle, and you have to use that to get legislation done.

Well, here I am in Congress, and I am proud to be following in the footsteps of Geraldine Ferraro. I wouldn't use the words, the kind words that people use for her on myself like "pioneer" or "trailblazer." I actually followed Geraldine and her advice to come to Washington and try to make a difference.

Like so many women in New York politics today, Geraldine helped me as I went through from private citizen to candidate to public official. She opened so many doors for me, introducing me to people that I needed to meet. She was well known for this, for spending as much energy helping lift up others and having another woman follow.

We will all remember you, Geraldine. I will always remember you. God bless you. We do remember you. Thank you.

Again I thank my colleagues, CHARLIE and CAROLYN and PETER, for arranging this moment we could pay tribute to Geraldine.

With only 17 percent of members of Congress being women, we still have a long way to go when it comes to equality in representation.

But certainly we couldn't be where we are today if it weren't for Geraldine.

I for one am looking forward to making a living tribute to Geraldine, to take her philosophy of helping others, of lifting people up the ladder behind you, as I continue my career here.

Thank you very much.

1-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF UPPER BIG BRANCH MINE DISASTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, it was exactly 1 year ago today that an explosion ripped through Upper Big Branch Mine in Montcoal, West Virginia, killing 29 workers. It was the deadliest

mine accident in 40 years. But perhaps "accident" is the wrong word to characterize what happened in Montcoal, West Virginia, last year April 5. This wasn't a hurricane, it wasn't a tsunami or some other act of nature.

Although the Mine Safety and Health Agency, MSHA, has yet to complete their investigation, it is absolutely clear from the preliminary reports that this tragedy was avoidable but for negligence and carelessness on the part of Massey Energy.

When Chairman MILLER and I traveled to West Virginia with Congressman RAHALL, miners told us that Massey routinely cut corners on safety. And yet the miners were afraid—they told us this too—to come forward for fear of losing their jobs. That's why we need stronger Federal whistleblower protections, Mr. Speaker. MSHA inspectors can't be everywhere all the time. So we need to rely on the people who know best. We need to rely on the workers, those that can report safety violations, because they are living with them. We must ensure that these workers have job protection when they come forward.

The questions we need to be asking ourselves are what can we be doing to make sure this does not happen again to them? What can we do to ensure that our Nation's coal miners, some of the hardest working and courageous people you will ever meet, aren't descending into a potential death trap every time they clock in?

But the silence from the United States Congress has been positively deafening. It is incomprehensible to me that we still haven't passed the Robert C. Byrd Miner Safety and Health Act. How many miners have to die before we take action?

□ 1040

Worker safety, not just in mines, but in workplaces above ground and across the Nation, is under siege thanks to irresponsible cuts in the Republican continuing resolution. Fully half of OSHA's staff would be furloughed if H.R. 1 becomes law.

A weak economy like this one that we are living in right now also further undermines worker safety, because as workers who want to report violations know, there are dozens who would take their jobs in spite of unsafe conditions just to have work.

Mr. Speaker, last Congress I was chair and now this Congress I am the ranking minority member of the Workforce Protection Subcommittee, and in that role I am absolutely committed, along with Congressman GEORGE MILLER and NICKY RAHALL, to bringing OSHA and MSHA into the 21st century, strengthening regulations to protect people from injury, sickness, and possible death on the job.

Needless to say, the Upper Big Branch explosion has devastated a tight-knit community with so many families still coping with grief. Gary Quarles, who testified before the Edu-

cation and Labor Committee last year, said "The life's been sucked right out of me" because he lost his only child in the explosion. Another man says of the death of his twin brother, "It's like part of me is gone." One woman lost her fiancé, whom she met when they worked side-by-side in the mine. And I cannot imagine the ordeal of Timothy Blake, who survived the blast and tried in vain to save eight coworkers.

But on this one 1-year anniversary, Mr. Speaker, let's do more than look back. Let's do more than remember and be sad. Let's use this tragedy as a call to action. In honor of the 29 fallen miners, let's give their coworkers the safety and protection they deserve.

CUTS TO THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. A lot of talk around here about millions, billions, and trillions, but let's just try to put a face on some of the cuts the Republicans put in H.R. 1.

I think one of the meanest of their cuts and the stupidest of their cuts is to eliminate a program called YouthBuild. Now, I'm sure most of them don't know what it is. They have never met with the kids who come back here every year.

This is a program that started in 1992 under George H.W. Bush. It's a program that takes kids who have generally dropped out of high school, had problems with drugs, alcohol, other things, but at some point decide they want to get straight and they want to do something better with their lives.

So this program takes kids between 16 and 24, helps them get their GED, gets them some counseling, gets them involved in peer groups. They learn leadership skills, teaches them how to build houses and the houses they build are for low-income Americans.

In the long term we have found incredible results with this program. Last year—and these are almost 100 percent high school dropouts with problems—78 percent of the kids completed the program. That's pretty extraordinary. Now, after, when they leave the program, the longevity of the effect of this program, 7 years after completing the program, 75 percent of the YouthBuild kids, kids who had problems with drugs, alcohol, homelessness, dropped out of high school, everything else, are either in college or employed in jobs earning more than \$10 an hour.

That's a pretty darn good investment. And what does this cost, and why would the Republicans zero it out? Well, it cost \$102 million last year for 20,000 students.

Now, we could, I guess, instead leave them in the street without their high school degree, hopeless, maybe they would get back on drugs, maybe they will get in trouble, maybe we will them in jail, and then we will spend \$30,000 a

year to support them in prison. Twenty thousand bucks for 1 year to get these kids straight and have them become productive members of our society zeroed out by Republicans.

Now, it is a lot of money. That's almost 1 hour of spending for the Pentagon across the river, almost 1 hour. And there's no waste at the Pentagon, though. We are not allowed to look at the Pentagon for waste. It's almost 2 days—that's a lot—of agriculture subsidies, paying people not to grow things.

So 2 days of paying people not to grow things or a year's funding for a program that takes kids who have been in trouble but want to do better, want to learn some skills, want to be productive members of society and helps them get a leg up. But, no, in the Republican world, that's wasteful spending. They have zeroed out this program.

I met with eight of these kids last week. I meet with them every year when they come back—I urge my Republican colleagues, for once. I asked if they had seen their Republican member of my delegation. They said no. They met with a staff person, maybe an intern. Republicans can't seem to be bothered.

But they should listen to these kids, there's a lot of wisdom there and, I think, future leaders there. They have gotten their lives straight and they have gone through some hard times, and we gave them a little help, yes, 1 year. They get \$500 a month while they are in the program, while they are building houses for low-income people, learning skills. And as taxpayers in the future, they will pay that back pretty darn quickly.

Now I wonder why they eliminated this program. First of all, I am sure they don't know what it is. They have never met with the kids, they don't care. These aren't people who go to the country club after all. But, secondly, probably because it's housed in the Department of Labor, and we hate anything on the Republican side of the aisle that has the word "labor" in it.

God forbid that America should do things for working people in this country or working people should be allowed the right to organize and have a better life. Well, this is a program that should be continued. It should, in fact, be enhanced. They had 19,000 kids who couldn't get in the program last year, on the waiting list, 19,000.

We should double the size of this program, maybe triple it. That would be a huge amount of money. That would be 3 hours of spending at the Pentagon, or almost a week of subsidies, paying corporations not to grow things on surplus lands.

Boy, I guess we can't afford that, can we? But we can't cut the subsidies, and we can't look for waste at the Pentagon, but we can stick it to these kids.

Good work, Republicans.

HONORING GERALDINE FERRARO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) for 5 minutes.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a great American and one of the great political trailblazers in American history, Geraldine Ferraro. Many of us speaking today, myself included, would likely not have achieved our successes without her paving the way ahead of us.

Of course, her contributions did not benefit just those of us in the political sphere. Her life was an important symbol to girls and women who aspire to succeed in any field, particularly those who have struggled to break into professions traditionally dominated by men.

The 1984 Presidential campaign is remembered by many as a landslide for President Ronald Reagan. He was, in fact, a very popular President. But many of us who aspired to enter politics were electrified to see the first female on a Presidential ticket.

Of course, Gerry was more than just the first woman on a Presidential ticket. Those of us from the New York delegation remember her service to Queens and, really, to all five boroughs. Before coming to the House, her life had already been dedicated to the service of others in the district attorney's office and as an educator for our city's youth.

Perhaps most of all, she will be fondly remembered for her wit, kindness, and grace. Yet, despite her gentleness, she was not one to shirk from speaking her mind.

Mr. Speaker, women everywhere have lost an inspiration. New York has lost a public servant, and all of us have lost a great American.

Her legacy will be remembered, and I am proud to be on the House floor remembering her many contributions.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 50 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CHAFFETZ) at noon.

PRAYER

Rabbi Efrem Goldberg, Boca Raton Synagogue, Boca Raton, Florida, offered the following prayer:

Our Father in Heaven, guard the Members of our esteemed House of Representatives. Instill within them the

wisdom, the courage and determination to provide for the physical, as well as the spiritual, well-being of the citizens of this great country.

May this body which hosts rigorous and robust debate continue to embrace diversity without resulting in divisiveness. May it seek and celebrate unity without imposing uniformity. May this House of Representatives, together with Houses of Worship across the land, promote justice, moral clarity, ethical living, righteousness, and acts of kindness.

As a grandchild of immigrants who fled the Nazis and came to this country 72 years ago this month to find refuge, freedom, and opportunity, I join this House in a prayer of profound gratitude and deep appreciation for the blessings we, the people of the United States of America, are privileged to enjoy.

Master of the Universe, protect our courageous Armed Forces, watch over our elected leaders, grant peace and prosperity to these United States and the entire world, and let us respond, Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. RUNYAN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

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

Mr. RUNYAN. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. DEUTCH led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING RABBI EFREM GOLDBERG

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Florida