

When is this Congress going to be brave enough, similar to those men and women who took those steps across the Edmund Pettus Bridge some 36 years ago, willing to offer their lives so that America might be free and have the right to vote. When will we stand as Republicans and Democrats on behalf of our children to stop the bloodletting of children going to school and killing children because we have a love affair with arms. We know we can certainly protect the second amendment and protect our children as well.

LOWERING THE ELIGIBILITY AGE FOR THE EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Mrs. MINK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce a bill that lowers the minimum age for individuals without children to be eligible for the earned income tax credit.

In 1975, the earned income tax credit was established to provide aid to working parents with low incomes. In 1994, the credit was extended to include low-income workers with no children.

This credit provides struggling workers age 25 or over a financial boost by reducing their tax liability or providing an actual cash benefit.

But the earned income tax credit discriminates against younger workers. It is inherently unfair to deprive some the benefits of the tax credit simply because he or she is under the age of 25.

Congress justified the age requirement to prevent students, who are supported by their parents, from becoming eligible for the credit. Yet in our inner cities and rural areas many young men and women cannot afford to go to college. Upon high school graduation, they are thrust into the workforce. But many of the jobs available to them do not pay a living wage.

My bill helps these individuals by lowering the minimum age requirement of the earned income tax credit to 21 years of age.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation.

36-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF MARCH ACROSS EDMUND PETTUS BRIDGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. HILLIARD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, on the 36th anniversary of Bloody Sunday, I stand to say thanks to the Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle, the Republicans and Democrats, who came this past weekend to Alabama to participate in the reenactment of the march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

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Mr. Speaker, this journey was begun some 36 years ago. The journey for freedom and for the right to vote is

still going on. It will not stop until every facet of our lives are free from prejudice and discrimination. But in order for that to take place, Mr. Speaker, each one of us must rededicate our lives to the proposition that all men are created equal and that they have certain inalienable rights.

Mr. Speaker, we as Members of Congress must make sure that we join the common man not only in rededicating himself to the principles of democracy, but we must make sure that our laws are in accordance with our democratic principles.

Mr. Speaker, the reenactment of the march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge is not just a celebration but it is a cause celebre. It is a time to remember and to reflect upon those persons who 36 years ago put their lives at the mercy of others who were opposed to them taking such action for the principle that everyone in our country should have the right to vote. It was an honor to participate in that reenactment with such greats as the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) and Bernard Lafayette, and others who participated at that time.

Mr. Speaker, all of us have our Edmund Pettus bridges to cross. We still discriminate in this country against the disabled, against gays, against people who may not speak in our native tongue. We still have a long way to go in our society to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to vote and to make sure that every vote is counted.

So it is not just remembering what took place; but, Mr. Speaker, we have to do something about the inequities that still exist in our society. The reenactment keeps the public aware of the past atrocities in our history. It keeps them reflecting on the fact that we still must fight for those things that are dear to our democracy. We hope that the reenactment will cause all of us to learn from the past but also to cause us to be able to profit from the mistakes of the past, to correct those problems of the past, to correct the problems of the present so that the future will be safe and secure for all to enjoy.

REMEMBERING THE 1965 MARCH ACROSS THE EDMUND PETTUS BRIDGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CANTOR). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, like my colleagues, I rise today to pay tribute to the brave and courageous men and women and a few young children that attempted to march from Selma to Montgomery 36 years ago today, March 7, 1965.

Just think, Mr. Speaker, 36 years ago, in many parts of the American South, 11 States of the Old Confed-

eracy, from Virginia to Texas it was almost impossible for people of color to register to vote. As a matter of fact, in a State like the State of Mississippi, in 1965 the State had a black voting-age population of more than 450,000 and only about 16,000 blacks were registered to vote. There was one county in Alabama, between Selma and Montgomery, Lowndes County, where the county was more than 80 percent African American; yet there was not a single registered African American voter in the county. In the little county of Selma, only 2.1 percent of blacks of voting age were registered to vote.

People of color not only had to pay a poll tax, they had to pass a so-called literacy test. Interpreting sections of the Constitution of the United States, the constitution of the State of Alabama, the constitution of the State of Georgia and the State of Mississippi, there were black men and women teaching in colleges and universities, black lawyers and black doctors being told they could not read or write well enough. On one occasion, a black man had a Ph.D. degree in philosophical theology and he flunked a so-called literacy test. On another occasion, a man was asked to give the number of bubbles in a bar of soap.

The drive, the movement for the right to vote came to a head in Selma, Alabama. For many months people had gone down to the courthouse to be turned back. They were arrested. Some were jailed. On March 7, 1965, about 600 black men and women, and a few young children, attempted to march from Selma, Alabama, to Montgomery, to the State capital, to dramatize to the Nation and to the world that people of color wanted to register to vote. They were beaten with night sticks, bull whips, trampled by horses, and tear gassed.

That day became known as Bloody Sunday. There was a sense of righteous indignation all across America when people saw what happened to these 600 men and women and young children in Selma. Eight days later, after what became known as Bloody Sunday, President Johnson came to this hall and spoke to a joint session of the Congress, and he started that speech off on March 15, 1965, by saying: "I speak tonight for the dignity of man and for the destiny of democracy." President Johnson went on to say: "At times, history and fate come together to shape a turning point in man's unending search for freedom. So it was more than a century ago at Lexington and at Concord. So it was at Appomattox. So it was last week in Selma, Alabama."

And in that speech on March 15, 1965, President Johnson condemned the violence in Selma, introduced the Voting Rights Act; and before he closed that speech he said over and over again: "And we shall overcome." The Congress passed the Voting Rights Act,