

Head Start in Iowa City, where she shared with me that “The staff and the program itself at Head Start are invaluable to my family and many others. It is a well-run program that has been vitally beneficial to my daughter and my family.” Ms. Thompson went on to say, “I can go to work every day secure in the knowledge that my daughter is safe in a positive learning environment with amazing people.” Ms. Thompson is not alone in her praise of these critical programs and the outstanding educators and child care providers.

The photo behind me today is a photo of one of these exceptional providers. Kelly Mathews of Iowa City is pictured here with children at the child care center she runs in Iowa. Ms. Mathews works 50 hours a week with the children at this center. Then she spends additional time filling out paperwork, completing continuing education credits, shopping for supplies, and creating a challenging and exciting curriculum for the children under her care. Ms. Mathews does all this for one clear reason: “to change the world.” But we know this goal isn’t easy, especially when Ms. Mathews is receiving a very modest salary with no benefits and no paid time off. We must do better for Ms. Mathews, better for all the child care providers and Head Start teachers, better for the children in Iowa and across the country, and better for hard-working families.

Unfortunately, this year the President failed to stand up for our country’s children. He failed to prioritize their needs, forgetting that these children are the key to our country’s future success. This year the President proposes flat funding for child care that will cause 200,000 children to lose access to child care assistance by 2009. The administration also acknowledges that fewer children will be served in Head Start under their proposal. Should these cuts be implemented, the Kelly Mathews of the world will find it even more difficult to make ends meet, and the Trina Thompsons and their young children will find it next to impossible to secure a spot at their local Head Start. And this is simply not acceptable.

I urge all of my colleagues to take a moment this week in honor of the Week of the Young Child to think about the tens of thousands of children you represent that could be provided a wealth of opportunity and hope in their lives if we simply reject the President’s budget proposal and choose to invest in the future and well-being of our children.

SUNSET MEMORIAL

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

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I stand once again before this body with yet another Sunset Memorial.

It is April 15, 2008, in the land of the free and the home of the brave, and before the sun set today in America, almost 4,000 more defenseless unborn children were killed by abortion on demand—just today. That is more than the number of innocent American lives that were lost on September 11th, only it happens every day.

It has now been exactly 12,867 days since the travesty called *Roe v. Wade* was handed down. Since then, the very foundation of this Nation has been stained by the blood of almost 50 million of our own children.

Some of them, Madam Speaker, cried and screamed as they died, but because it was amniotic fluid passing over their vocal cords instead of air, we couldn’t hear them.

All of them had at least four things in common.

They were each just little babies who had done nothing wrong to anyone. Each one of them died a nameless and lonely death. And each of their mothers, whether she realizes it immediately or not, will never be the same. And all the gifts that these children might have brought to humanity are now lost forever.

Yet even in the full glare of such tragedy, this generation clings to a blind, invincible ignorance while history repeats itself and our own silent genocide mercilessly annihilates the most helpless of all victims to date, those yet unborn.

Madam Speaker, perhaps it is important for those of us in this Chamber to remind ourselves again of why we are really all here.

Thomas Jefferson said, “The care of human life and its happiness and not its destruction is the chief and only object of good government.”

The phrase in the 14th amendment capsulizes our entire Constitution. It says: “No state shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law.” Mr. Speaker, protecting the lives of our innocent citizens and their constitutional rights is why we are all here. It is our sworn oath.

The bedrock foundation of this Republic is that clarion Declaration of the self-evident truth that all human beings are created equal and endowed by their creator with the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Every conflict and battle our Nation has ever faced can be traced to our commitment to this core self-evident truth. It has made us the beacon of hope for the entire world. It is who we are.

And yet Madam Speaker, another day has passed, and we in this body have failed again to honor that foundational commitment. We failed our sworn oath and our God-given responsibility as we broke faith with nearly 4,000 more innocent American babies who died today without the protection that we should have given them.

Madam Speaker, let me conclude, in the hope that perhaps someone new who heard this sunset memorial tonight will finally embrace the truth that abortion really does kill little babies, that it hurts mothers in ways that we can never express, and that 12,867 days spent killing nearly 50 million unborn children in America is enough; and that the America

that rejected human slavery and marched into Europe to arrest the Nazi Holocaust, is still courageous and compassionate enough to find a better way for mothers and their babies than abortion on demand.

So tonight, Madam Speaker, may we each remind ourselves that our own days in this sunshine of life are also numbered and that all too soon each of us will walk from these Chambers for the very last time.

And if it should be that this Congress is allowed to convene on yet another day to come, may that be the day when we finally hear the cries of the innocent unborn. May that be the day we find the humanity, the courage, and the will to embrace together our human and our constitutional duty to protect the least of these, our tiny American brothers and sisters, from this murderous scourge upon our Nation called abortion on demand.

It is April 15, 2008—12,867 days since *Roe v. Wade* first stained the foundation of this nation with the blood of its own children—in the land of free and the home of the brave.

THE U.S.-COLOMBIA TRADE PROMOTION AGREEMENT

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

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise to express concern about an action taken by this House this past week, and let me begin by asking this House who is America’s best friend in Latin America?

Well, the answer is pretty loud and clear, and that is America’s best friend in Latin America is the democratic Republic of Colombia, a nation of 42 million people, the second largest Spanish-speaking nation in the world, a nation which is recognized throughout Latin America and, frankly, throughout the world as United States’ most reliable partner in counterterrorism, United States’ most reliable partner in counternarcotics. It’s the Republic of Colombia.

Well, this passed week the House of Representatives, the Democratic majority, which controls it, voted to turn its back, this Congress’s back, on our most reliable partner in Latin America, sending a terrible signal to all of Latin America that if you are a good friend of the United States, you’re not very important and you’re not a very big priority, and when we have an agreement, we’ll ignore it.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have a trade promotion agreement with Colombia and the United States. It’s a good agreement. Why is it a good agreement? Because it’s a win-win-win for Illinois workers, Illinois farmers, Illinois manufacturers. The majority of this House, an overwhelming bipartisan majority of this House, voted earlier this past year to pass trade preferences for the Andean region, for countries like Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru. And what the trade

preferences do is allow all the products that come in from Colombia that enter the United States duty free, no taxes, no tariffs. So agricultural products and manufactured goods made in Colombia and produced in Colombia enter the United States duty free. However, without the trade promotion agreement, products made in Illinois by Illinois workers or farm goods like corn and soybeans produced by Illinois farmers and, of course, manufacturers and workers all suffer taxes or tariffs on U.S.- and Illinois-made goods exported to Colombia.

We have often heard from constituents that say trade's important in Illinois and it just doesn't seem right when one country's products come into the United States duty free but we don't get reciprocity. And the U.S.-Colombia Trade Agreement gives us that reciprocity. In fact, farm organizations will tell you that the U.S.-Colombia Trade Agreement is the best ever negotiated to give U.S. farmers and growers and producers access to a foreign market. And when it comes to manufactured goods, 85 percent of the manufactured goods exported to Colombia would be duty free immediately.

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In my district, I have 8,000 constituents, union members, who work for a company which makes the yellow bulldozers and yellow construction equipment. Right now, those bulldozers made in America suffer a 15 percent tariff, which means the cost of that product is 15 percent more, making Illinois-manufactured construction equipment, like bulldozers and mining trucks, 15 percent more expensive but also less competitive with Asian competition.

We need this trade promotion agreement. And we need to have that brought to the floor for an up-or-down vote. Because I believe if it is brought to the floor for an up-or-down vote, the majority of this House would agree that we need to continue to expand our markets overseas for Illinois-manufactured goods and Illinois farm products as well as American farm products and American manufactured goods. It is a good agreement.

Now, there are those who say, "Colombia, yeah, they are our partner, and, of course, they are the oldest democracy in Latin America. But there has been violence in that country." Historically they are right. President Uribe, when he was elected, pledged to defeat the FARC, the left-wing narco-trafficking terrorist group which has troubled the nation of Colombia over the last 40 years. And he has made tremendous progress.

In fact, President Uribe today enjoys 80 percent approval. Eight out of 10 Colombians approve of the leadership of President Uribe. And if you look at this Congress, this House of Represent-

atives, this Congress has an 18 percent approval rating. So clearly, the Colombians think more of their president than the American people do this Congress. And at the same time that he has made progress defeating the left-wing narco-trafficking FARC, 73 percent of the Colombian people believe he has made Colombia more secure and safer while respecting human rights. In fact, today the murder rate in Colombia is lower than in Washington, D.C. It is lower than in Baltimore. In fact, it is safer in Colombia than it is in our Nation's Capital.

The U.S.-Colombia trade promotion agreement is a good agreement for American workers, American farmers and American manufacturers. Let's bring it to a vote.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA VOTING RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. NORTON. Madam 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.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, this is a special day for all Americans, none more so than the people I represent, the residents of the District of Columbia. And so I have come this evening to offer some remarks, remarks that I think are particularly justified today when the residents of the District of Columbia, like all other American citizens, are paying their Federal income taxes. The difference is they are doing so without any voting representation on the floor of the House or the Senate.

First, I begin with some gratitude to my colleagues, the so-called Blue Dogs, for whom this hour had been claimed, but who gave it to me this evening because of the subject matter of this special order. I very much appreciate their support. For those of you who don't know who the Blue Dogs are, they are the more conservative Members of the House. They supported the D.C. Voting Rights bill that indeed passed the House, one of the first.

We hadn't been here 6 months, I don't think we had been here more than 4 months before this bill to give the District of Columbia citizens, the citizens of the Nation's Capital, voting rights only in this chamber, the people's House. It was indeed passed by the House of Representatives, mind you, the only House that is affected. In a Nation known more for its

incrementalism than for rapid change to effect justice, we have accepted the notion that we must begin with the House, the people's House. After more than 200 years of meeting every obligation that has been met by every other citizen, we think it is not too much to ask that the residents of the Nation's Capital have the vote at least in the people's House. We are asking for no more than that.

Our thanks go especially to the Speaker of the House, NANCY PELOSI, who made it a priority to pass this bill and put her full energy behind it. She was willing to bring it to the floor. She made it clear that she, as the leader, the first woman to lead the House of Representatives, wanted to put her signature on this bill and asked four Members on both sides of the aisle to support it. Majority Leader STENY HOYER, a longtime supporter of this bill, as well, put all of his energy in it. Particularly when it was stopped first by a parliamentary maneuver, he worked tirelessly until he got this bill passed. He has been with us every step of the way. These two leaders have stood for full representation and equality for Americans in so many ways. No one should be surprised at the leadership they have given us on this bill.

I have to very especially mention Congressman TOM DAVIS who doggedly started us on what has been a truly bipartisan path. When I was in the minority and he indeed became the chief sponsor of the House-only bill, I discovered indeed a partner for us. The State of Utah barely missed getting a House vote in the last census. And they missed it for reasons I have to put into the RECORD. Utah sends many of its citizens who willingly agree to go away and become missionaries when they are young for a few years of their lives. They, of course, are missionaries for their Mormon church. And they are coming home to their families. Like others who come home, the State of Utah wanted them counted since they remained residents. They took the matter all the way to the Supreme Court. And because of the way the Census Bureau and the administrative process had ruled, the Court allowed the census to stand. And all of these missionaries exercising their freedom of religion, their freedom of speech, while being residents of their State, lost their State a seat.

To say the least, residents of Utah were not joyful about this. And they have joined us in what would seem to be the example par excellence of win-win in our country. A heavily Republican district and State, some would say the most Republican State in the union, a big city in the United States tends to be Democratic, this one is, joined together. It's a wash politically. Nobody gains and nobody loses. Why hasn't this bill passed?

Well, it has almost passed. And we will get into that in a minute. Just a