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Speakers

Speaker(s): Pete Olson

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speech of
HON. PETE OLSON
of texas
in the house of representatives
Friday, April 15, 2016

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight from across the political spectrum that sheds a light on the concerns of our younger constituents. Giving voice to their priorities will hopefully instill a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share them with my House colleagues.

Phillip Nguyen attends Dawson High School in Pearland, Texas. The essay topic is: The Ferguson Riots: An Important Event That Has Changed America.

The year of 2015 has been a time of immense societal changes in America. The riots in Ferguson, Missouri exemplify one of the many events that have sparked such changes in the United States. From impacting the way society views minority groups to representing the shift in which the citizens of America demonstrate their protests, the Ferguson riots were a horrific event to be remembered throughout our country that has changed the way our society functions.

Beginning with the sudden death of Michael Brown by a police officer, the riots over the dispute of police brutality have become a catalyst for the newfound "black lives matter" movement. This event has sparked an immense change in our country in that the citizens have become much more focused upon the treatment of minorities (especially African Americans) by police officers. In addition, a large amount of citizens of all races have been

advocating the idealistic values of non-violence after witnessing the incidents occurring during the riots (looting, fires, and destruction of property). The media has even become extremely centralized over the ongoing disputes between the black and white communities as well as police brutality. Furthermore, the event of the riots in Ferguson has incited a shift in the functionality of the police system, such as requiring on duty officers to have a working camera on their person. Not all changes were positive, however. The riots were indicative of the change in how Americans demonstrate their protests of today in comparison to the past. For example, the riots emerged from the protests pertaining to police brutality towards African Americans quickly turned violent (by the protestors), whereas in the past for American civil rights movements, the protests were centralized over the idealism of peace and non-violence and rarely have the protestors ever turned violent.

The Ferguson riots in Missouri were an event that shook the country as a whole and sparked a plethora of social changes in the American people. Moreover, it not only impacted the way in which people have viewed the African American community lately, but it has changed the way in which the police force functions.

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