

Mister Speaker, I rise in celebration of June as Pride Month. Participating and supporting the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community is a way of life.

At its core, this month stands to recognize a fundamental belief upon which this country is founded: equality.

The first pride parade took place in 1970 to commemorate the Stonewall Riots in New York. Forty years later, the event has become much more than a parade – it has evolved into a month-long celebration of the LGBT community.

What was once a moment is now a movement, bringing people together to fight for the rights and benefits granted to them by the Constitution, rights we should all fully support and fight for every day in Washington.

We've got a few victories under our belt – Hate Crimes legislation and the repeal of Don't Ask Don't Tell have passed these chambers – but there remains much to be done. I look forward to celebrating equality for all this weekend at the Chicago Pride Parade and festival, and I am as emboldened as ever, to continue this important work in Congress.

