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DEBATES and PROCEEDINGS

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May Day Significant for Workers' Rights

Mr. Forbes: Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is May Day, a very important day for workers and workers' rights everywhere. Also known as International Labour Day, May Day traces its roots back to the 19th century fight for an eight-hour workday, something many of us take for granted here in modern times.

It was on this day in 1886 that thousands of workers from all over North America came together to fight for a change in Chicago's Haymarket Square. For more than 100 years, workers have marked May Day as a time to remember the hard-fought gains that have been made to advance workers' rights and to improve workplace safety but, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's also a time to reflect on what we can all do to make our workplaces safer and what the idea of workers' rights mean in the modern era.

May Day has always been about promotion and protection of rights on the international scale, and when we look around the world, we know that there is so much more that needs to be done. Too many people continue to work in unacceptably unsafe conditions and millions work long hours for poverty wages and some earn no wages at all.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in recognizing May Day today and in committing to continue the fight for fairness, safety, and workers' rights around the world. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.