



"AGEISM" TO OLD OR YOUNG WRONG IN POLITICS & WORKFORCE, CLYBURN & CORTEZ PROVE, WRITE WEINER & NALIKKA IN CHARLESTON POST

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, February 14, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- "‘AGEISM’ against old or young is wrong in politics and the workforce. Jim Clyburn and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez’s actions make the case," write former White House Spokesman and House Aging Committee Chief of Staff Robert Weiner, and policy analyst Elaine Nalikka, in an op-ed in the Charleston (SC) Post and Courier and ranked H2 by OpEdNews (No. 2 op-ed in the country). "House Majority Whip Clyburn’s (78, D-S.C.) recent ‘smart wall’ comment served as a reminder that ageism in politics can be fought with poise and competence. "From 29-year old Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY), the House’s youngest, to Clyburn, Hoyer, and Pelosi, to Warren, Sanders, Biden, McConnell, and Trump himself, we should elect, re-elect, or defeat politicians because of what they bring to the table, not their age."

Weiner and Nalikka assert, "The popular misconception is that old politicians just can’t fix today’s problems. Last week (January 23), when House Majority Whip Jim Clyburn (D-S.C.) said the country needs an innovative, modern ‘smart wall’ alternative to President Trump’s ‘medieval’ solution to border security, he took the media by storm. By Friday Trump was touting the phrase ‘smart wall’, albeit with a different meaning. Instead of having a big wall with a harsh message about America, Clyburn’s ‘smart wall’ would use modern technology such as drones, scanners and fencing where needed to police the southern border, Clyburn said. The experienced House Majority Whip won’t let you define him by his age."

They continue, "Ageism is everywhere in politics. The notion of ‘too old’ flies in the face of accomplishments. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (78) and her top team of Clyburn and Steny Hoyer (79) led the midterm efforts that secured a 40-vote Democratic pickup. They then led the fray against Trump’s border wall shutdown. In the Senate, Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is 76, and Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer is 68. Three of the leading potential Democratic candidates for the 2020 presidential elections include former Vice President Joe Biden (76), Senator Elizabeth Warren (71), and Senator Bernie Sanders (77)."

They continue, "Ageism is just another form of prejudice in America, blocking experience. It’s a bias in politics. Congress has yet to fix the problem in the workplace for all Americans. Age-related layoffs rise and ADEA (Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967) suits are climbing. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) reports that between 1997 and 2007, there were 16,000 to 19,000 filings for age discrimination complaints. From 2008 through present, the numbers increased to 23,000 to 25,000 a year. With an average lifespan twenty years more than fifty years ago, people today are working longer than their grandparents." Weiner and Nalikka add, "Freshmen like Rep. Donna Shalala (D-Fla), former HHS Secretary and President of the University of Miami, brings decades of experience. One of the oldest freshmen in congressional history, she took office a month before her 78th birthday."

They continue, "AARP calls the late Rep. Claude Pepper (D-Fla) ‘the first politician to grasp the potential political power of older Americans, and to marshal that clout to protect their interests. ‘Ageism is as odious as racism or sexism,’ he said in 1976 before his first of two pieces of

legislation became law. 59-2 in the House and 89-10 Senate, Pepper's bills passed to eliminate age-based mandatory retirement and end discrimination in hiring and advancement. The lead witness was Colonel Sanders, who testified at 86 about launching his first Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant at 65"

They assert, "The legislative intent of the ADEA and its updates have been perverted by the Supreme Court. In a 2009 case, Justice Stevens dissented citing 'utter disregard of our precedent and Congress' intent.' Justice Ginsburg dissented in a 2013 case: 'The ball is...in Congress' court to correct the error, and to restore the robust protections."

Weiner and Nalikka contend, "Congress should realize seniors use their power. 71% of Americans over 65 voted in the 2016 presidential election."

They conclude, "Congressmen and women, and candidates for President, have the right to defeat stereotypes fueled by ageism by demonstrating poise, expertise and competence. Likewise, American workers should have the right to succeed on merit."

Link to article: https://www.postandcourier.com/opinion/commentary/ageism-is-always-wrong-in-politics-and-the-workforce/article_a9754d32-2e1b-11e9-b12a-1fd073a17309.html

Robert Weiner
Weiner Public News
+1 202-306-1200
[email us here](#)

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