

Civil Rights

Transcending Partisan Identities

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How the congressional pilgrimage to Selma brings Members together for a bipartisan experience.

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I think that it is always such a significant experience that it transcends the partisan identities. And in my experience, that's the most powerful way to break the partisan trap, if you will, or build a bridge, is you just talk with each other about bipartisanship, it only goes so far. But if you can provide an experience that takes people from both parties sort of out of where they are, then it creates a whole different atmosphere. We've never had as many Republicans with us as we would hope to, at least not yet, but we're getting more, have had more recently, and at times, we've had—and Senator Frist did that pilgrimage, and it's waxed and waned a little bit, depending on, to some degree, on how hard we worked it, and to other degrees, what the political factors were, and whether people were willing to—whether they knew enough to take the risk.