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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LAMALFA).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 26, 2025.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DOUG LAMALFA to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

PROTECTING AGRICULTURE, THE BACKBONE OF DELAWARE'S ECONOMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Delaware (Ms. McBRIDE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. McBRIDE. Mr. Speaker, last week, when the House was out of session and I was in the greatest State in the Union, Delaware, I met with a family farmer in Sussex County who continues to farm the same land that her family has farmed for more than a century. We discussed the fear and unpredictability that is plaguing farmers in

Delaware and across the country right now, farmers who, since the New Deal, have been able to rely on the Federal Government as partners in their effort to produce the food that feeds our families, our neighbors, our Nation, and the world.

Agriculture is the backbone of Delaware's economy. From poultry farms to vegetable growers to grain producers, Delaware farmers feed families here at home and around the globe and contribute to an industry that supports thousands of jobs in Delaware.

Unfortunately, since taking office, the Trump administration has broken their promises to our families and breached the trust with our farmers.

In week one, this administration illegally froze funding from the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act, including vital resources that run through the U.S. Department of Agriculture. They have frozen programs that purchase products from Delaware farmers.

As I stand here today, the Federal Government is withholding nearly \$10 million owed to Delaware farmers to improve their infrastructure and lower their energy bills.

At the heart of Delaware's agriculture industry are chickens. We have roughly 200 chickens per person in Delaware, and while Delaware doesn't have a ton of people, that is a lot of chickens.

The rising crisis of bird flu poses a massive risk to Delaware farmers. It is a real and present danger to our food supply and to the livelihoods of poultry farmers across my State and across the country.

Dangerously, this administration halted bird flu monitoring in nearly 50 countries and imposed a gag order on Federal health agencies, limiting vital communication and collaboration with farmers. If that weren't bad enough, the very people we rely on to protect

our ag industry and combat the spread of bird flu have been fired from the USDA.

This chaos is only worsening the risk of disease spread and threatening a hallmark industry in Delaware.

All of this has resulted in higher costs for farmers and higher prices at grocery stores for Americans. Instead of lowering the cost of eggs, they are actively making them more expensive.

Anyone who knows a thing or two about agriculture and farming knows this: Farmers operate on thin margins. They depend on Federal partners to provide stability in a volatile market.

Right now, with a Federal funding freeze, that support is vanishing when they need it the most. How are farmers supposed to plan for the next season when the Federal Government is pulling the rug out from under them?

I don't care who you voted for in the last election. In fact, I made a commitment to serve all Delawareans—Democrats, Independents, and Republicans. My job, and the job of this great Chamber, is to serve and respect every American. That includes the farmers who feed our Nation.

I will stand here in opposition to any executive or legislative action that puts our farmers at risk because when we fail farmers, we fail all Americans.

AMERICANS DESERVE FACTS, NOT FEAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NORMAN). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, let's be very clear about something. Last night, the House budget resolution passed, unfortunately on a very partisan, party-line vote, but indeed it did pass.

One thing it does not do is cut Medicaid. It is right here in this document. There is no mention of cutting Medicaid or even the words "Medicaid,"

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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“Medicare,” “SNAP,” or “Social Security” in this document that passed last night.

Any claim to the contrary is actually fear-mongering, plain and simple, or I guess in my neighborhood it would be known as a lie that is being perpetuated to put fear in people and to drive anger at the majority party and have unruly townhalls because people are being fed lies.

It needs to come to a stop. We need to have an honest debate, an honest conversation, around here about how we are going to get our government back on a track that doesn't lead us to endless, massive deficits in our budget each year. We are still on track for \$2 trillion, upside down, following COVID spending.

COVID is over with. We need to get back to at least pre-COVID levels of spending with an opportunity to actually balance our budget, where it might be only \$700 billion, \$800 billion, or \$900 billion upside down.

The only way we are going to take a bite out of the national debt is to actually bring the lines together and have our budget balanced. We can do that with limited spending and a strong economy. My understanding from years ago is that if the growth of spending was only 1 percent, these two lines would meet.

We need to have a little bit of discipline around here. That is what was being sought in the budget resolution.

This budget resolution is not the final say. It actually is a roadmap for moving forward on the fiscal year '25 budget. It does not make final spending decisions. Those are still to be debated and heard in committee on TV in front of the people on C-SPAN and in the committee process that folks can attend.

It includes instructions for committees to review and adjust spending and revenue priorities, but it does not dictate specific program cuts, unlike the lies that are being spread all over in this Chamber, in committees, and in the media.

Reconciliation is indeed a standard budget process that will be taken up. The resolution instructs 11 committees to find ways to either reduce wasteful spending or invest in key priorities.

These committees have until March 27 to develop their proposals, so nothing is set in stone yet. No lies are needed. This is how budgeting has always worked. Democrats know that. Republicans know it. Unfortunately, on the other side of the aisle, they would rather scare people than be honest about this process, and indeed, honesty is very much needed in order to get a harness back on the profligate spending that has happened in this place over the last few years.

We need to have honest conversations about these programs. My good colleague, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT), speaks about this frequently. Social Security will be on the rocks by 2031, 2032, 2033, when that

trust fund actually goes empty. Are we going to do something about it, or are we going to have lies and distortions about what is actually happening with that? Do we want to fix it as much as we can ahead of time while we still have some runway to do so, or do we want to just have lies about this and not try to do anything about it?

I think we were instructed by the voters to do something about it and try to have these programs be salvaged so they aren't on the rocks in just 5, 6, or 7 years.

We need to have the allocations of taxpayer dollars that come from the hardworking taxpayers. Frequently these are called “contributions.” These are not contributions. They are compelled. Otherwise, people come take your stuff, and maybe you go to jail.

These tax dollars need to be respected as the work of the people. When we make these allocations, whether it is for national defense, border security, or tax relief for hardworking Americans, let's be honest about it and get it done.

This legislation is indeed focused on that and is an ongoing effort with budget reconciliation and the work of DOGE. We are hearing all this bad stuff about DOGE. It has had a few fits and starts, but doggone it, it is getting to the bottom of a lot of wasteful spending.

Each time they flip over the rocks, more cockroaches run out, and we find more things with bad contracts or spending that is not even a priority that any normal American can even think up.

In my home State of California, they are still seeking more money for that high-speed rail system that started out in 2008 for a price of \$33 billion. The price has quadrupled now to \$130 billion. Is that a bargain for Americans? Is that a bargain for Californians?

They have already tapped all the money they can at the local level, \$9 billion of State money and about \$3.5 billion of that ARRA money. Remember that shovel-ready so-called stimulus money back in 2009? They already tapped that.

They have what is called the cap-and-trade tax in California, which raises about a billion dollars per year. It is like a new currency now. It taps into the producers of carbon dioxide in the State and makes them pay a ransom to continue to produce whatever manufacturing they do.

This budget resolution is a good start, but it is not the final document. We will be working on that in the light of day in front of the people.

RECOGNIZING RESILIENCE, RESISTANCE, AND RELENTLESS STRUGGLE, LESSONS OF BLACK HISTORY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. BROWN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. BROWN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Black History Month.

Black History Month means a lot to me, and it means a lot to my constituents in northeast Ohio.

Just in the last few days, we have been reminded of how the past and present are connected. Last week, in Cleveland, we celebrated the 90th birthday of the Reverend Dr. Otis Moss, Jr., and his wife, Edwina Moss, two local civil rights icons who have fought for justice, fairness, and opportunity for Black people in Cleveland for decades.

Sunday was also the 100th birthday of Congressman Louis Stokes, the first Black American to represent Ohio in Congress. Congressman Stokes was a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus and represented northeast Ohio for 30 years. He also established a legacy of leadership that carried on to Stephanie Tubbs Jones and Marcia Fudge. They are three strong Black leaders who represented the district I now represent.

Black History Month isn't just about trailblazers, icons, and famous names. It is also about Black culture, community, and excellence, and the history and experience that binds us all. It is often a time of joy and celebration.

Black History Month feels a little different this year. President Trump and his MAGA allies have frozen funding for programs that address inequality and support equal opportunity, rolled back decades of civil rights and discrimination protections, and tried to erase Black history in our schools. He jumps at every opportunity he gets to attack Black America, using DEI as a racist dog whistle and pushing false and offensive ideas that Black Americans haven't earned or deserved their success.

Let's call this what it is: Trump's re-segregation agenda.

□ 1015

We know what happens when prejudice prevails. Opportunity is obstructed, and red lines are drawn with Federal funds. We have seen this story before.

Yet despite the dark clouds gathering above 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Black Americans have long battled bigotry, broken barriers, and built a brighter future despite the odds.

The fight is familiar. Black history teaches us the power of resilience, resistance, and relentless struggle. That is what I owe my constituents, and that is what we owe each other.

ELON MUSK MUST JUSTIFY HIS JOB

Ms. BROWN. Mr. Speaker, this weekend, unelected, unaccountable, unvetted, and unconfirmed billionaire, Elon Musk, demanded every Federal worker justify their job. He demanded five reasons they deserve to keep it.

Let's turn that around. Here are five things the world's richest man did just last week:

One, DOGE deleted the five biggest spending cuts it bragged about just last week, because nearly one-half of those savings don't exist. The receipts didn't add up.