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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HARRIS).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 23, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ANDY HARRIS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 17, 2012, 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 each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

GUN CONTROL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Imagine the headline, "Outbreak of Serious Illness Strikes; 12 People Killed, 58 Hospitalized," just like similar outbreaks, but the Federal Government prohibits the Centers for Disease Control from investigating.

Or another headline, "70 Trapped in a Collapsed Building, 20 Dead or Critically Injured," and your government makes it illegal for government organi-

zations to collect data to study what could be done to solve it, to minimize this carnage in the future.

People would be justifiably outraged. They expect government to protect them and to help understand the nature of threats in the workplace, the marketplace, or in our homes. At some level, we want to know about why cars malfunction or if there are patterns of disease, illness, injury, or mechanical failure.

That is what our government is supposed to do. If food safety, mine safety, or TSA fails, there would be calls for accountability. Sadly, that's not what is happening as the Nation recoils in anguish at another outbreak of gun violence. The 70 killed or wounded are the latest in a pattern that happens repeatedly, predictably, with overall loss of life being in the tens of thousands over the years.

What is as appalling as the loss of life is the fact that we not only refuse to do anything about it, but we allow political bullies to intimidate us from even researching the facts.

Now, there's never been a threat in this country that sportsmen will not be able to hunt or target shoot, that false specter raised by the gun lobby so successfully that today there's virtually no gun protection. But that doesn't stop the number one gun advocacy group, the National Rifle Association, from making things up, creating phony threats to gun ownership.

They're attacking the Obama administration, which has done, essentially, nothing in this field since they know that Congress would reject even the most reasonable of proposals. It has been impossible, for example, to even close the gun show loophole, where people can get unlimited amounts of guns without a background check.

The NRA is at work to make sure that people on the "no fly list" because they are threats to national security can purchase guns, that data cannot be

shared between ATF and Homeland Security dealing with potential terrorists.

The NRA argues that all we need is for existing gun laws to be enforced, while they systematically set about to dismantle what laws we have and then defund even feeble government enforcement efforts.

Anyone who looks at the background of the recent so-called Fast and Furious controversy finds that, in part, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms is dysfunctional because it's constantly under assault by the NRA for its most modest steps and most minimal budgets. We cannot even study gun violence, patterns, causes, and potential solutions.

While I didn't know anybody in Aurora, this most recent tragic, senseless rampage touches home for me. As I was growing up, a young man in a family that I was close to was killed by an act of random gun violence.

As I've followed the issues over the years, I continue to feel that there's no reason to permit armor-piercing, cop-killer bullets to be sold like Tic Tacs; that automatic weapons should be available over the counter with hundred-bullet magazines like the killer in Colorado had that facilitate such sprees. These things have no useful purpose in sports activities or target shooting.

I find it appalling that we, as citizens, have enabled Congress to act in a spineless fashion, to be taken over in the area of gun safety by the NRA; that we refuse to deal with something that has serious law enforcement implications so that we, alone, in the developed world are most at risk for random gun violence. Any time there's a mass killing spree, I hope against hope for a more enlightened reaction.

Perhaps the gun owners themselves, the majority of whom disagree with the NRA's extreme positions, will join with politicians, business, the health

□ 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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community to come together to deal with an epidemic of gun violence in the way we would treat any other threat to the safety of our families and our communities. We would study, we would work on solutions together, and we would act.

Sadly, we're still waiting.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HARRIS) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

Reverend Andrew Walton, Capitol Hill Presbyterian Church, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

Creating God, we come together today in a simple prayer. May we be who we are created to be, reflections of Your image. May we live as we know we should, as caretakers of creation. May we participate in the purpose of life, as companions to God and to one another. May we truly embrace the equality of humanity as "self-evident" and know that just beneath the surface of disagreement, conflict, discord, and even violence and death, there is a deep river of grace, love, and forgiveness that truly binds us. May this stream of eternal presence be solace for any pain in our lives; but, more importantly, inspiration and hope of reconciliation and peace in personal relationships, in our Nation, and throughout the world.

May the deliberations and decisions of this day and all days take place in the spirit of common good, the spirit in which we are created.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SARBANES led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT—FISCAL CALAMITY IN WAITING

(Mr. BURGESS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, almost a month after the Supreme Court has issued its decision on the so-called Affordable Care Act, we have all had time to think and dissect their opinion and start to predict how this landmark ruling will affect each and every one of us.

I respect the role of the Court and the decision of the Justices, but I can't help but tell you I was disappointed the entire law was upheld. I do believe the Affordable Care Act is detrimental to our Nation. Certainly it has been a wet blanket on our economy, and it is a real threat to the future of medicine in America. Since the passing of the law over 2 years ago, we have seen the strain it has placed on our economy. The pricetag continues to increase, sometimes staggeringly so. There are provisions which discourage small businesses from hiring, not to mention the commensurate government regulations.

Today, the Congressional Health Care Caucus held a panel discussion on what was one of its many panel discussions on the current state of health care. Karen Ignagni, president and chief executive officer of America's Health Insurance Plans, has said that the health care law won't work unless it is changed or delayed. I couldn't agree more. Dan Danner from the National Federation of Independent Businesses was also present, and he said there has got to be a way to get price signals to people so they can participate in the cost of their care.

The structure of this law, through the combination of new fees coupled with weak penalties for those who choose to not purchase will force the young and healthy to shoulder the majority of the financial burden of expansion. Mr. Speaker, we must do away with this thing.

TURKISH OCCUPATION OF CYPRUS IS OFFENSE TO HUMAN DIGNITY

(Mr. SARBANES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the 38th year of Turkey's invasion and occupation of the Republic of Cyprus. I do so only days after Cyprus assumed the 6-month presidency of the European Union, yet Turkey, an EU candidate country, refuses to recognize the Cypriot presidency and has acted to freeze its communications with the European Union.

Since 1974, Turkey has engaged in the systematic destruction of the island's Hellenic, Christian, and Turkish Cypriot heritage. This year, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom placed Turkey on its watch list "as a country of particular concern."

The presence of 45,000 Turkish troops on the island, along with over 200,000 Turkish colonialists, is an offense to human dignity.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for Turkey to meet the expectations of the international community by ending its decades-long occupation of Cyprus.

NATION JOINS COLORADO IN MOURNING VICTIMS OF SENSELESS VIOLENCE

(Mr. POLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, my home State of Colorado had a tragedy over the weekend, a mass murder that will forever remain on the minds of all Coloradans and all Americans. The tragedy extends beyond those who were killed and those who were injured to our friends, our neighbors, everybody impacted by this senseless act of terror in my home State. I would like to thank President Obama for joining the families impacted in mourning. I would like to thank all of those in Colorado and across the country who have sent their thoughts, their care, their resources to all of us in Colorado in a time of need.

This also should serve as an occasion for all of us to acknowledge what is special and important in our lives, to celebrate every day we have on this planet, the health of our family, our own health and safety, and hope and pray to God that the tragedy that impacted Colorado will not happen again in Colorado or anywhere else.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 20, 2012.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on July 20, 2012, at 4:07 p.m., and said to contain a message from the President whereby he notifies the Congress concerning the national emergency with respect to Somalia.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House.

NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO SOMALIA—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 112-126)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message