

Yosemite National Park at all. The Merced River within Yosemite National Park is protected and regulated by the National Park Service and has never needed an overlay of inconsistent and confusing regulation. The Merced River in Yosemite Valley has been recreational for almost 150 years. Yosemite Valley has never been wilderness. Any plan which proceeds should not change any infrastructure or ban any activities traditionally carried on in Yosemite Valley.

Indeed, when Mr. Coelho authored the legislation designating the Merced as “wild and scenic,” these tourist facilities already existed, and nowhere in the bill’s findings is there any mention of an intention to force their closure or to override Park policies. In fact, many of the facilities slated for removal are not even on the Merced River and do not in any way impede or affect its flow.

The officials of the National Park Service are clearly not required to take these actions. It’s becoming increasingly apparent that they want to take them and that they intend to take them despite widespread public opposition from all but the most radical elements of the environmental left. Indeed, when 13 members of the California congressional delegation, including liberal Democrats and conservative Republicans alike, asked for an extension of the public comment period, the Park Service grudgingly extended it by only 12 days.

It is obvious that Park officials have already made up their minds and are merely walking through the formalities. I believe that this matter and related issues of public access cry out for a congressional investigation.

In the meantime, if members of the public want to protest the elimination of many of Yosemite Valley’s tourist amenities and iconic landmarks, their time is running out. My Web site, at mcclintock.house.gov, provides guidance on how people can protest this action, and I strongly urge them to do so.

THE MAJORITY’S DEFLATING AGENDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, the 113th Congress has been in session for over 100 days; and so far, the majority has attacked worker protections, slashed important job-training programs, and has created one manufactured fiscal cliff after another.

This is the last week before yet another recess, but there is still no proposal to help Americans get back to work. Instead, we have another attack on the Affordable Care Act. Plus, we have on the floor today the Responsible Helium Administration and Stewardship Act. I, in fact, had a balloon, Mr. Speaker, that I would have liked to have had on my wrist as I gave this speech this morning, but I was told it would not be appropriate—and maybe not.

But helium? Helium? Really?

I hate to burst the majority’s bubble, but Democrats and Republicans actually agree on this bill. There was no need to take up a full day of our time to debate the bill. We could have considered it under the expedited procedures and saved time for proposals that created jobs instead of balloons. With leadership like this, it’s no wonder the American people are feeling discouraged and deflated.

Helium? Helium.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o’clock and 40 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Archbishop Oshagan Cholyan, Armenian Apostolic Church of America, New York, New York, offered the following prayer:

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Almighty God, we seek Your holy guidance in all our endeavors, especially in the deliberations of our leaders in this noble body, because strong and wise leadership is essential for the well-being of nations.

Today, we are mindful of another April 24—98 years ago, the beginning of the genocide of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, the first genocide among so many that followed in the 20th century.

We beseech You, O Lord, to bless this land of America and its people. Empower them to continue serving Your goodness as they did when they sheltered the remnants of the Armenian nation.

Give Your children wisdom, love, and compassion that they may live and prosper with the gifts of Your Spirit—justice, truth, freedom, and righteousness. Your name will be praised forever and ever.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. VALADAO 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.

WELCOMING ARCHBISHOP OSHAGAN CHOLYAN

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, as the Representative for Rhode Island’s First Congressional District, which is home to many Armenian American families, I am honored to rise today in order to thank His Eminence, Archbishop Oshagan Cholyan, for offering our opening prayer and for recognizing the 98th anniversary of the start of the Armenian genocide.

A native of Aleppo, Syria, Archbishop Cholyan was first ordained into the priesthood in 1967. He attended the American University of Beirut where he majored in history and later received two master’s degrees from the Princeton Theological Seminary. Since 1998, Archbishop Cholyan has served as the prelate of the Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America and has focused his efforts on strengthening local faith communities under his jurisdiction.

On behalf of the Armenian community in my home State of Rhode Island, I am honored to welcome the archbishop here today and to join him in remembering the victims of the Armenian genocide—the systematic extermination of Armenians living under the Ottoman Empire in the early 20th century.

I join members of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues in urging that our government finally recognize the Armenian genocide as a historical fact.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). The Chair will entertain 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

THE CANCER DRUG COVERAGE PARITY ACT

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, America’s biomedical research industry is

the envy of the world, but the health insurance model is not keeping pace with the science. For cancer patients, this means that smart drugs purchased at a pharmacy and self-administered orally are dramatically more expensive than traditional chemotherapy administered at a hospital or at a clinic.

This makes no sense. That is why I have joined with a broad coalition of the cancer community to reintroduce the Cancer Drug Coverage Parity Act. This bill would require health insurance coverage for smart drugs and injectable treatments at the same rate. Ensuring that parity coverage exists would both increase access to life-saving treatments and improve the quality of life for cancer patients.

Mr. Speaker, a cancer patient should never be denied the most effective cancer treatment because of cost. We must make sure that coverage for cancer treatments keeps pace with the promising new therapies as they become available.

THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION'S FAILURE TO STOP TERRORISM IN THE UNITED STATES

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

Mr. COTTON. I rise today to express grave doubts about the Obama administration's counterterrorism policies and programs. Counterterrorism is often shrouded in secrecy—as it should be. So let us judge by the results.

In barely 4 years in office, five jihadists have reached their targets in the United States under Barack Obama: the Boston Marathon Bomber, the Underwear Bomber, the Times Square Bomber, the Fort Hood shooter, and, in my own State, the Little Rock recruiting office shooter.

In over 7 years after 9/11, under George W. Bush, how many terrorists reached their targets in the United States? Zero.

We need to ask: Why is the Obama administration failing in its mission to stop terrorism before it reaches its targets in the United States?

CURBING GUN VIOLENCE IN AMERICA

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

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, it was President John F. Kennedy who famously said, "Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger men."

Last week, some members of the United States Senate took the easy way out when they voted down the most basic measures to curb gun violence in America.

Today, I ask my friends and colleagues in this body, Democrats and Republicans alike, to pray for the courage to stand with the American people

and to refuse to accept the profound failure of the United States Senate. For the parents of those children lost in Newtown and for the families of the nearly 86 Americans who die of gunshot wounds every day, there are no easy days.

Doing what's right, like stopping criminals from buying weapons online and cracking down on illegal gun trafficking, will not cost anyone a vote at the ballot box, for the American people know that these measures don't threaten the Second Amendment; they only protect the rights of all Americans to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Mr. Speaker, too many lives have been lost, and too many lives are on the line not to get something done.

98TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the 98th anniversary of the initiation of the Armenian genocide in order to commemorate a moment in history inflicting wounds still fresh for many constituents in my congressional district.

From 1915 to 1923, the Ottoman Empire engaged in the systematic and organized deportation and extermination of over 2 million Armenians from their homeland. Although exact records were not kept, it is estimated that nearly 1.5 million Armenian men, women, and children were killed and that many were permanently displaced or forced to flee. These horrific events have become known today as the Armenian genocide.

Many of those able to flee emigrated to the United States and settled in California. Today, their families continue to grow, thrive, and pass along their cultural heritage into their adopted communities. However, the sense of loss as a result of these horrific acts runs deep as many Armenian Americans personally know a friend or a family member who was unable to escape the genocide.

Despite the horrors of this time and broad international consensus that these events are rightly identified as "genocide," the foreign policy of the United States refuses to acknowledge what so many already know to be true. Today, let us recognize and remember the 2 million Armenians whose lives were lost or forever changed by these tragic events.

□ 1210

IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of comprehensive immigration reform, and I especially want to thank

the faith communities. In particular, I want to thank the evangelical churches that were here last week.

There were over 300 either pastors or members of their church here, and I would like to read some of the things they had to say from the Christian Post. Over 300 evangelicals representing 25 States gathered in the Nation's Capitol Wednesday for worship, prayer, and meeting with Members of Congress in an effort to bring about comprehensive immigration reform.

"We're here to say that immigration reform has strong evangelical support," said the Reverend Gabriel Salguero.

There were a number of very important pastors here along with Dr. Richard Land, pastor and also a member of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Pastor Kenton Beshore writes this, describing how ministries and the church have worked with children in his community who are living without a parent due to immigration laws that have broken apart their families: "This has to change."

The pastor is correct—this has to change.

I want to thank all the faith communities. They are united to make sure that we have a comprehensive immigration reform that reflects our values, and I'd like to thank them.

ENSURING THE SAFETY OF THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVE US

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

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, the House just recently released a five-separate committee report requested by the Speaker of the House on the aftermath of Benghazi. It tells the American people a story that needs to be told and has not yet been completed. The story is that we did not protect our people in Benghazi.

The Embassy asked for more security. Secretary Clinton cabled back, "No," in April of 2012. On the very day, September 11, that the Ambassador was killed along with three of his colleagues, he said:

It is not a question of if, but when this attack will come.

Today, Congress has not yet seen a plan that ensures this will never happen again. The safety of our men and women all over the world in the State Department and other agencies needs to be assured.

Mr. Speaker, the House needs to address this in a way that we can have confidence that people who serve us abroad will be properly protected.

STUDENT LOAN RELIEF ACT

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