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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Compassionate and merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

As this House comes together at the end of a busy week, bless the work of its Members. May their legislative actions bring about positive results which redound to the benefit of all citizens of our Nation.

As the Members return to their home districts, fill their hearts with charity, their minds with energy, their wills with courage to listen well and reflect back, with the expertise and knowledge they possess, greater insight for American voters.

The work that they have is difficult work. May they rise together to accomplish what is best for our great Nation, and indeed for all the world.

May all that is done in the days to come be for Your greater honor and glory.

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.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum

is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 5 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

MY POSSIBILITIES

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I proudly recognize the fifth anniversary and expansion of My Possibilities, a nonprofit organization serving disabled young adults in north Texas.

My Possibilities began with the vision of three dedicated mothers of special needs children. These mothers dreamed of something more for their kids beyond a high school education. After 2 years of hard work, they created the first full-day, full-year continuing education program for disabled Texans. In fact, last week, they commemorated the grand opening of a new facility in Plano so even more Texans could become lifelong learners.

My Possibilities stands as a testament to the American spirit of freedom and free enterprise. Three moms took an idea to fill a need in our community and made it a reality. That's truly remarkable. The folks at My Possibilities live up to their motto: "Make every moment count."

To the staff, board of directors, and Chairman Charmaine Solomon, thank you for your tireless efforts and your dedication.

STOP GUN VIOLENCE

(Ms. KELLY of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, as I have before, on behalf of the many families victimized daily by the persistent gun violence in their communities.

As a Nation, we shudder at tragedies like the Newtown shootings. The news coverage of Newtown left a mark on our collective conscience. Yet sadly, every day, equally devastating acts of gun violence occur in urban America, often without the same media coverage.

Since Newtown, over 6,000 Americans have lost their lives to gun violence. Still, Congress has yet to act on commonsense gun reforms that would save lives. Every life lost, regardless of ZIP code, is a tragedy. It's easy to get angry and frustrated over the relentless drumbeat of death in urban America, but instead we need to turn our anger and frustration into action.

In my 3 months in Congress, I've introduced three commonsense gun bills that will help make our communities safer. Though Federal legislation alone cannot solve the gun violence epidemic, it is a strong start and a step in the right direction.

So I urge my colleagues to cosponsor these bills and take a stand with me against gun violence.

□ 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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ATTORNEY GENERAL HOLDER ACCOUNTABILITY

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

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to shed light on Attorney General Eric Holder's less than glamorous tenure as Attorney General.

As the chief law enforcement officer of our Nation, Mr. Holder is expected to govern by the principle of seeking justice. As a sworn Federal official, he has one primary job: to enforce the laws of the United States fairly and impartially. It is for that reason that Lady Justice wears a blindfold. The blindfold represents objectivity and that justice should be dealt out without fear, favor, or impartiality.

How come Mr. Holder dispenses his version of justice impartially? How come the Attorney General overlooked injustices and with disregard for the rule of law?

As Supreme Court Justice Brandeis said:

In a government of laws, the existence of the government will be imperiled if it fails to observe the law scrupulously. If government becomes a lawbreaker, it breeds contempt for law: it invites every man to become a law unto himself. It invites anarchy.

I ask you then, has the Attorney General invited anarchy?

I will continue to make my case here in the people's House at the people's pulpit. Folks, I will be back.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

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

Mr. McNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the 30th anniversary of National Night Out. "America's Night Out Against Crime" began those 30 years ago to encourage community-based crime prevention.

I've participated in many National Night Out events throughout my district over the years, meeting people who are committed to reducing crime in their neighborhoods and promoting community spirit by building relationships with their local civic leaders and law enforcement officials.

This year, I look forward to celebrating National Night Out in Stockton, California, a city in my district. National Night Out has made a difference in my district by bringing people together and making them more aware of how to keep their neighborhoods safe.

National Night Out has grown to over 37 million Americans participating in 15,000 communities across North America. National Night Out illustrates how partnerships between community members and local law enforcement can prevent crime. I encourage my colleagues to participate in National Night Out events in their own districts.

PIONEER DAY

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

Mr. STEWART. Mr. Speaker, like you, as a fellow Utahn, this week my heart is back in my district and my State as we celebrate our great pioneer heritage.

On July 24, 1847, Brigham Young stood over the great Salt Lake Valley, which was nothing but a desert, devoid of any green meadows, and uttered those famous words, "This is the place."

After traveling more than 1,300 miles crossing the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains, the pioneers settled to begin a new life. Throughout this, they suffered great hardships: hunger, fatigue, cold, disease, and exhaustion. During their journeys, they quickly called Utah home as they reached this great valley, where they planted their crops and went to work building beautiful communities that grew into the wonderful city and State that we now know.

Our State has much to be proud of. We have the greatest snow on Earth. Our National Parks are truly magnificent. Our State is consistently rated among the top in job creation, education, and quality of life. Utah truly has some of the most honest, hard-working, and friendly people in the country.

Pioneer Day is celebrated to honor everyone who immigrated west to Utah during this pioneer era and who aided in creating this great State, which I'm proud to call my home.

KEEP COLLEGE AFFORDABLE

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

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, just last week, I had the privilege of speaking to students who attend Florida International University in my district. These students included Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. But their message was clear: it is time for Congress to help keep college affordable.

That is why I have supported efforts to prevent and reverse the doubling of the Federal student loan rates that took effect on July 1. This issue is too important for us to delay any further.

I was very encouraged that the Senate yesterday passed a strong bipartisan compromise bill to lower these rates. I urge the House leadership, Mr. Speaker, to bring this bill to the floor and keep college rates affordable for our Nation's students.

RELEASE SAEED ABEDINI

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

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to cochair the

International Religious Freedom Caucus here in the Congress. In that capacity, it's also my privilege to participate in the Defending Freedoms Project, a bipartisan effort for Members of Congress to adopt a prisoner of conscience.

My office has adopted Saeed Abedini, a Christian pastor and an American citizen from Idaho who is currently imprisoned in Iran for his faith. Iran's tyrannical attempts to, in the words of Ronald Reagan, "stifle the freedom and muzzle the self-expression of the people" were again exposed to the world after the imprisonment of Pastor Abedini, who was sentenced to 8 years in prison while working to build an orphanage in Iran.

Mr. Speaker, Martin Luther King said:

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

Pastor Abedini's case is a demonstration to the world of the far-reaching implications of even a single instance of human rights abuse.

I would call again upon Iran to immediately release Pastor Abedini so he can return to Idaho to be with his family.

PRISON RAPE ELIMINATION ACT

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago today, this body unanimously passed PREA, the Prison Rape Elimination Act, which my colleague from Virginia, FRANK WOLF, and I sponsored.

PREA is designed to end sexual violence in our Nation's prisons. One focus of PREA is on reducing assaults on children in our criminal justice system. Youthful inmates are more likely than their adult counterparts to be victimized by prison staff and adult inmates. Under PREA, no youth under 18 years of age can be placed in a housing unit where contact with adult inmates may occur.

Furthermore, children in adult jails and prison are often placed in solitary confinement for their own protection, which turns out to be detrimental to their mental health. Due to this type of confinement and exposure to abuse, youth have the highest rates of suicide amongst all inmates. PREA urges agencies to avoid subjecting children to solitary confinement.

Mr. Speaker, I call on the Department of Justice to redouble its efforts to ensure that every State implements PREA to protect all inmates from sexual violence. The type of sexual violence that has plagued our prisons and jails is cruel and unusual punishment and should not be part of an inmate's prison term.