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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 16, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable Tom EMMER 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 6, 2015, 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, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the sobering but extremely consequential topic of Christian persecution.

Last week, I had the honor of visiting with more than 100 parishioners of St. Alphonsus Liguori Catholic Church in Zionsville, Indiana, including many interested high school students who shared with me their passionate concerns about the senseless persecution of their Christian brethren.

Through the church's Social Action Committee, they wanted to know how a small, faithful community could make a difference in bringing attention to this commonly overlooked matter. However, they wondered if their cries for mercy were falling on deaf ears in Washington. They felt helpless in bringing to light the barbarity, torture, and living conditions that Christians in places like Iran endure.

The parishioners at St. Alphonsus felt that too often horrendous massacres are met with isolationism and arguments that it is not America's job to promote human rights beyond our shores.

Today I want to let the people of St. Alphonsus and all those who seek to give a voice to the silenced victims of religious persecution know I hear you, and others in Washington, D.C., do as well.

I believe that America must reassume its leadership role in protecting those most destitute and downtrodden, that American leadership in the world should advance not only our national interests but also the interests of those who yearn for freedom across the globe, that Christians who have to shield their faith for fear of crucifixion or beheading have an ally in America, an ally who will fight for the dignity of all mankind.

Incidents of persecution of Christians more than doubled in 2014 alone. I wish I could say I was surprised by this increase, but I am not. I think this is part of the larger trend around the globe.

The world we live in is remarkably unstable right now. People lack security. Too many regions of our world are fending off the rise of groups that espouse extremely radical ideologies, groups that hate this Nation, groups that often hate all other religions, groups that feed off of destruction and poverty, groups that value violence over peace, groups that are clearly not

a true or worthy representation of the religions they claim as their own.

The parishioners at St. Alphonsus Church asked me: What can we do?

I told them America first needs a smart and decisive plan because the threat Christians face is significant, and it is not going away.

The United States must work with free nations across the globe to reaffirm a simple but important message: human rights are not negotiable. Countries don't get to pick and choose which rights they allow and which ones they deny. We also need to work more locally to raise awareness of the specific issue of Christian persecution. There must be a strong grassroots element to this effort.

Each month, approximately 180 Christians are killed across the globe because of their faith. That is a startling number. In America, a country where it is so easy to take our freedoms for granted, it is easy not to notice the pain and suffering of others, but we must. And I know we are a truly generous and kind people.

When Japanese communities were torn apart by a massive tsunami in 2009, Americans mobilized to donate more than \$700 million in charitable relief.

Americans always answer the call when people are suffering. Well, today there is clearly a tsunami of hatred sweeping parts of the world, and there are people who need our help. So churches and other groups with a concern for their fellow Christians and all global citizens need to take a stand.

Like those at St. Alphonsus have, Christians and people of all faiths across this Nation need to reach out to their elected officials and let them know of the tragic persecution of Christians and that it deserves attention, that religious freedom is a value we must defend and promote. Only then will everyone in this body know what was foretold in Matthew, that

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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blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. Let us now work to bring that kingdom of Heaven closer to Earth.

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. DENHAM) at 2 p.m.

PRAAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Gracious God, we give You thanks for giving us another day. In this Chamber where the people's House gathers, we pause to offer You gratitude for the gift of this good land on which we live and for this great Nation which You have inspired in developing over so many years. Continue to inspire the American people that, through the difficulties of these days, we might keep liberty and justice alive in our Nation and in the world.

A week after many Members of this assembly traveled to Selma to remember historic and heroic actions 50 years ago, may the House be energized to guarantee the very rights so many suffered to obtain back then and which still elude so many of their American descendants today.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

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 Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KILDEE 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.

ANOTHER OBAMACARE DEBACLE

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, last month, the Obama administration admitted that it sent inaccurate tax forms to 820,000 Americans who receive health insurance through ObamaCare. Individuals who received subsidies must fill out the 1095-A form to document what they have received for the past year.

The government is advising people not to file their tax returns until they have the correct forms, but just last week Kevin Counihan, the man responsible and accountable for leading healthcare.gov, declined to say when ObamaCare participants will get the correct tax forms and if all of the new forms have been created.

Since its implementation, the President's health care law has proved to be a hindrance, not a help, to the health care market. This debacle is yet another example of why we must continue to work towards repealing this ill-conceived law and replacing it with policies that empower patients and promote access to affordable health care options.

JOBS

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

Mr. KILDEE. Well, Mr. Speaker, I just got back from spending a week at home in Michigan talking with the people that I work for and meeting with small business owners. I heard a lot of frustration—frustration about the priorities of the Republican leadership in the House and of Congress in general.

Instead of legislation to create jobs here in America to make it easier for hardworking families to buy their own home, to afford to send their kids to school, and to save for retirement, this Congress has bounced from one manufactured political crisis to the next and has not taken on the big challenges that the people sent us here to take on.

Let's put away this dysfunction and this paralysis. Let's get back to the work of the American people.

As we now are set to consider our Nation's budget, let's make sure that the priorities of the American people—good paying jobs, affordable college, homeownership, and the ability to save for a decent retirement—that those priorities are the priorities that we include in this important budget document. This is what the American people expect of us, and this is what we should take on.

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, March 16, 2015.

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, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 16, 2015 at 10:38 a.m.:

That the Senate agreed to S. Con. Res. 7.
With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

ROBERT F. REEVES,
Deputy Clerk.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1530

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee) at 3 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

IMPROVING REGULATORY TRANSPARENCY FOR NEW MEDICAL THERAPIES ACT

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 639) to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to drug scheduling recommendations by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and with respect to registration of manufacturers and distributors seeking to conduct clinical testing, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 639

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Improving Regulatory Transparency for New Medical Therapies Act".

SEC. 2. SCHEDULING OF SUBSTANCES INCLUDED IN NEW FDA-APPROVED DRUGS.

(a) EFFECTIVE DATE OF APPROVAL.—

(1) EFFECTIVE DATE OF DRUG APPROVAL.—Section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355) is amended by adding at the end the following: