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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. HULTGREN).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 16, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable RANDY HULTGREN 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 11:50 a.m.

RICHARD ALBERO'S 1,150-MILE WALK

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

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a man who has literally walked the walk in support of our Nation's wounded warriors.

Mr. Speaker, 65-year-old Richard Albero, a former Naval officer and math teacher from Dunedin, Florida, recently completed an 86-day, 1,150-mile walk from home plate at Steinbrenner Field in Tampa during a spring training game to home plate at

Yankee Stadium in New York City. He did so to honor his fallen nephew. Richard's nephew, Gary, worked at the World Trade Center and lost his life in the 9/11 attacks.

In addition to honoring his nephew, Richard also chose to do something very special. He walked to raise money for the Wounded Warrior Project. His goal was to raise \$25,000.

During Richard's trek up the East Coast, which began on March 2, he went through six pairs of shoes. He suffered blisters on his feet and traveled over countless hills and endured the many elements, yet Richard never gave up.

Very recently, just a few weeks ago, he completed his walk, arriving at Yankee Stadium to a cheering crowd. Along the way, Richard blew past his goal for raising money and raised \$55,000 for the Wounded Warrior Project.

Mr. Speaker, Richard's nephew would be most proud and the Members of this body should be most proud as well as we reflect on and remember those who lost their lives and those who pay tribute to them today, those like Richard Albero.

May God bless Mr. Albero. May God bless our men and women in uniform who protect us each and every day. And may God bless these United States.

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, there is a tremendous crisis facing America, but it is not one you hear much about on Capitol Hill. It is killing hundreds of people a year, injuring thousands more. It is crippling America's global standing, as we have fallen in the world ranking from number 1 down to 27 and falling further. It is

having a profound effect on our global economic competitiveness, while costing American families hundreds of dollars a year in extra expenses.

Of course, it is complicating the lives of American business and families by losing millions of hours that otherwise could be put to productive work, at exercise, or with their families, and on the job.

If it were any other subject, there would be cries of outrage and alarm and calls for action. You would see a flurry of action here on Capitol Hill.

Sadly, this decline, this cost, this damage is the result of our very real infrastructure crisis, a crisis to which Congress has been indifferent at best and negligent at worse.

Despite countless examples of the crying need for infrastructure investment, Congress has been paralyzed, trying to pay for 2015 costs of infrastructure with 1993 dollars. Congress has not taken any systematic action since 1993, and the time has long since passed for action.

Thirty-three short-term extensions of transportation finance is not a substitute for action. No nation became great building its infrastructure 9 months at a time.

To be fair, there are people on Capitol Hill who do care about this and have proposed action:

My friend and colleague PETER DEFAZIO, the ranking member on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, has proposed a barrel tax on petroleum. He has proposed a financial fee on transactions, both of which would go a long way toward solving this problem.

My Ways and Means colleagues JIM RENACCI and BILL PASCRELL have proposed a mechanism that would be a failsafe, that if Congress didn't act to fund infrastructure, the gas tax would be indexed and increased.

Our Maryland colleague JOHN DELANEY has identified vast sums of

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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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corporate money parked overseas that could be made available for infrastructure investment in the United States if it were returned for that purpose.

And I have proposed, along with two dozen of my colleagues, that we simply bite the bullet and do what Ronald Reagan did in 1992—raise the gas tax for the 1st time in 22 years.

When I introduced this proposal in this Congress, it was supported by the widest array of groups on any major contested issue on Capitol Hill. It was supported by the top echelons of business, of organized labor, of the building trades, construction companies, local government, transit, bicycles, truckers, AAA, all in alignment that Congress should step up and remedy this situation.

There are solutions. There are people who think about it. We need to have the same level of courage and urgency that has been shown by people at the State and local level where they don't have the luxury of living in a Capitol Hill bubble. They have to deal with the consequences, and they have stepped up, 19 States since 2012—in fact, 6 States already this year. Idaho, Utah, Iowa, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Georgia, deep red States, have all raised the gas tax in 2015.

I am pleased that tomorrow the Ways and Means Committee will have its first hearing on transportation finance in the 56 months since my Republican colleagues took over. It is no substitute for Congress rolling up its sleeves and acting, but it is an important start. And I hope it will signify a full-court press in that committee to finally get down to cases and solve this problem.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Neiman, 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 8 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

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

Guide the Members of this people's House with the spirit of understanding, which might lead them to their best

judgment. We live in a world of human failure and broken promises; may they be tolerant of the faults of others because they are aware of their own shortcomings.

Bless all with a quiet respect for the diversity of opinions to be found here. Through honest dialogue and contemplative listening, may Your servants search all the avenues open to them to meet today's challenges with integrity and justice.

May all that is done 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.

Ms. FOXX. 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.

Ms. FOXX. 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 gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania 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 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HOLDING THE PRESIDENT ACCOUNTABLE ON TRADE

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, last week, the House approved part of a legislative package on trade promotion authority, or TPA.

There have been many mischaracterizations of what TPA is. Every day I hear from constituents who want me to hold President Obama accountable. Well, TPA does just that

by providing accountability to the President's trade negotiation efforts through enhanced congressional oversight and additional transparency. The allegations that TPA is something for President Obama is false.

It is important to recognize that more than 95 percent of the world's customers live beyond U.S. borders, and 1.2 million jobs in North Carolina rely on trade with them. Trade-related employment in North Carolina grew 3.8 times faster than total State employment from 2004 to 2013.

While I heard many different perspectives on TPA from my constituents, the argument from North Carolina families, farmers, and employers that negotiating these trade agreements is in the economic best interest of our State was a deciding factor for my vote in favor of TPA.

REBUILDING OUR NATION'S INFRASTRUCTURE

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, it is long past time for Congress to come together and pass a bold, bipartisan plan to rebuild our Nation's infrastructure.

Right now, China is spending 10 times as a percentage of GDP what we are on infrastructure. They are making huge investments in roads, bridges, ports, and rail. Meanwhile, Congress has simply not acted to put us on a competitive path in this global economy.

Now, a lot of debate has occurred here in the last weeks and days about our position in global trade, and we should have a trade deal that protects American jobs.

Meanwhile, what are we doing about China outspending us on infrastructure, which makes us less competitive? How are we supposed to compete with them when we haven't done anything to deal with our crumbling roads and bridges that are essential to making our manufacturers competitive in delivering their products to market?

It is time for bold action, big action on infrastructure, like the development of a national infrastructure bank that would leverage public capital with private capital to rebuild our crumbling roads and bridges.

Mr. Speaker, it is long past time for action. There is bipartisan support for this. We need to bring a big infrastructure bill to the floor of the House.

MAJORITY OF PENNSYLVANIANS SUPPORT HYDRAULIC FRACTURING

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, a recent poll conducted by Robert Morris University reveals that 57.1 percent of Pennsylvanians support natural gas production and hydraulic fracturing, with nearly half