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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 2, 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.

ACTIVE FOREST MANAGEMENT LEADS TO HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the Twenty-Five Percent Fund Act of 1908 required 25 percent of tax receipts of timber harvested from U.S. national forests to be returned to the counties where the tax receipts originated.

Since local property taxes cannot be levied on Federal lands, these dollars

along with payment in lieu of taxes, or PILT, funding are critical for counties located in national forests and other Federal lands. This is because the 1908 law specifies that they directly support local schools and road activities in national forests.

Unfortunately, timbering has dramatically decreased in the National Forest System since the late 1980s. According to the Forest Service, the agency was annually harvesting over 12 billion board feet by the end of the 1980s, but today, this amount has decreased to less than 2 billion board feet per year.

Make no mistake, timbering activities, such as removing unhealthy wood waste and potential fire fuel, plays a fundamental role in the core mission of the Forest Service and lends the forest health.

Leading up to the turn of the century, declining timber production has resulted in less forest management and, therefore, decreased forest health, fewer local employment opportunities, and dramatically less funding for schools and roads in forested communities.

As a result, the Secure Rural Schools program was created in 2000 to help offset the lack of funding for essential local activities. Unfortunately, the program was allowed to expire at the end of September 2014, resulting in payments to counties reverting back to previous law which again requires 25 percent of the tax receipts from timbering to be returned to the counties of origin.

Earlier this month, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the parent agency of the Forest Service, announced that 25 percent of receipts will be paid to 41 States throughout the coming months in 2015.

These funds are very much needed in rural communities located on Federal lands, including the Allegheny National Forest, where four counties in

northwestern Pennsylvania directly benefit.

While these funds amount to nearly \$50 million nationally, they represent only one-sixth of the funds that were provided the previous year through the Secure Rural Schools program.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Education and the Workforce Committee and a former school board president, I can attest that there is no school district in America that could have 94 percent of a funding stream pulled out from underneath them and still manage.

Make no mistake, the Secure Rural Schools program has gone a long way in helping communities bridge the financial shortfalls for the lack of taxable land over the past 15 years, but the program alone does not solve the underlying challenges faced by counties and communities colocated in national forests and other Federal lands.

In order to ensure the long-term ecological sustainability and economic prosperity of our national forests and our local communities, the Forest Service must adhere to its historical mission of active forest management and timber harvesting for our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, let us not be confused. National forests are not national parks; they are home to the people's resources. We must encourage sustainable and increased production of the public's resources which directly support those communities that are colocated on Federal lands. This would be a win-win for the country. The American people deserve as much.

RECOGNIZING STACY EGGERS, JR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize Stacy Eggers, Jr., of Boone, North Carolina.

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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On March 20, Stacy will be 91 years old, but he hasn't let age slow him down one bit. He still goes daily to his office on West King Street where he has been continually practicing law since 1950. Back then, he was one of only four attorneys in Watauga County.

Stacy is one of the last attorneys in the State of North Carolina who did not attend law school. He was admitted by the North Carolina State Bar to practice law on April 19, 1950, and eventually, his law practice became a family affair.

He formed the law firm Eggers & Eggers with his son Stacy Eggers III in 1974 and later formed Eggers, Eggers, & Eggers when his daughter Rebecca Eggers-Gryder joined the practice.

His grandson Stacy Eggers IV, who is known as Four, joined the firm in 2001. His granddaughter-in-law Kimberly Eggers joined the firm in 2010. Another grandson, Austin Eggers, joined the firm in 2011.

I think it bears repeating that Stacy still goes to work every day at the age of 90. In fact, he tried a property rights case with his grandson Four before a local jury at the age of 88. You rarely see that kind of dedication to one's profession anymore.

In addition to his work in private practice, Stacy has served as county attorney for Watauga County, as well as town attorney for Blowing Rock and Seven Devils. His service to the bar also includes terms as councilor of the North Carolina State Bar for the 24th Judicial District, president of the Watauga Bar Association, and president of the 24th Judicial District Bar Association.

He is an active member of the North Carolina Bar Association, where he served on the Client Security Fund Board, which helps reimburse individuals who have suffered financial loss as a result of the dishonest conduct of lawyers.

In 1996, Stacy was inducted into the North Carolina General Practice Hall of Fame and received the Liberty Bell Award in 2008. The Liberty Bell Award is given annually by the North Carolina Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division to one individual who "has strengthened the American system of freedom under law."

Active in the local community, Stacy has served as a member of the Watauga County Hospital Board of Trustees, the Watauga County Board of Elections, the Boone Rotary Club, the executive committee of the Watauga County Republican Party, the Boone Chamber of Commerce, and the Watauga Savings and Loan Association Board of Directors. He also currently serves on the board for LifeStore Bank.

Prior to his career as a lawyer, Stacy served in the Army Air Corps during World War II. When describing the experience to his children in later years, he would say he received a personal invitation from the President to take an all-expense paid world tour.

He left on a transport out of Charlotte, North Carolina, and by the time he arrived in Los Angeles at the end of the war, he had served his country in locations across the globe, including Africa, the Mediterranean, India, and Tinian. Stacy is a lifetime member and past commander of the American Legion and a lifetime member and judge advocate of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Stacy raised four children with his loving and supportive wife of 56 years, Elizabeth Bingham Eggers, who passed away in 2004. He is blessed with eight grandsons and three great-grandsons and has another great-grandbaby on the way. His family is one of the most respected families in Watauga County.

Stacy is a man of few words but great wisdom. He has tremendous insights into human nature, and his observations are well worth hearing. Watauga County is fortunate to call this hard-working citizen one of its own.

WEST VIRGINIA'S SECOND DISTRICT PRIORITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the great honor of addressing the Nation as a newly-elected Representative for the people of West Virginia's Second District.

My name is ALEX MOONEY, and I grew up in a home where the American ideals of personal freedom and limited government were cherished.

My mother was born and raised in Cuba where, at age 21, she was thrown in jail for 7 weeks as a political prisoner by the communist regime of Fidel Castro. After her release, she fled here to the United States where she was welcomed with open arms to restart her life in freedom.

My father was a feisty Irishman from New York and a Vietnam veteran. He was an ardent conservative and had great pride in leaders like Ronald Reagan.

Through the hard work of my parents, my three siblings and I had the chance to live the American Dream. My older brother, Vincent, is a professor of electrical engineers at Georgia Tech. My younger brother, Patrick, is a successful businessman. My younger sister, Margarita, is a professor of sociology at Yale University where she conducts research on happiness, virtues, and the common good. I was blessed to have the opportunity to attend Dartmouth College where I played football and rugby and graduated in 1993.

In 2001, my father suffered a stroke and was dying. There was one doctor who was particularly compassionate in her efforts to comfort my family and me through that difficult time. She also happened to be very pretty. One year later, that neurosurgeon, Dr. Grace Gonzalez, agreed to marry me.

My wonderful wife and I have been blessed with three beautiful children. My son, Lucas, is 11; my daughter, Camille, is 9; and we were pleasantly surprised on October 13 of last year with a third child, Gabrielle. My wife and I have been doing the hard work of homeschooling our older children, imparting on them an appreciation for the special place America holds in the world, just as my parents did for me.

My parents also taught me personal responsibility enshrined in the Constitution must always be protected. Their example showed me we must never cower in the face of tyranny, never give up on the God-given rights we are entitled to, and never stop fighting for the American Dream. They taught me the importance of serving one's Nation and community.

I knew early in life I wanted an opportunity to fight for the values which have made our Nation a beacon of freedom and prosperity around the world. As a young State senator, I fought for relief for hardworking taxpayers, for more personal responsibility, for the right to life of unborn babies, for a prosperous business climate, and to protect our Second Amendment rights.

Last fall, the people of the Second District of West Virginia afforded me the tremendous honor of representing them in Congress.

Our Nation faces great challenges. Our President and his liberal allies on the left would see us lose the values which make us who we are, lose the values my father fought for and my mother escaped despotism to enjoy.

West Virginia is blessed to be abundant in natural resources. I will fight so that West Virginians and all Americans are able to seek prosperity from our natural bounty. I expect to spend much of my time at my home in Charles Town and crossing the district, listening to the citizens I serve.

During my first week in office, I didn't wait to begin delivering on West Virginia priorities. I cosponsored legislation to gut onerous provisions of ObamaCare, to audit the Federal Reserve, and authorize construction of the Keystone XL pipeline. I also cosponsored bipartisan legislation to protect the unborn after 20 weeks when they are capable of feeling pain.

I am fortunate to serve on the House Natural Resources Committee, where I will focus on policies which contribute to the energy security of our Nation and the expansion of our production here at home.

I have also been selected to serve on the important House Budget Committee, where I will fight to fulfill my commitment for a balanced Federal budget. It is totally unacceptable for West Virginians and all Americans to live within their means while the Federal Government continues to allow its spending and debt to run rampant.

We are a nation whose values are emulated around the world by people seeking freedom, justice, and constitutional self-government defined by the rule of law.