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No. 172

House of Representatives

The House met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
November 30, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JEFF DENHAM to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

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

You have blessed us with all good gifts, and this past week, with thankful hearts we gathered with family and loved ones throughout this great land to celebrate our blessings together.

Bless the Members of the people's House, who have been entrusted with the privilege to serve our Nation, and all Americans in their need. Grant them to work together in respect and affection, and to remain faithful in the responsibilities they have been given.

In the few weeks remaining in this first session, may those issues pressing upon the Nation be considered and addressed to the benefit of all.

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 Texas (Mr. POE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. POE of Texas 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.

PRESIDENT'S LEGACY OF FAILURE

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the President's legacy of tragic failure is more revealing every day as refugees flee conflict, with children drowning at sea. He should change course to build peace and avoid murderous attacks on American families.

I appreciate The Washington Post's editorial page, Editor Fred Hiatt, who clarified last week:

"He withdrew all U.S. troops from Iraq when experts advised that a residual force of 15,000 would help to keep a fragile peace. He bombed Libya to overthrow its dictator but opposed a small NATO training force that might have stabilized the new government."

The President's failure to enforce a declared red line in Syria, the President's abandonment of the people of Iraq, the President's capitulation to the autocrats of Iran allowing nuclear development, and the President's betrayal of Israel have been catastrophic and created chaos.

It is not too late for the President to change course to promote peace in the Middle East. To allow safe havens for Islamist radicals abroad is a threat to American families at home. Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM tells the truth.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President by his actions

never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

THE ISIS THREAT IS NOT A MYTH

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, ISIS has vowed to takes its murderous Islamic jihad to America. There are ISIS fighters already here and more on the way. Meanwhile, the President wants to add thousands more unvetted Syrian refugees to the mix, this when his own FBI Director says the Federal Government cannot effectively conduct proper security checks on these Syrian nationals.

Over half of the State Governors have refused to take refugees because of the inability to fully vet them. But the administration says States have to take the refugees, whether they like it or not.

The law says the Federal Government must "consult" with States regarding refugee resettlement, but it is unclear if they can be rejected by the States. That is why I have introduced the States' Right of Refugee Refusal Act. This bill gives State Governors the choice to accept refugees or not.

Let's resolve this now with legislation, not lawsuits. We don't have years to wait for the courts to decide. Meanwhile, let's ramp up aid to Syrian refugee camps overseas and encourage our Middle Eastern allies like the Saudi Arabians to step up and help.

The ISIS threat is not a myth.
And that is just the way it is.

USA FREEDOM ACT PRESERVES LIBERTY

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

□ 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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Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, thanks to a measure Congress passed earlier this year, at 11:59 p.m. this past Saturday, the National Security Agency ended its collection of Americans' telephone call data.

After revelations about NSA data collection that many Americans, myself included, believe violated Fourth Amendment protections against search and seizure, Congress passed the USA Freedom Act to end this activity. Despite violating privacy of millions of Americans, this program had never generated intelligence that prevented terrorist activity. Americans spoke out, and Congress acted.

Our Nation's security should be the government's first priority, yet we should never sacrifice liberty for a program that doesn't even increase our safety. As Benjamin Franklin stated: "Those who give up essential liberty, to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety."

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, November 20, 2015.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
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 November 20, 2015 at 10:06 a.m.:

That the Senate agreed to without amendment H. Con. Res. 95.

That the Senate passed S. 2328.

That the Senate passed S. 1550.

That the Senate agree to House amendment to the bill S. 599.

Appointment:

Congressional Award Board

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 4 of rule I, the following enrolled bill was signed by Speaker pro tempore MESSER on Monday, November 23, 2015:

S. 599, to extend and expand the Medicaid emergency psychiatric demonstration project.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 4 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1600

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of New York) at 4 p.m.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

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.

GRASSROOTS RURAL AND SMALL COMMUNITY WATER SYSTEMS ASSISTANCE ACT

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 611) to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to reauthorize technical assistance to small public water systems, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 611

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 "Grassroots Rural and Small Community Water Systems Assistance Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996 (Public Law 104-182) authorized technical assistance for small and rural communities to assist those communities in complying with regulations promulgated pursuant to the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300f et seq.);

(2) technical assistance and compliance training—

(A) ensures that Federal regulations do not overwhelm the resources of small and rural communities; and

(B) provides small and rural communities lacking technical resources with the necessary skills to improve and protect water resources;

(3) across the United States, more than 90 percent of the community water systems serve a population of less than 10,000 individuals;

(4) small and rural communities have the greatest difficulty providing safe, affordable public drinking water and wastewater services due to limited economies of scale and lack of technical expertise; and

(5) in addition to being the main source of compliance assistance, small and rural water technical assistance has been the main source of emergency response assistance in small and rural communities.

SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) to assist small and rural communities most effectively, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency should prioritize the types of technical assistance that are most beneficial to those communities, based on input from those communities; and

(2) local support is the key to making Federal assistance initiatives work in small and rural communities to the maximum benefit.

SEC. 4. FUNDING PRIORITIES.

Section 1442(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300j-1(e)) is amended—

(1) by designating the first through seventh sentences as paragraphs (1) through (7), respectively;

(2) in paragraph (5) (as so designated), by striking "1997 through 2003" and inserting "2015 through 2020"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(8) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may use amounts made available to carry out this section to provide grants or cooperative agreements to nonprofit organizations that provide to small public water systems onsite technical assistance, circuit-rider technical assistance programs, multistate, regional technical assistance programs, onsite and regional training, assistance with implementing source water protection plans, and assistance with implementing monitoring plans, rules, regulations, and water security enhancements.

"(B) PREFERENCE.—To ensure that technical assistance funding is used in a manner that is most beneficial to the small and rural communities of a State, the Administrator shall give preference under this paragraph to nonprofit organizations that, as determined by the Administrator, are the most qualified and experienced in providing training and technical assistance to small public water systems and that the small community water systems in that State find to be the most beneficial and effective.

"(C) LIMITATION.—No grant or cooperative agreement provided or otherwise made available under this section may be used for litigation pursuant to section 1449."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few minutes to explain why we are pushing this bill and what the bill does.

The smallest water systems of our country account for 77 percent of all systems. These smaller and rural communities, with populations of 10,000 or less, have a high percentage of systems in significant noncompliance with drinking water regulations and face significant challenges in maintaining,