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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. FORTENBERRY).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 11, 2016.

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

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, 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.

THE COST OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, we talk a lot in this Chamber about the burdensome regulations that Federal agencies frequently place on the American public. Last week the Competitive Enterprise Institute released a report that puts a price tag on the rules implemented by the Federal bureaucracy, saying that Federal regulation and intervention cost American consumers and busi-

nesses nearly \$2 trillion in lost economic productivity and higher prices in 2014. That is simply unacceptable.

Many of these rules hinder innovation and job creation and are costly to businesses and consumers. As a former small-business owner, I know firsthand how the government can make it more difficult for a business to be successful. I recognize the true costs of overregulation, such as lost productivity, increased expenses, and new financial and legal liabilities, which many policymakers often forget about.

Just last month, the House approved a disapproval resolution to stop the Obama administration from implementing its flawed fiduciary rule, which will significantly impact the ability of Americans to receive advice on how to save for retirement and make it more difficult for businesses—in particular, small businesses—to establish retirement plans. The rule, which contains more than 1,000 pages of new regulations, makes it cost prohibitive to offer advice or services to low- and middle-income Americans by increasing compliance costs and the risk of litigation.

The Department of Education is constantly putting obstacles in the path of innovation, and these unnecessary regulations are stifling pioneering higher education institutions at a time when forward-thinking solutions are desperately needed. More redtape and hoops to jump through are not going to promote diverse choices for students. In fact, they often add administrative costs on schools—costs that are typically passed on to students in the form of higher fees and tuition. That is why I have introduced legislation to reduce Federal intrusion and limit the costly regulatory burden on colleges and universities.

As my colleagues and constituents know, the issue of unfunded mandates has been a particular interest of mine for a long time. It is frequently over-

looked in the debates about reforming our regulatory system and carrying out Federal policies. It is all too easy for Washington bureaucrats to write off concerns expressed by a handful of local governments or a small subset of private businesses. But these decisions have real costs and real effects on the individuals, families, and communities we each represent.

My legislation, the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act, does not seek to prevent the Federal Government from regulating; rather, it seeks to ensure that its regulations are deliberative and economically defensible. Asking regulators to consider thoroughly and understand the cost of a rule in addition to its benefits should not be controversial.

Republicans are often accused of opposing all regulations, but that is just not true. We are in favor of common-sense rules, and we believe it is possible to alleviate the regulatory burden on small businesses and other job creators while balancing public safety and consumer interests.

Regulation by bureaucratic fiat is not what the Founding Fathers had in mind when they created our government. I applaud Speaker RYAN for creating the Task Force on Reducing Regulatory Burdens and look forward to seeing its suggestions for a modern and transparent regulatory system that makes it easier to invest, produce, and build in America.

ISRAEL INDEPENDENCE DAY/DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is Yom Ha'atzmaut, the commemoration of the Israeli Declaration of

□ 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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Independence in 1948. This day of celebration is always immediately preceded by Yom Hazikaron, Israel's Memorial Day.

This timing is no accident. The people of Israel know that their freedom comes at a high price. Today I am humbled to join them in remembering more than 23,000 soldiers and victims of terrorist attacks who have paid this price, including 68 soldiers and police officers and 32 civilians over the past year alone.

The strong relationship between the United States and Israel dates back more than six decades. On May 14, 1948, just 11 minutes after the provisional government of Israel, led by Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, proclaimed a new state, President Harry S. Truman announced: "This government has been informed that a Jewish state has been proclaimed in Palestine, and recognition has been requested by the provisional government thereof. The United States recognizes the provisional government as the de facto authority of the new State of Israel."

This year, Israelis will celebrate their independence as they always have, gathering for public shows, performing Israeli folk dances, singing Israeli songs, and spending the day with families at picnics or on hikes. The holiday will conclude with the awarding of the Israeli Prize to men and women who have made unique contributions to culture, science, the arts, and humanities.

For American Jews, the celebration of Israel's independence has always been a way to express solidarity with the State of Israel. In many communities, it is a special occasion for Jewish organizations and synagogues of different denominations to come together for a single, united celebration of Israel's creation and existence, both of which have defied great odds.

Just one day after President Truman recognized the new Jewish state's existence, five neighboring Arab countries amassed their armies and invaded, determined to remove the dream of Israel from the pages of history. But after months of fighting, Israel emerged stronger than it was before, with more territory under its control.

Since then, the people of Israel have lived under the threat of violence for nearly seven decades. They survived the Six-Day War in 1967, the Yom Kippur War in 1973, and insurgencies that targeted soldiers and civilians alike. Through it all, the friendship between the United States and Israel has remained strong. We stood together to oppose Soviet aggression during the cold war, and we continue to stand together today, united in the fight against terrorism and global extremism.

This friendship is rooted in much more than strategic interests. The United States and Israel have always shared common values. As the most stable and successful democracy in the

Middle East, Israel is committed to the values of equality and freedom, including a free press, freedom of religion, and the right to self-determination through democratic elections.

Today, at a pivotal moment in the history of the world, it is more important than ever for the United States to stand with the people of Israel. I have been proud to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle on legislation to strengthen the ties between our two countries. The United States-Israel Cybersecurity Cooperation Act, which I introduced earlier this year, will establish a joint Cybersecurity Center of Excellence where the leaders from our two countries can work together on cybersecurity and the protection of critical infrastructure. In the House Foreign Affairs Committee, we have worked to advance legislation that condemns efforts to inflame anti-Semitic sentiments by the Palestinian Authority. These are critical issues we must continue to work on in the pursuit of our common objectives and our shared values.

I congratulate the State of Israel on the anniversary of its independence, and I look forward to continuing to work to strengthen the relationship between our two countries even further.

THE REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA: A DEMOCRACY IN A ROUGH NEIGHBORHOOD

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as the world leader in freedom and democracy, it is in our national interest to see the same freedoms we enjoy spread to people throughout the world.

The Republic of Georgia is a small and young democracy in an area that is more known for its authoritarian rule than freedom. Georgia formally declared its independence in 1918, but 4 years later, the Soviet bear invaded and declared Georgia a Soviet Socialist Republic. But the Georgian people are resilient, and with the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, Georgia again declared its independence from Russia.

Over the past 25 years, Georgia has become the freest country in its region. It sets up a stark contrast to the dictatorship of Putin in the north. However, the Russians never gave up on their ambitions to control Georgia.

I was in Georgia in 2008 when Russian troops invaded and took one-third of Georgia. I saw the Russian tanks up on the hill. And, Mr. Speaker, the Russians still illegally occupy one-third of the nation of Georgia.

The Russians want to impose tyranny upon Georgia precisely because of Georgia's quest for democracy and liberty. Georgia has made good governance a cornerstone of its reforms, grown the economy, and made significant progress toward creating a democratic society.

The world witnessed Georgia's first peaceful democratic transition of

power from one party to another in 2013, and it has improved media freedom for 4 consecutive years, according to Reporters Without Borders. In fact, Freedom House ranks Georgia number one in the region for its freedom of the press.

Georgia has also made significant strides when it comes to corruption. It even ranks higher than some European Union countries and other U.S. allies according to Transparency International.

When it comes to business and free markets, Georgia makes it to the top of the pack. The World Bank ranked Georgia among the top 25 countries easiest to do business in.

The fact is that the Georgian people and their government share our Western values. A recent poll found that more than three-quarters of the Georgian people support their government's goal to join the European Union. Nearly 70 percent of Georgians also support Georgia's joining NATO. The United States should be vocal and support Georgia's quest to be in NATO.

For the past 25 years of independence, Georgia has been a valuable ally of the United States. Due to Georgia's free market system, low corruption, and simplified tax system, many American companies have invested in Georgia, especially in the energy sector.

The U.S. should negotiate a free trade agreement with Georgia to add jobs to both of our economies and send a message that Georgia is an important friend of the United States.

Georgia is also a vital partner in the battle against international terrorism. It has provided more troops to the effort in Afghanistan than any other non-NATO member. Thirty-three Georgian troops have fought and died on the battlefield with American troops, and 900 Georgian troops still remain in Afghanistan.

The Georgians are now preparing to hold elections in October. To ensure that these parliamentary elections are free and fair, the Georgians have invited international, independent election observers to monitor those elections in October.

The United States and our NATO allies must remain firm in our support for Georgia. Georgia is a sovereign country whose boundaries should be respected—even by Putin. Russia knows Georgia is a symbol of democracy in the region. That is why Putin continues to rattle his sabres in the entire neighborhood. Dictator Putin knows if Georgia is a successful democracy, then Georgia's neighbors are going to want to follow that lead and become more democratic. It is in our national interest to support Georgia and their democratic aspirations in their journey for liberty.

Fifty years ago, our President John F. Kennedy talked about liberty. He stated what the American policy is regarding liberty. I hope and believe it is still our policy today. Here is what he said, Mr. Speaker: "Let every nation