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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 12, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK MEADOWS 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 1:50 p.m.

EPA'S REGULATIONS NEGATIVELY AFFECT JOBS AND THE RURAL COMMUNITY

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

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, farmers, ranchers, and foresters take great pride in the stewardship of the land. They are the original conservationists. While it may be popular among some to blame farmers and ranchers for any and every environmental concern that crops up, I know that nobody cares more for the environment than those who work the land every day. When a

farm family's livelihood depends on caring for natural resources, there is an undeniable economic incentive to adopt practices to enhance the land's long-term viability.

Unfortunately, the Obama administration has pursued an agenda seemingly absent of any recognition of the consequences for rural America and production agriculture. Obama's EPA is creating regulations that are burdensome, overreaching, and negatively affecting jobs and the rural economy.

Perhaps the most poignant example is the EPA and Army Corps of Engineers' recent power grab with the waters of the U.S. rule or, as the EPA calls it, the clean water rule. I will be frank, this rule is not about clean water. Everybody wants and deserves clean water. This rule simply embodies EPA's insatiable appetite for power. When EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy testified before the House Committee on Agriculture in February, members of the committee brought forth many concerns with the WOTUS rule. Numerous times Administrator McCarthy simply brushed off their concerns with statements that were intended to assure us that farmers would have the same longstanding farming exemptions that were originally included in the Clean Water Act.

These verbal assurances give little comfort to farmers and ranchers who will face steep civil fines for any violation. While the Administrator was telling the farming community that they have nothing to fear with the new WOTUS rule, a California farmer was being prosecuted by the Justice Department for simply plowing his field.

The lawsuit brought against this producer claims that by plowing a field, which every farmer I know considers a normal farming practice, this farmer has created, get this, "mini mountain ranges" in his field. These mountain ranges are furrows from normal farming. The suit also claims that this pro-

ducer discharged a pollutant into the waters of the U.S. This so-called pollutant was the soil he was plowing. These perceived violations only came to light when an overzealous court bureaucrat just happened to be driving by the property and discovered perceived WOTUS violations on the land.

Regardless of the degree to which some deem government regulation justifiable, all regulations must be developed in a manner that is based on science and mindful of the economic consequences. This rule clearly was not. Farmers, ranchers, and foresters believe the EPA is attacking them, and it is easy to understand why.

Instead of using the EPA and Corps' preferred strategy of fear and intimidation, coupled with punitive enforcement and overreaching regulatory authority, we should be building on the successful approach taken in the 2014 farm bill and previous farm bills to protect our natural resources through voluntary incentive-based conservation programs.

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 4 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. COLLINS of New York) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

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

Merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

□ 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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In this year of post-9/11, we pray that the children of this generation and their children's children may never have to experience another day like the one that flooded our TV screens so many years ago.

Protect and guide this Nation to a new security, built upon human integrity and communal solidarity with all who love freedom and human dignity, while respecting the lives and beliefs of others.

Empower the Members of Congress and governments around the world to establish just laws and seek the common good that will lead to ways of equity and peace.

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 gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN 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.

ZIKA FUNDING AND ACCURATE INFORMATION ARE PARAMOUNT TO PROTECT AMERICANS

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I come to Congress this week with expectations that perhaps this is the week when, as elected officials, we will do the right thing for south Florida families and Americans across our Nation. Perhaps this is the week in which the Senate will finally pass the long-awaited Zika funding bill and then for the House to act, finally.

South Floridians are correctly pushing Congress to leave politics aside and to do our job to protect the public. We are already way late in doing so, Mr. Speaker.

I look forward to Governor Scott's meeting with our south Florida congressional delegation later this week, because the facts and figures related to how big a problem Zika is appear not to have been accurately reflected in the summaries provided by the Florida Department of Health, according to a report in the Miami Herald. Detailed, timely, and accurate information are needed to protect our communities from this epidemic.

Mr. Speaker, let's pass the Federal funding needed to fight Zika and ensure that State agencies are providing thorough and accurate reporting of local Zika infections.

GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, by the end of today, 90 people in America will have died from gun violence. That is beyond tragic. That is heartbreaking. That is 90 too many.

While House Republicans shamefully stand idle, I am proud to say that, in my district in the Silicon Valley, my hometown community hereby says: enough.

Several years ago, the city of Sunnyvale overwhelmingly passed critical, courageous, and commonsense gun violence prevention measures. Today, the city of San Jose is on the verge of adopting similar measures. I am proud that Silicon Valley is leading by example. It is time now for Congress to act.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot allow one more day to go by, and 90 people to die, without doing all that we can to end the epidemic of gun violence. Enough is enough. Give us a vote, Mr. Speaker. Give America a vote.

JEFF HENDERSON OLYMPIC GOLD

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

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jeff Henderson, who won a gold medal in the long jump during this summer's Rio Games.

A native of McAlmont, the Mac Side, Arkansas, Jeff has been pushing himself to succeed since the humble beginnings of his athletic career. After graduating from Sylvan Hills High School in 2007, where he played football and ran track, Jeff surprised himself and his peers as he tore through the competition in both collegiate and professional track and field. His perseverance would not dwindle in Rio, and Jeff promised his mother, who is battling Alzheimer's, that he would bring home the gold.

After trailing other athletes during the majority of the event, on August 13, 2016, Jeff leapt his way to gold on the final jump, edging past the silver medalist by just 1 centimeter.

Our Olympic athletes in Arkansas and throughout the country made our Nation proud this summer, and I am honored to recognize today this Mac Side star, Jeff Henderson, for his historic accomplishment.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS IN CONGRESS

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, last week, Vice President JOE BIDEN said, "We are facing a simple reality; we are not doing the people's most urgent business." He is right. It is long past time that we take up this staggering list of unfinished business in this House.

The people in my hometown of Flint still can't drink the water that comes out of their tap, yet House Republicans have pushed off any meaningful action that would send help to this community in its moment of greatest need. Further, the CDC will run out of resources to fight Zika, with almost 17,000 Americans, including 1,600 pregnant women, infected.

Republicans in Congress continue to put their own partisan messaging agenda ahead of fighting Zika, helping the kids of Flint, and even with the opioid epidemic killing 78 people a day. We lose 78 young people a day. No action.

We have bipartisan approaches to all of these problems. This body is called together to do the people's work. We should take up this legislation, and we should do it now, Mr. Speaker.

MEDIA SHOWS THEIR BIAS

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the media's credibility is at a new low, and it is self-inflicted. That is because they have set out on a maniacal mission to destroy anyone who doesn't bow to their political views. Why? Clearly, one person poses a threat to the media's liberal views. He wants to secure the borders; they want mass amnesty for illegal immigrants. He wants to reduce government regulations; they favor more government control. He opposes political correctness; they support speech police.

The liberal media think they know better than the American people what is good for them. Let's hope the voters won't let the liberal media tell them what to think or how to vote. The future of our democracy depends on a fair, balanced, and unbiased media.

FUND ZIKA

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

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I just returned after a weekend in south Florida where people wanted to talk about two things: remembering 9/11 and wondering why Congress can't figure out how to find the necessary funding for Zika.

This morning, Dr. Fauci of the NIH said that if we don't act, we are at risk of halting the investigation into coming up with a vaccine that can help prevent people from getting Zika.

After 9/11, everyone in this country was able to come together as one. We all remember how that felt. My colleague, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, stood on