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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: God of the universe, we give You thanks for giving us another day. We ask Your blessing upon our Nation. Bless the work of the Members of the people's House. May they toil diligently to bring about solutions to the pressing issues of these times.

Bless all men and women across our country, especially those who work in service to others: police, firefighters, healthcare providers, teachers, those who work in local, State, and national government, and those men and women serving in our Armed Forces.

May all that is done this day 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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. RASKIN 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 five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

EQUALITY FOR AMERICAN CITIZENS LIVING IN PUERTO RICO

(Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico. Mr. Speaker, I was elected to seek equality for 3.4 million American citizens living in Puerto Rico. I am the sole Representative for the island, and I represent more constituents in my sole district than anyone in this House.

I rise today to honor the 100th anniversary of the enactment of the Jones Act, which conferred American citizenship on Puerto Ricans on this day in 1917. Since then, more than 200,000 veterans have served proudly in the U.S. military, where they are equal in war but not in peace.

That is why I stand with the will of the people of Puerto Rico to incorporate to the United States as the 51st State of the Union, as requested in the 2012 plebiscite by 61 percent of the votes.

Let this House fulfill the promise that the United States of America is a nation of liberty and justice for all of us.

LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO FIX THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

(Mrs. BUSTOS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, I welcomed Emily Carlson to the Capitol as my guest at President Trump's address to Congress.

Emily comes from a rural town called Abingdon, Illinois. She is the co-owner of a small family-owned business, and her husband, Kevin, is a farmer. Like a lot of hardworking Midwesterners, they don't want a handout; they just want a fair shot at success.

But 17 years ago, all of that was put at risk when Emily was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, which is a chronic

and expensive disease to treat, and she will have this the rest of her life. They could barely afford the most basic care for Emily because she was in the high-risk pool in the State of Illinois.

Too often the Carlsons literally had to vacillate between affording Emily's medication or going deeper into debt. However, since the passage of the Affordable Care Act, life has been much better for the Carlsons. Today their family of four has much better coverage, and it costs much less.

Mr. Speaker, President Trump's repeal wouldn't just undermine Emily's health; it would devastate their family's economic security, along with those of many families throughout our Nation. Instead, let's work together to keep what is working and fix what is not.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF ARMY SERGEANT ROBERT SHANE PUGH

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

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I am humbled today to rise in memory of Army Sergeant Robert Shane Pugh. He made the ultimate sacrifice while defending our Nation on March 2, 2005, during Operation Iraqi Freedom III.

He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 155th Infantry Regiment, Mississippi Army National Guard, headquartered in McComb, Mississippi. Sergeant Pugh, a combat medic, was mortally wounded when an IED detonated near his vehicle near Iskandariya, Iraq, also wounding Sergeant First Class Ellis Martin.

Sergeant Pugh posthumously received the Silver Star, the third highest award for valor, as well as the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, and Mississippi Medal of Valor.

□ 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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Sergeant Pugh's Silver Star citation reads: "Although in extreme pain, Sergeant Pugh directed treatment instructions to the members of his platoon for both himself and Sergeant First Class Martin. Sergeant Pugh passed away en route to the hospital; however, his courage and disregard for his own welfare resulted in saving the life of a fellow comrade who was severely wounded."

Sergeant Pugh's mother, Ms. Wilma Allen, said her son was her pride and joy, that he was happy, outstanding, and outgoing. Ms. Wilma said Sergeant Pugh would do anything for anyone.

In a fitting tribute to this brave and caring soldier, the National Guard Readiness Center in Morton, Mississippi, has been named in his honor.

Sergeant Pugh is survived by his parents, Glen and Wilma Pugh; his stepfather, Gary Allen; and his siblings, Tiffany Johnson, April Pearson, Jennifer Reed, Brad Allen, and Dale Allen.

Stand fast, Mississippi. Stand fast, Sergeant Pugh. Stand fast.

I have also honored fallen Mississippi soldiers Private Barry Wayne Mayo, Sergeant William Seth Ricketts, and Corporal Robert Taylor McDavid III this week.

COMMEMORATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF U.S. CITIZENSHIP FOR THE PEOPLE OF PUERTO RICO

(Mrs. MURPHY of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, a century ago today, a Federal law granted U.S. citizenship to individuals born in Puerto Rico. Island residents have made countless contributions to this country in times of peace and war, serving with exceptional valor in our Armed Forces. The bonds between Puerto Rico and Florida are unbreakable. The State is home to over 1 million Puerto Ricans, with most living in central Florida.

Puerto Rico is going through difficult times, and I am determined to help the Island get back on its feet. The main reason Puerto Rico is struggling is because, as a territory, it is treated unequally under Federal law. I support equal treatment for Puerto Rico because I oppose second class citizenship.

Ultimately, I believe Puerto Rico should discard its territory status and become a State or a sovereign nation. The choice lies with the people of Puerto Rico. However, my personal hope is that they will choose statehood so that they have full voting rights and full equality.

Puerto Ricans have earned the right to become first class citizens of the Nation they have served with honor.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF PLACER COUNTY SHERIFF ED BONNER

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to recognize the service, and now the retirement, of our good friend from Placer County, Sheriff Ed Bonner, after 42 years of dedicated service to northern California and Placer County and its sheriff's department.

Many would talk about creating a family atmosphere at work, but few truly achieve it. Ed Bonner made the families of his officers and his staff a priority. He is with them in the best of times and in the worst, from the joy of the births of their children, or marriages, to the family tragedies, which indeed have been felt by the deputies and the brothers and the sisters of Placer County.

In his 22-year career as a sheriff, he has earned the respect and admiration of Placer County and many others throughout the State of California.

He graduated from Cal Berkeley, and has earned the respect of so many. He had a bachelor of arts in criminology, and earned a master's degree in management science at Cal Poly, Pomona.

Before his law enforcement days, Ed Bonner was a gifted athlete who excelled at track and field, where he still holds multiple State high school records. At the University of California, he became the first 4-year letterman for track and field in the school's history.

After a distinguished career, which included serving as president of the California State Sheriffs' Association, Sheriff Bonner's skills as a law enforcement administrator will be greatly missed by all of us in the community.

Now is time, though, for a much-deserved retirement which he can spend with his loving wife, Jeannie, his family, and his friends.

It has been such a pleasure to work with him. Indeed, the rigors of travel from the East Coast to the West Coast don't allow me to spend the kind of time I would like to with a good friend like Ed Bonner, but I wish him the best. I know he will have a good time in retirement, and I will see him around.

WE NEED A BUDGET THAT SERVES THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as we begin the process that comes as a responsibility of this House, and that is, overseeing the President's budget and designing a budget to serve the American people, I am raising the question of the baffling budget that seems to be emerging from the White House.

The plus-up and elimination of sequester on the defense spending may be worth considering. I, frankly, believe we should remove the sequester on discretionary spending. But what is being

proposed is that the plus-up of \$54 billion will be taken out of the needs, the hearts, and minds of the American people.

The EPA will be gutted, so there will be no staff to oversee clean water and clean air, of which so many counties and cities, like Flint and my own community of Harris County, are in desperate need of.

What will happen to housing for senior citizens and young families?

Gutted because the Department of Housing and Urban Development will see a drastic cut. Or Health and Human Services that helps to sponsor federally qualified health clinics and the complete elimination of the Affordable Care Act, which will bust the budget. Medicaid, civil rights, and the prevention of hate crimes; the Justice Department gutted and, as well, as Attorney General Sessions has already done, not preventing voter fraud or voter discrimination.

Mr. Speaker, we need a budget that serves the American people. That is the kind of budget that I will be looking to support.

HONORING CARL LAMM ON HIS 90TH BIRTHDAY

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

Mr. ROUZER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a North Carolina legend as he celebrates his 90th birthday this week. Mr. Carl Lamm, who many know as "the Voice of Johnston County," has been a pioneer of the country music radio scene since 1946.

"Mr. Carl," as he is known, has been a disc jockey and co-owner of WMPM-AM in Smithfield, North Carolina, since 1958, where he plays a lively mix of bluegrass, Southern gospel, and old-time country. His daily programming is revered by tens of thousands throughout Johnston County, North Carolina, and all across the Nation.

In the seven decades Carl has been on the air, he has brought some of the greatest musicians, top athletes, and national political figures into our homes and businesses through radio to discuss current events, politics, our Creator, and much more.

Mr. Carl has witnessed the evolution of radio from the glory days of the Grand Ole Opry to the digital age of the 21st century. To say that Mr. Carl Lamm is a radio legend is an understatement.

Carl Lamm, thank you for everything you have done for our State and for our country. Again, happy birthday.

EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION DAY

(Mr. PRICE of North Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, March 3, is Employee Appreciation Day; and since we