

Over the last 40 years, she has also mentored hundreds of members of our staff and helped guide them in their careers. Thanks in part to her leadership with my office, a vast majority of our current and former permanent staff members got their start in our office as interns or fellows and grew into talented and instrumental staffers. Joni showed them how they could make a real difference working in government. Her dedication to our staff has helped make me a more effective legislator, and I am forever grateful for that.

Mr. Speaker, Joni LaVerne Ivey retires from her service to the United States House of Representatives and to my office this week. This will be a hard-earned and well-deserved retirement, and I know that she will remain as active in Newport News and around Hampton Roads as she is now, but perhaps a little less restrained now that she no longer has to worry about me or our office.

I know Joni has never sought public recognition for her hard work, but on behalf of our entire current and former staff and the citizens of the Third Congressional District of Virginia, I thank her for her dedicated and selfless service to our community, our Commonwealth, and our Nation.

STRENGTHENING THE PEACE CORPS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, at the young age of 23, Nick Castle knew he had a higher calling. So directly following his graduation, he headed overseas to China to teach English, volunteering in the Peace Corps.

Sadly, Nick became seriously ill after becoming an ambassador abroad. He was the victim of an inefficient, underequipped, and unresponsive Peace Corps-led medical team in China.

After he reported that he was ill, he was prescribed a broad antibiotic. Nick quickly began to experience drastic weight loss, but he was reassured he was okay. As the weeks progressed, he was confined to his bed, too ill to even stand up. But his doctor never recommended that he go to the hospital.

After experiencing dangerously low blood pressure, Nick was finally sent to a hospital. As the ambulance made its way to him, it got lost on the winding roads in the remote area of China. Before the ambulance could get Nick to the hospital, he stopped breathing. Nick died a few weeks later in early 2013.

A 2014 Peace Corps Inspector General report found that Nick was the victim of medical negligence. "Failures and delays in treatment" were exposed, ultimately leading to Nick's death. Investigations revealed that the Peace Corps medical team misdiagnosed his illness.

This heartbreaking death of a young man serving our country and the world

could have been avoided had the Peace Corps staff been properly trained, equipped, and had a responsive team.

Unfortunately, Nick's case is representative of a broader problem: Peace Corps volunteers struggle to access quality medical treatment when they are abroad in remote areas of the world. And when they return to America, then they face a red-taped, bureaucratic nightmare.

They are covered by the Peace Corps for 3 months while they wait on the Department of Labor to determine that their illnesses or injuries are service-related. But the Department often takes much longer than 3 months to make that determination, forcing those Peace Corps volunteers to pay out of pocket for costly medical expenses. When attempting to get medical coverage through the Department of Labor, many are faced with costly personal expenses.

So, Mr. Speaker, Congressman KENNEDY and I have sponsored H.R. 2259, the Sam Farr Peace Corps Enhancement Act. Sam Farr was a Peace Corps volunteer and a Member of Congress. This act seeks to improve and strengthen the health, safety, and well-being of current and returning Peace Corps volunteers. It requires that Peace Corps volunteers have access to a qualified Peace Corps medical officer and medical facilities while they are at posts overseas. And when those volunteers return home, it extends their Peace Corps coverage for up to 6 months while they wait on the Department of Labor to determine coverage. It enhances access to health care for returning Peace Corps volunteers as well, and it expands and improves provisions of the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act, enhancing the ability to assist and protect volunteers that have experienced sexual assault, among other issues, while in lands across the seas.

Mr. Speaker, Peace Corps volunteers are America's angels abroad. They are some of the best that we have. They are the spirit of humanitarian assistance. They work in remote areas of the world helping others—areas of the world that many Americans can't find on a map.

So America must make sure to take care of these amazing people when they serve in lands far away so that there are no more deaths like Nick Castle's. And that is just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING PENN MEDICINE'S MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the incredible actions of a group of individuals in my community.

On April 3, 2017, an amazing physician and amazing mother, Amy Reed, experienced what should have been a

catastrophic cardiac arrest at Penn Medicine's community radiology center in Yardley, Pennsylvania. Yet, because of the amazing efforts of a series of professionals, Amy survived this event.

I would like to recognize the following individuals:

The advanced life support paramedics from the Yardley-Newtown area, Mr. Mark Horner and Mr. Chris Adams;

St. Mary Medical Center's cardiac surgeon, Dr. Veluz, and the entire cardiac surgery, anesthesia, and perfusion team at the St. Mary Medical Center in Langhorne, Pennsylvania;

The PennSTAR trauma critical care air rescue helicopter crew, Ms. Shiloh Kramer, Mr. John Goddard, and Mr. George Huey;

Cardiac critical care nurses, Ms. Coleen Nicolosi, Ms. Darian Parkinson, and Ms. Laura Glorioso-Moyer, who took intensive care of Dr. Reed in her initial resuscitation.

Thereafter, a corps of highly specialized surgical critical care nurses played an intensive role in her ongoing recovery. Mr. David Alfano, Ms. Carrie Brewster, Ms. Rachael Coyle, Ms. Catherine DeLaurentis, Mr. Michael Duca, Ms. Christina Felix, Ms. Cortney Johnson, Ms. Anita McAlee, Ms. Erin McCormick, Mr. Sebastian Romagnano, Ms. Lina Sivadasan, Ms. Christine Steffon, Ms. Joann Vernon, Ms. Gina Vizzarri, Ms. Meghan Welsh, and Ms. Danielle Wright all are to be commended for their professionalism and extreme skill in recovering Dr. Reed and giving her a second chance at life.

After 5 days in a coma, Amy has emerged and is neurologically intact. The actions of these professionals led to Amy's life being saved. Their conduct can only be characterized as heroic.

Amy is loved by family and many friends in Bucks County, and by many thousands more across the United States for her role as a champion and a spokeswoman for women's health and patient safety. And because of the efforts of the medical professionals who saved her life, I have the opportunity to continue working with Amy to advance her crucial mission.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 31 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Ric Metzgar, Sr., The Church of God, Essex, Maryland, offered the following prayer:

My heavenly Father, You are the composer of my life. Thank you for orchestrating my direction today.

I recognize You as the source of life and love. Hear the prayers of this House, both for the good of the Nation and the good of humanity and around the world. Help this House to discern Your will in our day.

Strengthen all of us and help us to show forth the fruits of Your spirit of love, joy, peace, and generosity as we go about our work. Grant us a spirit of compassion and cooperation.

We ask Your blessings for all those who have chosen to take up this difficult task of governing, not only those who are elected but also those who serve as staffers, interns, and volunteers here and around our great Nation.

We look to Your Scriptures that tell us "Balance and scales belong to the Lord; all weights of justice belong to You." And as Jeremiah 29:7 exhorts us to:

Seek the peace of the city and our Nation. Pray to the Lord for it; for in its peace, you will have peace.

May the peace that passes all understanding guide our hearts and our minds in the days to come.

This we pray in Your matchless name, thanking You for being the architect of our lives.

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.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. KENNEDY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING REVEREND RIC METZGAR, SR.

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RUPPERSBERGER) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to introduce and welcome to Washington, Maryland State Delegate Ric Metzgar, a friend for a long time, Second District resident, who has been representing eastern Baltimore County in the Maryland General Assembly since 2015. He has been serving his community far longer.

Delegate Metzgar has lived in Essex for most of his life, graduating from Kenwood High School before attending Northwest Bible College. His father worked for the Glenn L. Martin airplane community, and his mother owned a drycleaning business.

Delegate Metzgar managed a local car dealership and a diner, and, as an ordained minister, he has served as a ministry leader and Sunday school director for several local churches. He founded Gateway Pastors and Churches Association.

In Annapolis, Delegate Metzgar serves on the Health and Government Operations Committee as well as the Maryland Veterans Caucus. His volunteer efforts within his community are unending.

Delegate Metzgar has long served as chair of the Essex Christmas parade and co-chair of the massive Essex Day Festival. He is a member of the board of directors for the Heritage Society of Essex and Middle River.

Delegate Metzgar is married with two children and two grandchildren. I am honored to call Delegate Metzgar a friend and constituent of the Second Congressional District of Maryland, and I offer sincere thanks on behalf of this entire body for his delivery of today's opening prayer.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

(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, this week marks National Small Business Week, a time to recognize the remarkable contributions small businesses make creating jobs.

In South Carolina, small businesses represent 99 percent of our State's

businesses, employing 47 percent of our citizens. I am grateful for the input from the National Federation of Independent Business, NFIB, led by Ben Homeyer; the State Chamber of Commerce led by Ted Pitts; and local chambers from Barnwell to Blythewood and from North Augusta to northeast Columbia, promoting every corner of the district.

When I meet with members of the small-business community of South Carolina, I learn how government regulations and government overreach threaten their businesses and reduce job opportunities.

I support President Trump's commitment to creating jobs and how, in only 100 days, his administration has proven to be a champion of small business by cutting harmful regulations and outlining tax reform.

I appreciate the leadership of the small-business administrator, Linda McMahon, and her advocacy for the 29 small businesses nationwide.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH FUNDING

(Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, President Trump wanted to cut \$1.2 billion from the National Institutes of Health and the National Cancer Institute. Instead, Congress will exert its independence by rejecting the President's cut and will instead increase National Institutes of Health's funding by \$2 billion.

My community of Buffalo, New York, is home to America's first cancer center, Roswell Park Cancer Institute. Roswell Park is a national leader in NIH-funded research for immunotherapy.

Immunotherapy uses drugs and vaccines to unleash the cancer-killing potential of the body's own immune system. Immunotherapy has the potential for longer remission and is an alternative to debilitating chemotherapy.

Because of this congressional action, Roswell Park Cancer Institute's clinical trials and immunotherapy will continue, and the potential for tens of millions more in NIH research funding over the next 5 years is a reality.

This is good for the good that it will do in advancing this promising research and is good for Buffalo and the continued growth of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus.

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION WHISTLEBLOWER

(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, according to Kuauhtemoc Rodriguez,