

Flood mitigation improvements that will decrease the risk of disastrous flooding events both above and below the dams;

Continued evaluation of the impacts of fully utilizing the F.E. Walter Dam and reservoir.

Regardless of the final changes to the FFMP, it is imperative that we not sacrifice the progress which has been made over the last number of years. All parties' specific concerns and opinions have value, but we must accept that if we are not willing to negotiate and compromise we jeopardize the safety, well-being, and economic viability of all communities within the Delaware River Basin.

I eagerly anticipate a finalized FFMP before the May 31 deadline. If a new FFMP cannot be negotiated within that time, a one-year extension should be agreed upon. Reverting back to the 1980s reservoir management approach is unacceptable.

I am more than willing to provide support as needed.

Sincerely,

JOHN J. FASO,
Member of Congress,
19th Congressional District of New York.

WESTERN WALL

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

Mr. BANKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, President Trump will embark on his first international trip as our Commander in Chief. I am very pleased to see that one of the first countries our President will visit is Israel, a nation that is a cherished American ally and a beacon of freedom in a troubled region.

This visit comes at an important time, as recent comments by an administration official created uncertainty as to whether the U.S. Government considers the Western Wall to be within Israeli territory. Located in the heart of Jerusalem's Old City, the Western Wall is one of the holiest sites in the world and a place where millions have gathered to pray and seek the presence of God.

Jewish tradition teaches that the Western Wall was an integral part of the Temple Mount and has been an important site in Judaism for more than 2,000 years.

It is vital that the United States Government recognize the Western Wall as part of Israel and that the President should affirm that position during his upcoming trip. I am hopeful that recognizing the Western Wall will be part of a process to formally recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

REPEALING THE DURBIN AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUDD. Mr. Speaker, right now we are having a fierce debate in the Republican Conference over the Durbin amendment, which is a price control on debit swipe fees. Retailers have claimed that the Durbin amendment is

about competition. They have claimed that it is about restoring a broken market. They have claimed that Visa, MasterCard, and issuing banks are engaged in price-fixing on swipe fees.

This is a key element of this debate. A vote to keep the Durbin amendment is a vote that rests on the idea that Members are sure that there is price-fixing in the debit card market. There is \$6 billion to \$8 billion per year at play here, and the violation of a core free-market principle, which is the notion that government should not be telling people what they can or can't charge.

My point would be that, if you do that, if you support that degree of command and control in the economy, you have got to be sure.

And should we be sure?

I go back to the Sherman Antitrust Act, which outlaws price-fixing. This is a criminal law. Hundreds of people have been put in jail for it. You can go to jail for up to 10 years for violating it, and the law has stood for more than 100 years.

Payment networks and retailers have been fighting over whether or not Visa, MasterCard, and issuing banks are violators of the Sherman Antitrust Act for 30 years. And one of the earlier rulings goes back to 1986.

There is ongoing litigation now. In fact, there are more than 15 different cases out there on this. Litigation, I would add, that the retailers have never won when cases went to trial. In the major cases that we have managed to find, they are 0-3.

They are actually in the middle of another big case right now. There was a settlement, and later a higher court set it aside. A sentence of that ruling reads:

"Discovery included more than 400 depositions, 17 expert reports, 32 days of expert deposition testimony, and the production of over 80 million pages of documents."

Eighty million pages. I have studied this issue for months, and I have not read 80 million pages. I am a retailer, and I have paid thousands of dollars in swipe fees, so I know the difference between point of sale and Square mobile payments. I have used these systems, but I still don't know.

That is why I oppose the Durbin amendment: because I am not sure that this price control is necessary. Therefore, I put the Federal Government in the role of judge, jury, and executioner for the payment industry. For me to do that, I would have to be sure.

I know that the government wasn't sure when they came up with the regulation. They originally came up with 12 cents per transaction. Then the final rule finally came in at 24 cents.

Were they right the first time?

Were they wrong the second time?

There is no way to know for sure.

I guarantee you that when we walk down to this floor and we vote on this issue and choose to uphold a policy which many free-market think tanks

have said harms consumers, Members will not have read 80 million pages. If we are honest with ourselves, most will not have read 80 pages. There is no way we could, given everything that is in front of the Federal Government, even if we wanted to.

Economist F.A. Hayek got at this in his criticism of the planned economy. He said that socialism doesn't work because of what he called "the unavoidable imperfection of man's knowledge."

Hayek was referring to human beings at large. I would offer that the knowledge of politicians—speaking for myself, in particular—must be that much more imperfect.

You don't have to believe that the banks are angels, and you don't have to disbelieve the retailers to oppose the Durbin amendment. You just have to feel a bit of doubt either way.

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 55 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

Pastor Glen Berteau, The House Modesto, Modesto, California, offered the following prayer:

God, Your Word says that unity and light extinguish darkness and chaos. We debate opinions while not recognizing that You are the answer. Behind me the words "In God We Trust" are not a suggestion.

God, we have told You to leave, but come back to our schools, our businesses, our streets, our families, our government. I ask You to fill the political seats in America with God-fearing, God-following leaders. I pray for our Nation to stop rising up in division against one another and instead kneel down and pray for one another.

Instead of petitioning opinions and protest, we petition You in prayer. I pray for hate to dissipate from the heart of our society. Lord, You are our protection, our sustaining power.

Protect our first responders. Protect our powerful military. Protect the citizens of this great Nation, and let us not forget that You are our national security.

In Jesus' name.

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 Florida (Mr. LAWSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LAWSON of Florida 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.

WELCOMING PASTOR GLEN BERTEAU

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor today to introduce to the House our guest chaplain, Glen Berteau of Modesto, California.

Glen is the senior pastor of The House in Modesto, a church of more than 8,000.

Supporting his community is a priority, and, under Glen's leadership, The House Modesto has established programs to fight against human trafficking, provided groceries on a weekly basis to those in need, repaired bicycles for the homeless, and developed mobile medical and dental clinics that provide services free of charge.

The House was also recently recognized by the city of Modesto for their annual event, Unity Matters, which honors law enforcement and first responders.

Glen is originally from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and has called California his home for over 24 years. He and his wife, Deborah, have been in ministry for over 40 years, have been married for 42 years, and they have 3 children, 5 grandchildren.

Glen is a gifted speaker, teacher, and evangelist and has ministered at conferences, churches, and conventions all over the world.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming Pastor Glen Berteau. We thank him for offering today's opening prayer in the United States House of Representatives.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

IRAN-NORTH KOREA LINK

(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 Post and Courier of

Charleston, on May 6, explained the Iran-North Korea link in an editorial:

"President Trump is looking for ways to put a squeeze on North Korea that will persuade it to give up nuclear weapons and the missiles to carry them . . . there is another collaborator with North Korea that appears to be helping it survive: Iran."

"According to Jeffrey Lewis of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in Monterey, California, the evidence of collaboration between North Korea and Iran is ample and of long standing. 'The very first missiles we saw in Iran were simply copies of North Korean missiles. Over the years, we have seen photographs of North Korean and Iranian officials in each other's countries, and we have seen all kinds of common hardware.'"

" . . . President Obama got Tehran to agree to reduce its stock of enriched uranium. . . . But the agreement is a weak one if Tehran is simply paying Pyongyang to do the design work for missiles and warheads. . . ."

"And if Iran is paying North Korea for help, then the sanctions . . . are also being fatally undermined."

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

JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SHOULD INVESTIGATE HEALTHCARE COMPANIES

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

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, it was reported in The New York Times on Monday that UnitedHealthcare and four of the Nation's largest health insurance companies concocted a scheme to defraud the Medicare program and the American people out of tens of billions of dollars each year over the past decade.

The United States Department of Justice yesterday joined the lawsuit and is investigating these serious charges against UnitedHealthcare and the others. The Justice Department should conduct an investigation aggressively and thoroughly to get to the truth and to exact justice.

If these allegations are true, these actions would represent among the most egregious schemes of fraud perpetrated against the American people.

Shockingly, the House Republican health bill gave a \$78 million tax cut to the executives of the very companies that are under investigation, including a \$15.5 million tax cut to UnitedHealthcare and their chief executive officer.

This information can easily be found on page 67 in 3 lines of the Republican healthcare bill.

This is, Mr. Speaker, a blatant violation of the public trust that this Congress took an oath to protect and to uphold.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, this week is National Police Week. I rise today to honor the brave men and women in blue who sacrifice their safety every day to keep our families and communities safe.

Each day these Americans go to work willing to put their lives on the line for the security of their fellow Americans.

We often hear the remarkable stories of our law enforcement officers. These men and women work long hours and late shifts, often being called into work and called away from their families. These are the people who risk their lives to protect our very neighborhoods, schools, communities, while asking nothing in return.

These professionals exhibit the greatest love of all, and that is to offer their lives to protect another.

I pray for those who have lost their lives, like Sergeant Greg Meagher, a 33-year veteran of the Richmond County Sheriff's Office who lost his life earlier this year in the line of duty. We will never forget his ultimate sacrifice.

Our safety depends on these amazing people, and I am proud to honor them here today.

INFRASTRUCTURE WEEK

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

Mr. LAWSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this week is infrastructure week, and today I rise to highlight the need to update our country's aging infrastructure system. This is a topic that is important in both the rural and urban areas of our country.

From the highway system in Lake City, Florida, to the port needs of Jacksonville, we must put forth the necessary resources to update our transit needs.

Each year, millions of tons of freight traffic, seaport cargo, and rail cargo pass through Jacksonville as they are transported to communities throughout our country.

The Jacksonville Transportation Authority is building a 57-mile bus rapid transit system, which is cost-effective and will support hundreds, and potentially thousands, of new jobs.

They are also overseeing the development of the Jacksonville Regional Transportation Center, a transportation hub that will consolidate major modes of public transportation, making transit more accessible and convenient.

While that is all good news, there is still much work to be done to improve our infrastructure in north Florida.