

home, an increasingly common arrangement, especially in the tough farm economy we have today. But at the moment, a reliable broadband connection is out of their reach.

To keep and grow these jobs in our rural areas, we must make smart infrastructure investments that connect our rural residents: investments that don't duplicate what private enterprise has done, and investments that will carry far into the future.

For most businesses, including agribusiness, broadband services allow companies to access the global electronic marketplace. For consumers, broadband allows people to connect via social media, to download apps and stream videos, and to manage everything from a bank account to a college application. Beyond just access to resources, building out broadband in rural areas increases the quality of life for most citizens and promotes job creation and economic development.

As you think about infrastructure and technology, Mr. Speaker, and as the Small Business Subcommittee on Agriculture, Energy and Trade hears testimony on the topic this week, I encourage my colleagues to keep in mind the value of our small rural telecom providers that connect rural Americans with the rest of the world and make every effort to connect rural consumers and businesses with a wide array of services.

Mr. Speaker, the House will take up the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act. Education supported by career and technical education programs are vital to addressing gaps in workers' skills and employee needs. Employers across the Nation and in my district in Kansas continue to stress the need for well-trained workers, often citing the lack of workers as a key constraint for their own growth.

Luckily, there are great educational programs in my district. I am so proud that many community colleges and technical colleges offer 2-year degrees in technical education that lead to high-paying, steady jobs across Kansas.

About 30 FFA students recently visited me on Capitol Hill. They talked about their desire to enter a wide array of careers and trades. Their pride in the work they are pursuing is contagious. H.R. 2353 seeks to align CTE programs and in-demand industries, while allowing local programs more flexibility to address the needs of local labor markets.

The bill further highlights the importance of employability skills to student access. Career and technical education is foundationally important to economic growth and innovation. These are the jobs that sustain our economy. We must always keep this curriculum at the top of our minds as we look to preparing our students for success and our economy for stability.

I look forward to voting in favor of H.R. 2353 and ask my colleagues to do the same.

CONGRATULATIONS TO PENNSBURG HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL TEAM ON WINNING STATE TITLE

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Pennsbury High School baseball team on winning their first State title on June 16, 2017.

After withstanding a rain delay of nearly 3½ hours, the Pennsbury Falcons triumphed over District 3 Dallastown in the PIAA Class 6A final at Penn State University. Thanks to Nick Price's single in the bottom of the seventh, the Falcons avoided extra innings and emerged on top, winning the game 1-0.

Pennsbury ended the season on 13 straight wins. Their pitching staff gave up one run in the playoffs, and zero runs in the last 30 innings. Billy Bethel was 4-0 with 0 earned runs in 27 innings in the district and State playoffs.

Mr. Speaker, it was Michael Jordan who said: "Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships." The Pennsbury Falcons are something special, led by 13 seniors and Head Coach Joe Pesci. They should be extremely proud—not only for their accomplishments on the field, but also the pride that they brought to their families, to their school, and to the entire Eighth Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the individual names of the PIAA 6A Championship Pennsbury High School Falcon baseball team.

R.J. Huth, Jake Martell, Christian Buchler, Gary Minnes, Vaughn Ward, Alan Wolf, Josh Tesarck, Max Crawn, Bryan Nagy, Justin Ward, Ryan McCarty, Josh Arruda, Alec Wilson, Nick Price, Tommy Erickson, Shane Ostrowsky, Nate Derry, Ben Spadea, Justin Massiello, Kyle Dear, Dave Murphy, Billy Bethel, Tyrone Hodges Jr, Alex Ritter.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, these young men have shown us what success can look like on the baseball field, and I am confident that they will succeed in all of their future endeavors, continuing to make all of us in Bucks County proud.

HONORING THE LIFE OF WILLIAM CHAD MULDER

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

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to a friend and an American hero.

Chief Special Warfare Operator William Chad Mulder was a Navy SEAL and a highly decorated combat veteran receiving, among other honors, three Bronze Stars with Valor. He was a brother; he was a husband; he was a father; and he was a friend. William Chad Mulder, or "Bill," as his friends knew him, concluded his mission here on this Earth June 9, 2017.

If anybody was ever born for battle, it was Bill Mulder. He seemed to come hardwired with a soldier's spirit. All who knew him felt safer on account of his service to our country. Bill was the ultimate warrior.

Those of us who grew up with Bill in my hometown of Plainview, Texas, also knew him as the epitome of a Plainview Bulldog. He was tenderhearted, but he was tough. He was as caring as he was courageous, and he was as fun-loving as he was fearless.

To his wife, Sydney: Thank you for loving Bill so well.

To his children: His tender heart and his warrior spirit will live on through each of you.

We are praying for all of you, and on behalf of Plainview High School, the class of 1989, and all of us who were fortunate enough to call Bill our friend, we are proud of you, Bill. You served with distinction and honor.

Thank you for dedicating your life to keeping us safe. We will miss you, buddy.

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 41 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS) at noon.

PRAYER

Rabbi Hershel Lutch, MEOR Foundation, Baltimore, Maryland, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, we pray this day for wisdom, humility, courage, and Your beneficence.

We pray that You endow the distinguished Members of this House with the wisdom to develop legislation that advances the noble aims of our Nation and the honorable needs of her citizens.

Lord, we pray that You grant us humility to know that we are Your subjects and it is Your children for whom we toil.

We pray for steadfast courage to champion justice with fortitude and to battle tyranny with vigor.

O Lord, we pray this day that Your blessings of safety, success, and serenity rest on each Member, staff, and security officer of this House, and we pray that we might make continued room for Your presence in our hearts and in the soul of our great Nation.

Gracious God, we thank You today and every day for the profound gift that these United States represent in our lives. Both for those here at home and for people around the world, America stands as a beacon of hope and leadership in times of challenge and conflict.

May God bless this House of Representatives and may God bless the United States of America.

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 gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas 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 RABBI HERSHEL LUTCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. EMMER) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize my friend, Rabbi Hershel Lutch, and to thank him for reading the opening prayer here on the House floor today.

Rabbi Lutch has devoted his life to working for the Jewish community in the United States and around the globe.

I met Rabbi Lutch on a trip to Israel that he and his organization, Aish HaTorah, helped to coordinate. That special trip showed me firsthand how our ally in Israel fights to survive and thrive every day.

In addition to his work for Aish HaTorah, Rabbi Lutch is the CEO of the MEOR Foundation, an organization that strives to inspire Jewish students on college campuses to learn more about their history and heritage.

In his personal life, Rabbi Lutch is a husband and a father and a son. He is an asset to his community and our country, and I am pleased we could hear from him on the floor today.

Thank you, Rabbi, for blessing us here today and for your continued dedication to the Jewish people and to people of all faiths. It is an honor to know you.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

HONORING ELSIE FIGUEROA JOHNSON

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

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Elsie Johnson, who passed away last week at her Raleigh home.

Elsie was born in Puerto Rico to Gilbert and Maria Figueroa, and it was there during World War II that she met her husband, Carl Johnson, a North Carolinian and a U.S. Navy sailor stationed at Roosevelt Roads Naval Base.

Elsie and Carl lived the American Dream. Together, they started a small business, a motor shop, which grew into a franchise automobile dealership in New Bern, North Carolina, and, under the leadership of their son, David, now spans dealerships from Maryland to Florida. David learned from his parents the value of hard work and excellent customer service.

Elsie was a woman of incredible faith in God. She was strong, wise, and honest. Mr. Speaker, she made a difference and she leaves a legacy.

May God bless her family.

NATIONAL ASKING SAVES KIDS DAY

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, today, June 21, is National Asking Saves Kids Day, or ASK Day.

Every 6 days in our country, a child under the age of 15 dies from an accidental gunshot. Each year, more than 600 children sustain nonfatal injuries from an unintentional gunshot, and 80 percent of all unintentional firearm deaths of children under the age of 15 occur in a home. This is a national crisis, and we need to stop it.

Since 2000, the ASK Campaign has encouraged parents to ask before their child visits another home whether there is an unlocked gun in the House.

Today is the first day of summer, the season when kids spend more time at a friend's house, so later today I will be introducing a resolution to officially designate June 21 as National ASK Day, to promote children's health and gun safety.

This is not a Democratic issue or a Republican issue. This is an issue important to every family all across our country. Let's get the job done and do something that will save the lives of children all across our country. Just ask.

NATIONAL POLLINATOR WEEK

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this week is National Pollinator Week, and it is a time when we encourage the protection of pollinator species, such as honeybees, native bees, birds, bats, and butterflies as essential partners of farmers and ranchers in producing food.

These pollinators are vital to keeping items like fruits, nuts, and vegetables in our diets.

As vice chairman of the House Agriculture Committee and chairman of the Nutrition Subcommittee, I know that healthy pollinator populations are critical to the continued economic well-being of rural America and our U.S. economy as a whole.

It is important to recognize how critical it is to protect the health of pollinators and celebrate the significance that they play in our everyday lives.

The number of honeybee hives has declined from 6 million in the 1940s to about 2.5 million today. We need to increase those habitats.

American farmers have no better friends than the honeybee. More than one-third of U.S. crops require pollination.

As someone who has a beehive in his backyard, I fully support efforts to raise awareness and keep our pollinators buzzing for generations to come.

SENATE REPUBLICANS ARE CRAFTING THEIR HEALTHCARE BILL IN SECRET

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, Senate Republicans are continuing to craft their healthcare bill, TrumpCare, in complete secrecy, behind closed doors, no hearings, no bill text, no transparency whatsoever, and they expect to bring this bill to the floor next week.

The bill is secret, but it is pretty clear why they are keeping this legislation secret: because it is a lousy piece of legislation and the American people reject it because it takes away healthcare from 23 million Americans. For those who are fortunate enough to have healthcare, they will pay more for worse care. You will pay an age tax if you are an older American just to have access to healthcare.

Even President Donald Trump says this healthcare bill is mean. And let's just face the obvious. If Donald Trump says something is mean, you have got a real problem.

This legislation should go through the process of open debate and dialogue, not be crafted in secret because it is such a bad piece of legislation that the people offering it are embarrassed for the folks in America to know what it says. We have to shut this down.

HONORING SAILORS LOST AT SEA

(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 USS *Fitzgerald* collided with a cargo vessel in the Sea of Japan on Saturday, resulting in the loss of life of seven patriotic sailors. Each of the deceased sailors was dedicated in the service to their Nation and exemplified the U.S. Navy's motto, "Not for self but for country."