



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 163

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, JUNE 29, 2017

No. 112

## House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

June 29, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JODY B. HICE 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 3, 2017, 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. All time shall be equally allocated between the parties, and in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

### GOP HEALTHCARE BILL

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, Members on both sides of the aisle have offered their share of passionate words about the GOP healthcare bill.

And as can happen, the debate has been deeply polarized here, leaving Americans to wonder sometimes whether the facts get obstructed by the politics of the day.

So I want to take a minute and share what some experts have had to say

about the Republican healthcare proposal. These are not politicians; far from it. These words come from folks who operate outside the walls of Washington's halls and have dedicated themselves to fighting for those struggling with mental illness.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the Republican healthcare plan will "force people with mental illness out of work, onto the streets, and into jails and emergency rooms."

The legislation "shows dangerous disregard for the well-being of people with substance use disorders and their families and erases decades of progress," says the Association for Addiction Professionals.

Mental Health America tells us that this bill "will ultimately do significant harm to people with all chronic conditions, including mental illness, while increasing the cost of healthcare to everyone."

The National Association for Rural Mental Health agrees, saying, "these actions will leave millions of Americans with serious mental health and substance use conditions without life-sustaining and essential health insurance coverage, especially at a time when the Nation is suffering from the largest opioid epidemic in history."

In short, this bill would be, according to the American Psychiatric Association, "particularly devastating to the millions of Americans in need of mental health and substance use treatment."

Mr. Speaker, these groups are not political organizations. They are doctors; they are healthcare professionals; they are patients; they are advocates who have dedicated their lives day and night to filling the gaps of a badly broken mental health system. Take it from them.

This is what TrumpCare is offering our country. This is what they are trying to sell us at a time when we are

losing nearly 100 Americans a day to an opioid epidemic. This is what is being negotiated behind closed doors as we speak while the rest of us read reports that tell us that the death toll from opioids could reach well over half a million people in the next decade.

So let me be clear: You cannot advocate for comprehensive mental health reform and then stand on the opposite side of nearly every major mental health organization in this country. You cannot claim to be a champion for those suffering from mental illness and then support a bill that guts funding for Medicaid, which is the largest payer of mental healthcare in this country.

You cannot say that you are committed to addressing the opioid epidemic and then stand behind a piece of legislation that gives insurance companies cover to deny those patients addiction treatment and to tell those in the grips of addiction to summon just a little more will.

You have to choose: With these families or with this bill? Which side are you on?

### JULY AS PARKS AND RECREATION MONTH

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I introduced a resolution with Congresswoman NIKI TSONGAS to designate July as Parks and Recreation Month. It is a fitting time to celebrate our Federal, State, and local parks and recreation systems as so many start this summer season by visiting these facilities that are available within our communities or even a short commute.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 406 recognizes the important role that public parks, recreation facilities, and activities plays in the lives of Americans and the

□ 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.



Printed on recycled paper.

H5299

contributions of employees and volunteers who work daily to maintain public parks across the Nation.

As a lifelong resident of rural Pennsylvania and an avid outdoorsman, I strongly support our Nation's parks and recreation facilities. Our parks provide countless recreational and educational opportunities for individuals and families to engage in the outdoors.

This resolution simply recognizes and supports Parks and Recreation Month and the many benefits, including health benefits, that a healthy active lifestyle contributes in our park settings that is provided to all Americans.

Our parks generate opportunities for people to come together and experience a sense of community. They pay dividends to communities by attracting businesses and jobs and increasing housing values.

In the United States, public park operations and capital spending generates nearly \$140 million in economic activity annually.

Ninety percent of people in the United States agree that public park recreation activities and facilities are important government services, a figure that displays a base of support that spans across all people in the country regardless of race, income, gender, or political party affiliation.

Nearly 75 percent of Americans agree that it is important to ensure all members of their community have equitable access to public parks and recreation facilities. The most economically sound communities are those with ample and healthy public parks and recreation facilities and activities. In fact, a key factor in business expansion and location decisions is the quality of life for employees, with a premium placed on adequate and accessible public parks and open space.

Mr. Speaker, public parks and recreation facilities foster a variety of activity that also contribute to a healthier society. People who use public parks and open spaces are three times more likely to achieve recommended levels of physical activity than nonusers.

Americans living within a 10-minute walk of a park have a higher level of physical activity and lower rates of obesity.

Recreation programs at public parks provide children with a safe place to play, access to healthy foods, opportunities to be physically active, and enrichment facilities that help prevent at-risk behavior such as drug abuse and gang involvement.

Mr. Speaker, as our Nation celebrates Independence Day next week, scores of Americans will visit public parks and recreation facilities to spend time outdoors with family, friends, and neighbors. We are blessed with beautiful outdoor facilities. I wish everyone a safe and happy Fourth of July. Get out and enjoy the parks in your area.

#### CUTS TO MEDICAID

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

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of children and adults living with disabilities across the United States.

The cuts to Medicaid outlined in the dangerous Senate healthcare repeal bill will not only result in the loss of healthcare access for millions of Americans, but will also significantly reduce funding for In-Home Supportive Services in my home State of California.

Medicaid covers 50 percent of the program costs for In-Home Supportive Services. These funds provide care for an estimated 531,000 disabled children and seniors throughout California, which permits them to continue to live with dignity in their own home.

The \$772 billion cut to Medicaid outlined in this bill will have a devastating impact on seniors and people with disabilities who rely on Medicaid as their safety net for necessary long-term care services.

These cuts will directly affect the lives of my constituents, including 15-year-old Crystal from Santa Maria, California, in my district. Crystal was born with spina bifida, weighing in at just 2 pounds. She has survived under the dedicated care of her mother and grandmother, who are her primary caretakers. Crystal is covered by Medicaid, which allows her to receive specialized medical attention, adaptive medical equipment, physical therapy, and pharmaceuticals. Crystal's condition requires 24-hour care, a need that is fulfilled by the In-Home Supportive Services program. Her life is contingent upon this program.

I call upon my colleagues in the Senate to vote against this cruel healthcare repeal, also known as TrumpCare, for Crystal and the millions of our constituents like her who are at risk of losing their quality of life.

#### PLAYER OF THE YEAR

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

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Logan Aleshire, a senior at St. Cloud Tech High School, on recently being named the Minnesota High School Class AAA Baseball Player of the Year by the Minnesota State High School Baseball Coaches Association.

Logan is a star athlete, and due to his leadership and skills as a pitcher and shortstop, he helped lead his team to an undefeated season in this year's State tournament.

Logan excelled on the field this year, but we have known about him for a while. In fact, he has been a three-time All-Central Lakes Conference pick, and just last year he was a Times Baseball All-Area Team selection.

While his high school baseball career is coming to a close, I have no doubt we will see great things from this young man both athletically and scholastically in the future. We look forward to seeing what he will accomplish next.

#### A FARM FAMILY TO CELEBRATE

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Kreitlow and Ford family on being recently named the 2017 Farm Family of the Year.

Built in 1898, the Kreitlow farm has been passed from generation to generation for more than a century, with each generation teaching the next about hard work and successful farming. Today, the Kreitlow farm is successfully operated by Willard Kreitlow, his daughter Marienne, and her husband Jerry Ford.

The farm was once a dairy operation, but since 1990, the farm has mainly become a vegetable and pasture operation. However, the work the Kreitlow and Ford family has accomplished goes far beyond the fresh produce they harvest. In fact, this hardworking family goes above and beyond by striving to educate others through their work with the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota.

I want to thank the Kreitlow and Ford family for not only providing quality food for Minnesotans, but also for educating others about the benefits of sustainable farming and giving back to their community. Our State is a healthier place because of their dedicated work.

#### 50 YEARS OF GIVING BACK

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank the United Way of Central Minnesota for helping families throughout our communities escape poverty for an incredible 50 years.

Over the past half century, the United Way of Central Minnesota has raised more than \$100 million, allowing them to help fund other nonprofits who provide services that help Minnesota families in need.

It is largely because of the generous contributions from the United Way of Central Minnesota that the Boys and Girls Club of Central Minnesota was able to get off the ground in the 1970s and to be able to grow into what it is today.

Thankfully, the United Way of Central Minnesota continues to grow strong. In fact, they recently announced their latest partnership with the St. Cloud School District to create neighborhood resource centers for students and their families. It is inspiring to see an organization solely devoted to helping others. Sometimes when someone is down on their luck, all it takes is a helping hand to get them back on their feet.

On behalf of thousands of Minnesotans, I would like to thank the United Way of Central Minnesota for being that helping hand for the past 50 years, and we look forward to many successful years to come.