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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BRAT).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 26, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DAVE BRAT 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.

DON'T PRIVATIZE AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, a temporary extension of the absolutely crucial Federal Aviation Administration—which runs our air traffic control system in the United States of America; the largest, most complex, and safest system in the world—failed. It actually will expire on October 1. That means that the source of funding for air traffic goes away and air traffic controllers may be working without salaries.

Now, why are we here?

We are here because the chairman of the committee insists that we must privatize the air traffic control of the United States, the largest, most complex, safest, most advanced system in the world, to make it even better. Unfortunately, he does not enjoy support adequate to get this bill through. He delayed the bill in the last Congress because he didn't have the votes, and the bill has been delayed multiple times in this Congress. It has bipartisan opposition, and the Senate isn't even thinking about this.

Now, why are we here?

Well, the airlines have this fake group they call the Citizens for On Time Flights. And they say we have to fly old zigzag patterns across the United States with World War II radar. Well, that would be really bad if it were true. However, it is a lie.

In fact, we have direct routes, performance-based navigation. Actually, the government has built and deployed a functional system where we can fly every plane in America by GPS. But the airlines haven't wanted to make the investment in their planes. So, actually, they are making a case against themselves.

Why aren't we using the system more efficiently?

Because they have failed to purchase the equipment to fly planes closer together. If every plane doesn't have GPS, we can't fly them closer together because the air traffic controllers won't know exactly where they are.

Now, they say: Well, if we get to run the system, it will be more efficient. It is ATC that is the problem.

Well, here is June: In June, actually, airline operations, overscheduling, crew dispatch, mechanicals, the host of things that they have, caused 46 percent of the delays.

And then they go on to say: Well, this is horrible, these delays. It costs Americans \$20 billion a year.

If that is true, then the airlines are costing American consumers \$11.5 billion a year because they themselves won't clean up their acts.

Again, they go on about ATO. How many times have their dispatch and reservation systems crashed in the last 5 years?

Dozens of times, stranding millions of people.

How many times has the entire ATC in the United States of America gone down?

Zero. Zero times.

So we should let them run it? They will run it better, just like their computer reservation and their dispatch systems?

Come on. There is really just a very simple agenda here. We finance the current Air Traffic Organization with a 7.5 percent tax on every ticket—a progressive tax. The more expensive your ticket, the more you pay. That pays for about 75 percent of the system today.

The bill that the chairman wants to push will repeal the ticket tax. Airlines will raise prices 7.5 percent. So everybody will still pay the same amount for their tickets.

How do I know that?

Because this tax temporarily lapsed 5 years ago and every airline in America, except for Spirit and Alaska, immediately raised ticket prices 7.5 percent.

So then how are we going to pay for the system?

Well, actually, they are going to impose a new head tax. That is right. You get on the plane and you will pay a new head tax to use the airspace of the United States of America.

Now, that, of course, is a flat fee. So if you have a \$100 ticket, 25 percent tax, \$25 to sit in that seat. If you have a \$3,000 ticket, well, you are going to pay a tiny fraction. It won't bother you very much at all. So we are going to go from a fair, progressive tax that finances the system to a flat head tax.

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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The airlines get a \$10 billion windfall. And guess what. Your elected Representative will have nothing to say about it. The people on the Ways and Means Committee, the Republicans here, have decided that the airlines will have a vote on the new user fee. Yes, they will. They have a designated seat on the board of the new private corporation, so they will vote on the user fee. Your elected Representative does not have a vote, does not have review capability. It is entirely removed from the jurisdiction of the United States Congress. This is absolutely outrageous.

I mean, a campaign based on lies. We have a report from the Government Accountability Office saying, in fact, if we privatize, it will delay things in terms of implementing the new system and make it more expensive.

I happen to have the draft report. It was censored by political people in the Bush administration. So the final report just kind of waters down those conclusions. But they are still in there, and I am happy to make the draft report available to anybody who wants to know honestly what is going on around here. This place is not straight up.

REAUTHORIZE THE MATERNAL, INFANT, AND EARLY CHILDHOOD HOME VISITING PROGRAM

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of reauthorizing the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, known as MIECHV, which the House is expected to consider later today.

Proudly, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania was one of the earliest adopters of evidence-based State policies and has utilized MIECHV to aid more than 4,000 families statewide. MIECHV-supported home visiting programs are widely embraced on both sides of the aisle. The programs have a proven record of success, and they support the Nation's most vulnerable families during a critical and crucial time in their children's development.

Parents truly are the children's first teachers, and the results speak for themselves. MIECHV helps improve maternal and newborn health. It reduces child injuries, abuse, and neglect. It improves school readiness and achievement. It reduces crime and domestic violence. It improves family economic self-sufficiency.

Mr. Speaker, during the home visiting process, nurses, social workers, educators, and other trained professionals form relationships with the expectant parents and visit with them until their child has completed his or her first year of school. This model of care empowers parents to make healthy decisions that positively impact their child's health, well-being, and learning development.

In Pennsylvania, MIECHV's funds support four evidence-based home visiting models. These include Early Head Start, Healthy Families America, Nurse-Family Partnership, and Parents as Teachers. MIECHV funding plays a critical role in helping increase the availability of these services to more and more families across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Scientific research has supported claims that these services positively impact health, education, and employment outcomes for children while reducing criminal justice costs, instances of child abuse, and independence on public assistance.

These services can also play a key role in helping to support infants and mothers struggling with addiction. Pennsylvania has a long history of evidence-based home visiting programs because they are a proven way to strengthen families and improve the lives of children.

For these reasons, I look forward to supporting H.R. 2824, the Increasing Opportunity and Success for Children and Parents through Evidence-Based Home Visiting Act, when it comes to the House floor this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to do the same.

ADMINISTRATION NEEDS TO FOCUS ON COUNTRY'S REAL ISSUES

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

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, our Nation has a lot of issues on its plate. We have to stabilize healthcare. We need an infrastructure plan that creates millions of good-paying jobs. We need to deal with the hurricanes and the aftermath not just in Texas and Florida, but also in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. We have a huge problem with North Korea and nuclear weapons, and that is just for starters.

So what did President Trump spend his weekend doing? Fixing healthcare for tens of millions of people?

No.

Lobbying for a robust job-creating infrastructure plan?

No.

Sending aid to Puerto Rico?

Not that either.

De-escalate the situation in North Korea?

Well, actually, quite the opposite. No. President Trump spent his weekend doing one of his favorite things: attacking Americans and various groups on his favorite medium: Twitter.

His most recent attack: NFL players who use their constitutional right to freedom of speech to protest.

But they are not the only ones and the only group being attacked. Back in July, The New York Times found that President Trump was on track to insult 650 people, places, and things on Twitter by the end of his first term. Well, 2 months later, he is certainly

still at it. Instead of attacking our Nation's problems, he is attacking us.

Let's take a quick look at some of the people and groups he has attacked both as a candidate and President. On this board we have just a handful of the people, places, and things President Trump has insulted, and if we were going to list them all, we would probably have to have dozens of poster boards.

Here is a sampling: JOHN McCAIN and JEFF FLAKE; Barack Obama; Hillary Clinton, even though the election happened a year ago; the media from The “failing” New York Times and the Amazon Washington Post to individual reporters like Katy Tur and Mika Brzezinski; ObamaCare; Hamilton, the Broadway musical; Jeff Sessions, his own Attorney General; the Emmys; Nordstrom; the Russian investigation; Rosie O'Donnell; the Paris climate agreement; Meryl Streep; Mexicans; protesters; fake news; John Oliver; Mark Cuban; Snoop Dogg; and this weekend, the NFL and its players.

The list goes on and on. Well, it is actually easier to name the people and things that President Trump has not attacked than all of the ones that he has. So I came up with a very small list of people or groups that he has not attacked after several extensive Google searches.

First, I don't think the President has attacked the barbershop quartet singing organization: the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing, also known as SPEBSQSA. To the best of my knowledge, he has never attacked them, so maybe he is a fan of barbershop crooners.

Although it is fairly recent, pumpkin spice lattes. I know they just came out. It is a sign of fall, but so far there is no Twitter traffic from Trump attacking these tasty treats.

Finally, these very fine people President Trump hasn't attacked nearly enough: the Klan, neo-Nazis, and other White supremacists.

Instead of being the attacker in chief, President Trump is supposed to unify the Nation, but all he does is divide us. His job is to work for the American people, to deliver on the promises and actually help Americans.

Here are the issues we need help with: stabilize the Affordable Care Act to ensure tens of millions of people keep their coverage, and don't just sabotage the marketplace.

We need good-paying jobs and better wages for the American people. We need a job and infrastructure plan like the President promised, but we have yet to see.

We need trade agreements that work for American workers. Again, another promise we have had with no tangible results.

And we need aid for Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands after last week's devastating hurricanes, much of what has yet to materialize.

Mr. President, while you are so busy tweeting about the NFL, you attack a