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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FITZPATRICK).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 10, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK 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 1:50 p.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

PROTECTING THE PUBLIC HEALTH

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, going back to the days of Teddy Roosevelt, it has been a bipartisan principle that protecting the public health in America's environment is the sacred obligation of all of us who have the honor to serve this Nation in elective or appointed office. Unfortunately, the Administrator of the EPA, Mr. Scott Pruitt, didn't get that memo.

Yesterday, Mr. Pruitt announced that he is precipitously going to strike down the Clean Power Plan rule sometime later today, which will turn the clock back in this country in terms of trying to get our arms around the issue of rising carbon emissions that scientists from across all sectors have universally recognized are causing rising sea temperature, rising sea levels, affecting climate, and clearly are linked to manmade carbon emissions that have been tracked for decades going back in time.

Mr. Pruitt's argument is based on the discredited view that carbon pollution does not fall under the Clean Air Act, which is what the last administration was proceeding on when they actually designed the Clean Power Plan rule.

The facts are these:

In 1963, this Congress passed the Clean Air Act. It was signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson and has been amended a number of times on a bipartisan basis to strengthen and enhance the protections that were built into that law when it was, again, enacted many years ago. In fact, in 1990, George Herbert Walker Bush signed the last update and upgrade to the Clean Air Act, which is exactly what the prior administration was proceeding under when they designed the rule.

The Supreme Court has weighed in on this question about whether or not greenhouse gases are covered under the Clean Air Act. In 2007, in Massachusetts v. EPA, a Republican-majority Court ruled in favor of the fact that greenhouse gases are in fact covered under the statutory umbrella of the Clean Air Act. This is what the Court said:

Because greenhouse gases fit well within the Clean Air Act's capacious definition of "air pollutant," we hold that EPA has the statutory authority to regulate the emission of such gases.

In 2014, the Court reenforced that ruling in a decision written by Antonin

Scalia, the godfather of conservative lawyers all across this country, which reiterated the fact that greenhouse gases emitted from power plants are, in fact, subject to the scope and authority of the Clean Air Act.

Unfortunately, today, the EPA Administrator is completely striking down that important advance in terms of protecting the public health of this country and putting nothing in place. There is no alternative that Mr. Pruitt is putting out there in terms of trying to get this country to move forward on clean power.

It is unfortunate because, as the International Energy Agency announced this morning, for the first time ever, solar energy production now surpasses any other form of power production in the world. The same thing is happening here in the U.S. because of the renewable energy tax credits.

In my State of Connecticut, renewable energy solar panel jobs far exceed any other power production job in the State. We are seeing an incredible proliferation of people installing panels on their homes and businesses.

The U.S. Navy in Groton, Connecticut, now has solar panels on all Navy housing as well as a solar field to power the Nation's oldest submarine base, which is there.

The decision by Mr. Pruitt is not a pro-growth, pro-economic decision. It is simply responding, unfortunately, to political forces that drove this administration to power from the fossil fuel industry.

The only saving grace of Mr. Pruitt's order is that he allows a large and long public comment period for the people of this country who do care about clean air and who do care about our environment to weigh in on this reckless decision that turns the clock back for public health and safety and for our economy. That is where the growth is going to be, in renewables, and not power production of the past.

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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It is not a war on coal. Coal production is not singled out in the Clean Power Plan regulations. But what it does say is that any plant, whether it is coal, natural gas, or solar panels, you have got to address the question of carbon emissions. You don't get to produce that power and then leave a mess behind you. That is a very simple principle that I think every American can understand.

Unfortunately, it is about to be torpedoed by the EPA Administrator, who, by the way, was in the courtroom trying to argue against this in the courts back in 2014 and came out on the losing decision. I guess he got his revenge not just on the Court but, unfortunately, all of us who have to live with this terrible rule.

Mr. Speaker, again, let's reverse that decision. Let's move toward the future with a type of power that will protect the environment and grow jobs.

HONORING THE LIFE OF TROOPER TIMOTHY O'NEILL

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

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a fallen hero. Tragically, Michigan State Trooper Timothy O'Neill made the ultimate sacrifice in an on-duty motorcycle accident.

I rise to offer my support and love to Trooper O'Neill's friends, family, and all who were fortunate enough to know him. As the proud parent of a police officer, I can only imagine the pain you must feel. Words are inadequate at such a time of sorrow, but please know you are in my prayers.

Trooper O'Neill was known by his friends, fiancee, and family for his sense of humor, compassion for animals, and deep love for his family. He is also remembered for his commitment to bettering our community and our safety.

I ask my colleagues and all those watching to join me in a prayer for Trooper O'Neill; his fiancee, Carli Hicks; parents, Kristine and Michael O'Neill; siblings, Sara O'Neill and Brian O'Neill; and his entire family.

May God bless them all.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF THELONIOUS MONK

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of the most innovative jazz musicians of all time, the legendary Thelonious Monk.

This legend, Mr. Speaker, was born in my congressional district in the State of North Carolina, and would have turned 100 years old today.

Thelonious Sphere Monk was the second of three children born to Thelonious, Sr., and Barbara Monk on October 10, 1917, in Rocky Mount,

North Carolina. Though Monk and his family left Rocky Mount for New York City when Thelonious was a child, scholars and fellow musicians say Monk's North Carolina roots had an important influence on the man and his music.

Writer Sam Stephenson credited Thelonious Monk's Carolina roots in the "Oxford American," writing that Rocky Mount's flourishing tobacco culture and rail yard was one of the largest in all of the South the year Monk was born. Stephenson speculated those railways may have inspired Monk's composition "Little Rootie Tootie," which features train whistle sounds.

Mr. Speaker, incidentally, the city of Rocky Mount, North Carolina, is divided between two counties, Nash County and Edgecombe County. The railroad in that community is the dividing line.

Every day, the CSX and Amtrak trains come through that community. They have been doing that for a very long time. Those train tracks were first established in 1855, even before the Civil War. It was established as the Wilmington to Weldon Railroad. It was the longest railroad in the entire world, consisting of more than 160 miles of track. It came through Mr. Monk's hometown.

Thelonious Monk began studying classical piano at the age of 11 and showed an early aptitude for the instrument. By the time he was 13 years old, he had won the weekly amateur competition at the Apollo Theater so many times that management banned him from reentering the contest there in Harlem.

In 1941, Monk began working at Minton's Playhouse in Harlem, where he joined the house band and helped develop the school of jazz known as bebop.

Alongside fellow jazz greats Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Eubie Blake, and Ruble Blakey, Monk honed his fast and often improvised style that would later become synonymous with modern jazz.

Thelonious Monk's first known recording was made in 1944, when he worked as a member of the Coleman Hawkins Quartet. Monk did not record under his own name, however, until 1947, when he played as the leader of a sextet session for Blue Note.

In 1947, he married Nellie Smith, his longtime sweetheart. Two children were born to the marriage, whom they named after Monk's parents, Thelonious and Barbara.

In 1952, Monk signed a contract with Prestige Records, which produced pieces like "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes" and "Bags' Groove," which he recorded with Miles Davis in 1954. In 1956, Mr. Speaker, Monk released his third album, "Brilliant Corners," which is considered by many to be his first true masterpiece.

In 1957, the Thelonious Monk Quartet, which included John Coltrane, began performing regularly, with tours across the United States and Europe.

By 1964, Monk was popular with the mainstream audience and became one of the four jazz musicians ever to grace the cover of Time magazine.

The years that followed included several overseas tours, but by the early 1970s, Monk was ready to give it up. He was ready to retire from the limelight. After battling illnesses for several years, Monk passed away from a stroke in 1982.

Finally, Thelonious Monk, Mr. Speaker, has since been inducted into the North Carolina Music Hall of Fame and the Grammy Hall of Fame, added to the Library of Congress' National Recording Registry, awarded a Pulitzer Prize, and featured on a United States postage stamp.

Thelonious Monk left a legacy as one of the originators of modern jazz music. That is why the city of Rocky Mount is so proud of their native son. They celebrated this past weekend in various places throughout the city honoring and celebrating the life of this great musician.

I ask my colleagues to join me today in paying tribute to an outstanding artist, Thelonious Monk, as his family; the residents of Rocky Mount, North Carolina; and the country prepare to celebrate his 100th birthday.

BEAU BIDEN FOUNDATION

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the formation of a partnership between the Beau Biden Foundation and Doylestown Health, which will clear the way for efforts to prevent, recognize, and react appropriately to child sexual abuse in our community.

This critical program will be funded through the generous support of the Cowhey Family ShopRite in Warminster and will train local medical staff in the Darkness to Light's Stewards of Children course utilizing online education tools.

There is no doubt that because of the compassionate efforts of these organizations, the Beau Biden Foundation, Doylestown Health, and the Cowhey Family ShopRite in Warminster, Bucks County, children will be safer and our community stronger.

Mr. Speaker, I stand in strong support of this vital new partnership and all efforts to protect our society's most vulnerable.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CHRISTOPHER WARD, SR.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a lifelong Levittown resident, Christopher Ward, Sr., who passed away suddenly last month.

Born in Bristol, Pennsylvania, Chris became an accomplished businessman and a true pillar of our community. With all his success, he strongly supported local small businesses and always rooted for the underdog.

People in Levittown will remember Chris as the co-owner of Bailey's Bar &