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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:
Living God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

As we face a new day, help us to discover the power of resting in You. Send Your spirit down upon the Members of the people's House. Grant them wisdom, insight, and vision that the work they do will be for the betterment of our Nation, and help them to identify and bring to pass policies that will redound to the benefit of our children and grandchildren.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

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.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

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

PULMONARY HYPERTENSION AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Pulmonary Hypertension Awareness Month and the outstanding work of the Pulmonary Hypertension Association.

It is hard to believe that just over 20 years ago pulmonary hypertension patients were given less than 3 years to live and no treatment options. Today, there are 14 FDA-approved treatments for patients with this rare condition, and they continue to live longer.

I am proud of the work of the Pulmonary Hypertension Association and their volunteers and leadership over the past decade and a half, and I am glad to be a small part of it.

My inspiration was a 5-year-old patient named Emily, the daughter of my dear friend Jack Stibbs. Thanks to medical advancements, Emily graduated from Vanderbilt University and is leading an amazing life.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to continue to support critical research efforts to improve the lives of our PH patients.

HONORING REGINALD F. LEWIS

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

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of a native son of Baltimore, Maryland, Mr. Reginald F. Lewis.

Let me also acknowledge the presence of many of the Lewis family members in the gallery, including his mother, Carolyn; widow, Loida; daughter, Leslie; and brother, Anthony.

From November 30 to December 1, 1987, 30 years ago, Mr. Lewis negotiated the \$985 million leveraged buyout of Beatrice International Foods. At the time, it was the largest leveraged buyout of an American company's overseas assets, and it led to the creation of what the New York Times identified in 1993 as the largest corporation in the United States led by an African American.

Mr. Lewis' accomplishments changed the face of American business forever and opened new doors of opportunity on Wall Street. His substantial philanthropic gifts have also continued to benefit Baltimore and, indeed, the Nation. They help young Americans of color to dream bigger, and in Lewis' own words, to "keep on going, no matter what."

I invite everyone to join me in celebrating and honoring Reginald Lewis' memory and extraordinary accomplishments.

CONGRATULATING NORTH HUNTERDON WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY TEAM

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

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an important athletic achievement in New Jersey's Seventh Congressional District. The North Hunterdon High School women's cross country team won the State Meet of

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Champions. The North Hunterdon Lions are an historic and distinguished program, winning seven State cross country championships over the years.

I commend these young women on their athletic achievement. I can only imagine how proud their parents and families must be.

It is encouraging that the hard work of these young women has been rewarded with success. Their perseverance and commitment should be commended.

I also express my heartfelt congratulations to their coach, Sean Walsh. With Coach Walsh's steadfast leadership, the North Hunterdon women's cross country team was able to realize its full athletic potential. And these young women are distinguished academically as well.

Congratulations to all who were involved.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MITCHELL). The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery that they are here as guests of the House and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings is in violation of the rules of the House.

PROTECTING AN OPEN INTERNET

(Ms. ESHOO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, last week, FCC Chairman Pai circulated his plan to extinguish the most important technological achievement in modern history: the free and open internet. His plan guts the 2015 open internet rules and removes the FCC as the cop on the beat to protect consumers online.

Without protections against blocking, throttling, or paid prioritization, there will be nothing to stop ISPs from slowing or blocking a website or charging consumers more to access certain content. It would allow ISPs to pick winners and losers by charging small businesses tolls to reach potential customers online, and they will be able to control the flow of information on the internet.

Millions of Americans cheered for the 2015 rules to protect the open internet, rules that have been upheld by the courts. With those rules in place, ISPs have been less likely to mess with content.

Meanwhile, investment in the online ecosystem continues to grow with innovative new apps and more buildout of broadband.

I stand here in opposition to Chairman Pai's plan, and I urge my colleagues to do the same. The internet belongs to all of us, not just the big ISPs.

SHERIFF HARVEY GJESDAL RETIRES

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sheriff Harvey Gjesdal of Douglas County, Washington, for his significant contributions to the safety of the constituents in the Fourth District and to congratulate him on his recently announced retirement.

Sheriff Gjesdal has served in Washington State law enforcement for over 30 years. He began his career in 1985, at the Garfield County Sheriff's Office, and he spent 8 years in the Bellevue Police Department before landing in Douglas County in 1995. He was promoted to sergeant in 2000 and elected to his current position in 2006.

Additionally, he served in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve for 26 years, where he was activated four times, including two tours in the Middle East.

For the last 22 years, Sheriff Gjesdal has been promoting safety and building strong relationships in central Washington. I am thankful for his leadership and compassion, and I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating him on a successful career.

TAX BILL

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, today 9 million children are at risk of losing their access to healthcare and millions of parents are losing sleep as funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program expires.

Community health centers across the country are at risk of steep cuts, forcing them to lay off medical professionals and turn away thousands of patients as their funding expires.

DREAMers, who know no other home than America, are at risk of deportation as their DACA status expires.

Military families, who serve a nation at war, are at risk of going without pay as government funding expires.

But instead of passing legislation to ensure children have access to healthcare, to keep community health centers open, to protect our DREAMers, and to support military families, the majority is too focused on cutting taxes for the wealthiest individuals in America. This is a shameful failure to act in the best interests of the American people.

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS MONTH

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, today kicks off International Human Rights

Month, a celebration of the inalienable rights to which everyone is entitled.

This coming year marks the 70th anniversary of the date the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations, a document which has been translated into more than 500 languages.

This week, we examine the perils of human trafficking, which, at its core, is a violation of fundamental human rights and is far too prevalent around the globe.

As vice chair of the International Religious Freedom Caucus, I am saddened by the atrocities occurring around the globe in which people of all faiths are persecuted.

We cannot turn a blind eye to injustice. America must remain a beacon of principled courage, recognizing and promoting the basic human rights of all people. If we remain silent in the face of these transgressions, we neglect that moral imperative, and we do so at the peril of civil society.

REPUBLICAN TAX PLAN

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

Mr. GOMEZ. Mr. Speaker, from California to New York and everywhere in between, the Republican tax scam steals from working class families to give the top 1 percent and large corporations a massive tax break.

The Republican plan eliminates deductions like State and local taxes, mortgage interest rates, medical expenses, and student loan interest that working families rely on.

This bill will only increase income inequality in our country, where the rich get richer and those in the middle class and those struggling to get into the middle class are left further and further behind.

I can't believe anyone would vote for such a bill. Either you know what is in it and you don't care about the consequences of your vote, or you don't and you will still vote for it anyway. I don't know which one is worse.

To the Republicans who care about the deficit only when Democrats are in power, you have lost all credibility when it comes to this issue. I hope the American people will remember who voted for this bill.

ORGANIC PRODUCTION IS GROWING IN PENNSYLVANIA

(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 I had the opportunity to meet with a number of organic farmers to discuss the upcoming farm bill and its impact on organic production.

In recent years, organic production has continued to grow in Pennsylvania,