

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

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

The prophet Isaiah warns us: O Lord, unless we acknowledge You as Lord with living faith and lasting reverence, we go adrift.

You have raised us and reared us. Our pets know their owners, our appetites know where to be fed, yet there are times when we do not know where to turn unless we truly belong to You.

As Your people, should we hear You call us: "... a sinful nation, a people laden with wickedness, an evil race, corrupt children," should we run away from You? Or toward You?

In those times, is it You we fear and cannot face? Or is it the truth about ourselves? Strengthen us that we may be drawn into the truth by You, now and always.

May all we do in the people's House be for Your greater honor and glory.

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 Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee 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 PRO TEMPORE

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

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIPS ARE GOOD FOR BUSINESS

(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, this week we have representatives from the South Carolina Manu-

facturing Extension Partnership, MEP, visiting for their annual legislative day. MEPs are public-private partnerships that help small- and medium-size manufacturers grow their business. There are MEP centers in all 50 States and Puerto Rico.

Manufacturing is one of America's major economic drivers, comprising over 12 percent of our annual GDP, with most manufacturing firms in the United States having 500 employees or less. MEPs provide much-needed assistance for manufacturers to become more successful. MEPs help manufacturers grow their global market with export guidance on where to eliminate waste.

Last year, MEPs across the country generated \$1.7 billion in cost savings, \$3.5 billion in new client investments, and helped create and retain over 100,000 jobs. You can see these benefits firsthand in the Second Congressional District, where the South Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership, led by Chuck Spangler, served over 40 companies last year, resulting in \$25 million in new sales and 25 retained jobs.

I am grateful for the MEP's positive impact in communities across the country.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

BIPARTISAN ACTION ON GUNS

(Ms. GABBARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the students, faculty, staff, families, and community around Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School who lost 17 of their own 3 weeks ago today.

I rise to join the entire community of Parkland and millions of Americans all across the country, Democrats and Republicans, who are saying enough is enough. The time for action is now.

We cannot allow partisan politics to get in the way of taking meaningful action in areas where both parties agree and that have the support of most Americans across this country. Here are a few examples:

Both Democrats and Republicans support legislation I have cosponsored to ban bump stocks.

Both Democrats and Republicans support legislation to close the loophole exploited by the Sutherland Springs, Texas, shooter last year.

Both Democrats and Republicans support legislation to uphold Second Amendment rights and strengthen the National Instant Criminal Background Check System.

Now is the time for us to come together and to take meaningful action towards responsible, commonsense gun safety reform.

FEARS OF A TRADE WAR ARE BEING GREATLY EXAGGERATED

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

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, in his column yesterday, Pat Buchanan wrote that, through most of its history, the Republican Party was the high tariff party, favoring tariffs rather than income taxes. He wrote that those tariffs helped the U.S. to become the strongest industrial power in the world.

In the 1950s and 1960s, 53 percent of American jobs were industrial based, many of them white collar. Now only around 10 percent are in manufacturing, and many thousands of college graduates are working as waiters and waitresses or in other low-paying jobs and living with their parents.

Fears of a trade war are being greatly exaggerated. We have been in a trade war for many years, and we have been losing. With only 4 percent of the world's population, we buy almost 23 percent of the world's goods.

Every country wants into our markets, and we have tremendous leverage on trade that we haven't been using. President Trump's proposed tariffs apply only to two products. I commend him for his effort to try to protect American jobs.

GOP TAX BREAK FOR BILLIONAIRES

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, despite their best efforts, my Republican friends have not fooled the American people.

They provided a modest, temporary tax cut for some Americans, but their tax bill raised taxes on 86 million middle class families. Eighty-three percent of the tax cuts go to the top 1 percent. It creates \$2.3 trillion in debt and pays for it with deep cuts to Medicare and Medicaid.

It also provides a huge tax break, \$1.3 trillion, for the biggest corporations in this country and further incentivizes shipping American jobs overseas. Corporations have announced more than \$200 billion in stock buybacks in just 3 months, more than 30 times what workers received.

Corporations like Walmart and Pfizer, at the same time, are laying off thousands of workers as they pocket massive tax breaks for themselves, and we gave them incentives to ship more jobs overseas.

Democrats want real bipartisan tax reform that starts with a real permanent tax break for the middle class that will produce better jobs and better wages for a better future. The American people deserve A Better Deal than this raw deal that they got from the Republicans in this tax bill.

IN MEMORY OF DEPUTY LOCKLEAR

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

Mr. PITTENGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of Scotland County, North Carolina, Deputy Alexis "Thunder Eagle" Locklear, who was killed in the line of duty last Thursday while rushing to the aid of a fellow officer.

Deputy Locklear was just 23 years old and had only been on the force for 10 months, yet those who knew him best said he died doing what he loved.

My friend, Scotland County Sheriff Ralph Kersey, said that Deputy Locklear made friends everywhere he went. Sheriff Kersey said: "He wanted to be a law enforcement officer, and he chose the Scotland County Sheriff's Office. It did not take a long time spending with Thunder to know that he would fit right in with this family."

Deputy Locklear leaves behind a 4-year-old daughter as well as his parents, grandparents, and six sisters.

Last week, Scotland County lost a hero, but a hero remembered never dies in our hearts. Please join me in offering condolences to the Locklear family, Sheriff Kersey, and the Scotland County Sheriff's Office.

ELECTION SECURITY

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, the threat of foreign interference in our elections is real. Our intelligence chiefs are sounding the alarm that Russia views the 2018 election as a target for additional interference. And finally, yesterday, President Trump at last acknowledged Russian meddling and vowed to guard against it, saying: "We won't allow that to happen."

But, Mr. Speaker, actions speak louder than words, and time and time again, this administration has proven unwilling to confront this threat. We learned this week that the State Department is not using any of the resources they have been given to counter election interference. U.S. Cyber Command Chief Admiral Mike Rogers said the President has not granted him authority to disrupt Russian hacking operations. And we are still waiting on the administration to impose sanctions on Russia passed by an overwhelming bipartisan majority in this Congress.

This isn't a future concern. Americans voted in Texas primaries yesterday, and they are already heading to the polls in my State, Illinois, where early voting began on Monday.

I urge the administration to get serious about this threat and support funding for the Election Assistance Commission and resources for State election officials on the front lines of this

battle. This is not a partisan issue. It is about protecting our democracy and ensuring the integrity of every American's vote.

VETERANS AFFAIRS EMPLOYEES SPENDING 100 PERCENT OF THEIR TIME ON UNION ACTIVITIES

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

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, I came to the floor today to speak about my cotton farmers, but my heart is heavy after a conversation with our veterans—our VFW, to be exact—about this issue of union time, union activities on the taxpayer dime.

There was a GAO report a year ago that said there were hundreds of VA employees spending 100 percent of their time on union activity, not the job they were hired to do, not in service to our veterans who wait in line to get healthcare, who sometimes get sicker and sometimes even die.

The law says that the only way to do official time is it must be administered in a way that is reasonable, necessary, and in the public's best interests. Somebody spending 100 percent of their time on anything other than what they were hired to do, and especially in service to our veterans, is not reasonable; it is not necessary, and it certainly isn't in the best interests of the American people. It is outrageous.

SUPPORTING HMONG VETERANS WHO FOUGHT DURING THE VIETNAM WAR

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call for the support of the Hmong Veterans' Service Recognition Act.

This bipartisan legislation extends veterans' burial benefits to Hmong and Laotian-American veterans who fought in the United States Armed Forces during the Vietnam war. These brave men and women risked their lives fighting alongside American servicemen and -women as soldiers in the Special Guerrilla Units, otherwise known as SGUs.

The SGUs were covertly trained by the CIA during the Vietnam war and then led into direct combat support for American forces, yet they have never been recognized for their service, which is why I introduced the legislation with Congressman PAUL COOK, himself a decorated Vietnam veteran, who was a colonel in the United States Army and knows their story well.

There are only an estimated 5,000 Hmong veterans still alive today, with thousands of them in the San Joaquin Valley that I represent.

We extended this honor to Filipino soldiers years ago. I ask that we honor these courageous individuals with their choice of being laid to rest next to

their brothers in arms. It is the right thing to do.

GUN VIOLENCE

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, as Congress fails to advance commonsense gun safety legislation, I would like to share a letter from a young constituent of mine, Bella, from Skokie, Illinois.

Bella recently had a lockdown at her school. She writes: "While my peers and I crowded in the corner of my classroom, my mind instantly thought about the rise in school shootings in 2018. I thought, 'Am I going to be part of that statistic?'. . . This lockdown made me realize that something like that could happen to anyone anywhere. Please do something."

Well, Bella, we have solutions that are supported by an overwhelming majority of Americans: banning assault weapons, passing comprehensive background checks.

Students and parents around the country are telling us to do something. It is time, now, for Congress to listen.

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YOUNG VOICES ON GUN VIOLENCE

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like to share excerpts from a letter I received from a 15-year-old in my district of San Diego. It shows the impact the Parkland, Florida, school shooting is having on our young people.

This young person writes: "I have never been in a school shooting nor do I know anyone who has, yet I feel every time I think about it or have a dream about it, I experience it."

"I'm only 15 years old, why am I terrified to go to places I used to love because someone could shoot me?"

"Why is it so easy to buy and make guns in this country?"

"Why can nobody seem to do the right thing and put a stop to this?"

"Why does nobody pay attention to the kids in this country who have never been in a shooting but live in constant fear and do not feel safe?"

"I am asking you to do something about the gun policies in this country so people stop dying and younger generations of people can feel safe."

"Put us first, not guns."

Mr. Speaker, what is the Chair's answer to this young voice?

MEDICARE FOR ALL

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House today and the people