



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 164

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 2018

No. 48

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

March 20, 2018.

I hereby appoint the Honorable RANDY K. WEBER, Sr. 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 8, 2018, 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.

RUSSIAN INTERFERENCE IN ELECTIONS

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak about Russian interference in our elections.

In the last 18 months, the United States intelligence agencies and our allies abroad have decisively concluded that Russia interfered with our elections. We have sworn testimony from men and women with impeccable records, Democrats and Republicans

alike. Their testimony overwhelmingly states that Russia interfered in our elections and that Russia has done so as well in other Western democracies for years.

Russia's goal with election interference is to destabilize Western democracies. Destabilizing our democracy will weaken our ability to defend ourselves against foreign adversaries like Russia, China, and Iran.

Democratic institutions and systems are the foundation of how we govern ourselves and defend our borders. When the integrity of democratic institutions is doubted, the power of our democracy is weakened.

Make no mistake: attacking the integrity of our democratic institutions is an attempt to weaken our Nation and our way of life. We must ensure that neither Russia nor any other foreign power interferes in our election process in the future.

The House of Representatives seems to have abdicated its official role in investigating Russian interference. It is my hope that the Senate will continue its investigation in a bipartisan manner. Thus, Special Counsel Robert Mueller must be allowed to continue his investigation, following the evidence wherever it leads, and write a comprehensive and complete report without intrusion or obstruction by political power plays.

This is not a Democratic or Republican issue. This is an American issue.

Mr. Speaker, as Members of Congress, our first responsibility is to protect our Nation. We take an oath of office every 2 years to defend and protect our Nation from all enemies, foreign and domestic.

I call upon my colleagues, my fellow Americans, to join me in putting partisanship aside, putting our country first, and doing everything we can to prevent foreign interference in our elections in the future.

TARIFFS AND TRADE

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I also rise today to speak about U.S. trade and the recently raised tariffs on steel and aluminum.

We all want to secure American jobs and increase the opportunity in the U.S. economy, but raising far-reaching tariffs will do just the opposite. The most likely effect of raising tariffs will be other countries adjusting their trade measures to protect their economies and their workers. This is known as a trade war, and no one wins in a trade war.

What's more, American agriculture is always the target of international reactionary and retaliatory trade behavior. California agriculture, which I am a strong advocate of and represent, feels the most intense direct pain from these tariffs. California farmers and ranchers earned roughly 44 percent of their total revenue from international trade in 2016.

But this pain will radiate across the country. Manufacturers, processors, merchants, and farmers will face negative impacts to their businesses as foreign markets close, which will cost both American jobs and profits.

Yes, we have an international trade imbalance that must be addressed, but raising these tariffs, I think, is the wrong strategy, plain and simple. This is why both Republicans and Democrats have publicly expressed grave concern with these recent actions.

The way to address these trade imbalances is to successfully renegotiate and modernize NAFTA and other trade agreements with our European allies. The President and Congress must work together on trade agreements; it is that simple.

Our best approach for successfully renegotiating trade agreements is in a way that serves the entire Nation is by Republicans and Democrats coming together and putting in the hard work required for bipartisan negotiations, serious policymaking, and getting the job

□ 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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done. That is what we are supposed to do.

OUR JOB IS TO KEEP STUDENTS SAFE

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

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, as a parent with kids in school, I believe that no parent should have to worry if their child will come home safe at the end of the day. That is why I rise today to join President Trump in urging the Senate to immediately pass the STOP School Violence Act. The House overwhelmingly passed this legislation last week, and now it is time for the U.S. Senate to act and pass this bipartisan, commonsense bill.

Among other positive steps forward, this bipartisan bill would provide funding to enable local schools to make physical and technological improvements to keep students safe.

Southwestern High School in my district has been called the safest school in America because of its focus on security, training, and coordination with local law enforcement. I have had the opportunity to visit Shelby County's Southwestern High School and speak with the leadership there and the Shelby County Sheriff's Department leadership as well, and, frankly, I could not have been more impressed.

If the STOP School Violence Act is enacted, more schools could follow the example set by Southwestern High School. The U.S. Senate needs to do its job now and act quickly to pass this commonsense legislation to secure our schools and keep America's children safe.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 7 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Dr. Michael S. Lewis, Roswell Street Baptist Church, Marietta, Georgia, offered the following prayer:

Our Father in Heaven, we enter into Your presence this day with thanksgiving in our hearts for the gracious gift of life and the opportunities that You have set before us. We bless You for being our Creator and for providing a living relationship of love through Your Son and our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

We humble ourselves before You as men and women of this special body

whom You have appointed with the responsibility of serving the people of this Nation. May You fill the minds of each leader with wisdom which is from above, fill each heart with passion for Your glory and the greatest good of others, and fill each decision with the guidance of Your Spirit.

My heart is grateful to voice this intercessory prayer on this day in our Nation's history with fellow citizens. May You unite our hearts to glorify Your name. May You bless the cities and communities of our Nation with peace. May You bless the United States of America, for I humbly make this prayer in the name of Jesus.

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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER 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.

WELCOMING DR. MICHAEL S. LEWIS

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, today I have the honor of introducing our guest pastor, Dr. Michael Lewis, from my home district and from the great city of Marietta, Georgia.

Dr. Lewis graduated in 1996 with a master of divinity degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. In May of 2005, he received an honorary doctor of divinity degree from Liberty University. He has had the honor of serving in churches in South Carolina, Texas, and Florida as their pastor.

Currently, Dr. Lewis serves as pastor of Roswell Street Baptist Church in Marietta, Georgia, where he lives with his wife of 25 years, Liliana, and their three wonderful daughters.

It is my privilege to introduce Dr. Michael Lewis, who opened us this morning in prayer.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEBER of Texas). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-

minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

CELEBRATING WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in honor of Women's History Month. Every March, we celebrate the trailblazing women who have enriched our history, our society, and our communities.

This month, it is important to recognize the hardworking women in today's workforce. Today, more than 70 percent of women work outside of the home, and these women account for nearly half of the workforce, while 40 percent of women are their family's top earners.

Because of tax reform, the women of America's workforce will be able to keep more of their hard-earned cash to spend on their families, rather than sending it to Washington. Additionally, working moms and their families will receive double the child tax credit to ensure they have the means to care for their children.

Mr. Speaker, to the naysayers who claimed that tax reform would only benefit rich men, I say that is categorically false. Tax reform already has and will continue to empower the wonderful women in America's workforce to make history worth recognizing.

HONORING THE LIFE OF REVEREND JAMES HAWLEY MCKINNON, JR.

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great North Carolinian, a friend to many, and a man of God, Reverend James Hawley McKinnon, Jr.

Mr. Speaker, Jim passed away on Sunday, March 11, at the age of 77. Jim McKinnon preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ in eastern North Carolina for decades. His ministry inspired and motivated so many individuals, both in his home of Wilson, North Carolina, and elsewhere.

Ordained as a minister of the Presbyterian church on September 22, 1968—shortly after the assassinations of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Senator Robert F. Kennedy—Jim served congregations throughout North Carolina; first as an associate pastor in Fayetteville, and then as a senior pastor in Morehead City, Charlotte, and Wilson, where he retired after 26 years as senior pastor of First Presbyterian Church.

Jim McKinnon was a strong, strong pillar in our community and he will be missed. Jim McKinnon is survived by his wife of 51 long years, Louise Cherry McKinnon; and their two sons, also Presbyterian ministers, James, III—we