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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 12, 2018.

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

PROTECTING COVERAGE FOR PREEXISTING CONDITIONS

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, last Thursday, June 7, the Attorney General of the United States, Jeff Sessions, announced that: "After careful consideration and with the approval of the President of the United States," his lawyers joined the State of Texas in Federal Court in a lawsuit to strike down standing provisions of the Afford-

able Care Act that protect patients from being denied health insurance coverage because of preexisting medical conditions.

This stunning announcement was made despite the fact that Congress has not, and I repeat, has not repealed this part of the law, which is right here, page 1 of the Affordable Care Act, and despite the fact that President Trump and the Republican leaders have repeatedly promised to leave this section of the law alone.

The President, in his 2017 State of the Union said: "First, we must ensure that Americans with preexisting conditions have access to coverage."

Speaker RYAN: "We are on a mission to make sure that everyone has access to affordable healthcare, especially those with preexisting conditions."

The Representative who is the chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee that writes healthcare laws stated: "We've talked about the protection for those with preexisting illnesses for the last year, and we're not going to budge either."

Thursday's announcement by President Trump's Attorney General to attack preexisting condition protections as unconstitutional, and the deafening silence over the last 5 days in the wake of that announcement from GOP leaders in the House, shows that all those heartfelt comments and words were nothing more than crocodile tears.

From day one, the push to repeal the Affordable Care Act with no meaningful replacement, and last week's latest attack, shows this President and his political allies in Congress just plain don't care about the millions of Americans who struggle with medical conditions that they have no control over.

Mr. Speaker, this issue is not just a Washington, D.C., political squabble. It is not just a courtroom battle between lawyers. It goes to the heart of whether we, as a Nation, will join the rest of the developed world to treat all Ameri-

cans for disease, accidents, and chronic illness in a fair and just manner.

Here are the facts. According to the Department of Health and Human Services, up to 133 million Americans have conditions that insurance companies, using the old rules of medical underwriting, defined as preexisting conditions, conditions like diabetes; cancer; high blood pressure, which I have; epilepsy; MS; Parkinson's; stroke, to name just a few. Again, this is the list that insurance companies use to screen people for whether or not they would actually deny them coverage at all, no matter how big a subsidy or no matter how much money you had to pay.

Last year, during the debate on repeal, I heard from constituents in my district who benefited from the Affordable Care Act protections, like Michelle from Killingworth who said: "Before the ACA, I tried to buy affordable health coverage, but I was turned down by major insurance companies due to preexisting conditions."

Patricia from Old Saybrook: My adult daughter has a chronic disease that costs over \$10,000 every 6 weeks to treat. Our insurance is a godsend.

Richard from Killingworth, a 63-year-old former educator who sustained TBI in an accident and was treated for prostate cancer: "Thankfully, due to the Affordable Care Act, I have been able to access healthcare that I need."

Michele from Preston, she and her husband rely on ACA coverage.

This decision by the Attorney General last Thursday cannot and must not stand, and the voters in November will remember if this body does not act to protect people, their health coverage, for preexisting conditions.

SINGAPORE POWWOW

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, ending the nuclear threat in North Korea

□ 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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is within our reach. The maximum-pressure campaign has demonstrated some clear successes in pushing North Korea to the negotiating table and pausing its nuclear and missile tests. This is serious progress, and if we maintain our focus on disarming Kim Jong-un, we can end this horrific danger.

President Trump made history as the first United States President to meet with the leader of North Korea. I applaud President Trump for prioritizing the North Korean challenge, which has major global implications beyond just our own security.

The Singapore Summit is the first step toward the complete denuclearization of the North Korean peninsula. North Korea has pledged their commitment to work toward this agreement.

President Trump also reached an agreement to complete the recovery of United States' Korean war dead in the Korean Peninsula. This is, without a doubt, historic progress.

I urge the White House to stand firm on "complete, verifiable, and irreversible" disarmament of North Korea.

While this progress is promising, we must proceed with caution. This is not the first time the United States has attempted negotiations with this tyrannical state.

In the aftermath of these preliminary negotiations, many questions do remain.

Will China and Russia hold firm on their commitments of applying sanctions to North Korea? China and Russia have continuously undermined our efforts against a range of global bad actors.

Will a traditional nuclear deterrence work with North Korea? If North Korea is able to produce nuclear weapons and use them to hold the world hostage and blackmail its neighbors, the world will become less safe.

North Korea has played the United States for decades. Those days are over. President Trump has made this clear to Kim Jong-un.

We cannot afford the same mistakes that were made with the Iranian nuclear deal to provide relief to a regime that would spread terror and chaos with whatever money is earned from sanctions relief. No more billions of American dollars secretly given to a rogue regime in the darkness of night on an isolated airstrip, like our Government did with Iran.

We all want to disarm this evil regime, but giving concessions for the sake of ending the nuclear threat carries its own risk and moral dilemmas. Ensuring that Kim is able to hold on to power and continue to enslave his people presents massive problems.

It seems to me that Kim's goal is to remain in power. He does not want the same fate as Muammar Qadhafi.

There are other issues that need to be resolved. The regime still possesses a massive chemical, biological, and conventional arsenal that is capable of

mass murder and destruction. The regime still desires to reunify the Korean Peninsula under its rule. The regime still provides weapons technology to other bad actors like Iran and Syria. The regime is still the number one abuser of human rights in the world.

Whatever outcome is achieved in further negotiations, we must not forget who we are dealing with. The Kim dynasty is historically a brutal regime that remains a state sponsor of terror. We made the mistake of removing this label, believing North Korea negotiated in good faith. As we learned, they lied.

Any agreements must have the most stringent verification safeguards. We must preserve the presence of United States forces in South Korea and the South China Sea. International inspectors should have access to all sites in North Korea, no side deals, no holds barred.

Any indication of weakness by us or our allies will embolden the regime. Complacency has always been our enemies' best friend. Expectations for future talks must remain realistic and vigilance sustained. We still face many challenges ahead.

North Korea must know they have no option but to change its ways. If we uphold our commitment to a peaceful and free world in steadfast alliance with our allies, we will overcome whatever challenge North Korea throws at the world.

The "Singapore Powwow" is the beginning of a realization for North Korea that they must denuclearize and move forward as a peaceful nation.

I urge the President to be strong, be strong, of good courage, and bold in dealing with Kim. We are on a path toward an unprecedented agreement, and the United States must not waver in our demand of complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization by North Korea.

And that is just the way it is.

THE DEVASTATING NATIONAL EPIDEMIC

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, every day, day in and day out, more than 115 Americans die from overdosing on opioids. We are in the midst of a devastating national epidemic that does not discriminate by geography, age, income, education, or race.

I have heard from families who have lost loved ones to this epidemic. I have talked to the first responders who are on the front lines. I have talked to the doctors who treat the patients and the victims of this disease. I have talked to community leaders about the impact this epidemic is having in their communities, in our States, and across our Nation.

So today, I rise encouraged that this House, this week, is finally poised to take action to address the addiction and abuse hurting so many of our com-

munities. This week, we will vote on several bills that, among other things, seek to provide communities with needed resources to fight the epidemic, crack down on dangerous synthetics coming into our Nation, and improve care available to our veterans.

Among these, I am pleased that the House is voting on two specific measures I have cosponsored.

The Comprehensive Opioid Recovery Centers Act would create centers pairing treatment and recovery services together with community engagement.

The Preventing Overdoses While in Emergency Rooms, or the POWER Act, would increase the coordinated care options available for patients who have survived an overdose. These people, in particular, need more than just naloxone. They need extended treatment and support to overcome their addiction.

This epidemic is a crisis. We, as a country, as a body, need to act. I urge my colleagues to support these measures as we work to turn the tide, and I hope that we can continue to build on the bipartisan progress we are making in the days ahead.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF DR. SAM SHULTZ

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

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Sam Shultz for his 40 years of service to Arkansas children at the Arkansas Children's Hospital in Little Rock. As a former member of the Children's Hospital Board of Directors, it is a special pleasure for me to recognize Dr. Shultz for his recognition as a champion for Arkansas children.

He mentored and taught many of our pediatricians who are currently practicing in Arkansas. Throughout his career, Dr. Shultz worked with the Arkansas State Department of Health and the Department of Pediatrics to hold clinics in rural areas of our State. These clinics were primarily for children with health complications whose families had trouble traveling to Little Rock.

He also assisted in writing various Arkansas public health regulations, such as checking newborns for thyroid conditions and also increasing the number of nurses in our schools.

After decades of service to our Nation's youth, Dr. Shultz retired earlier this year. My congratulations on an incredible career, and best wishes for his future pursuits.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF MR. TOM FOTI

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life of a man who has had an indelible impact on conservation and preservation throughout Arkansas, Mr. Tom Foti. Tom is retiring at the end of this month, after serving as the Arkansas National Heritage Commission's senior ecologist for over 2 decades.

Tom dedicated his life to answering the call to serve the outdoors. From