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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

March 27, 2019.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JIM COSTA to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2019, 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.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, this week we celebrate Public Schools Week. It serves as a reminder that every child deserves access to quality education that helps them reach their full potential.

Public schools are where our students become citizens. They learn to think critically, solve problems, and build relationships. They grow to contribute to our society, our economy, and our communities, and it all starts

with the men and women who want to make a difference.

I want to thank our teachers and educators and professionals who work in these fields, and I want to include Ms. Lucy Gamby, who was my sixth grade teacher, and thank her for the influence that she had in my life. I am sure every one of us has someone like that that is that special teacher.

WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, on March 21, we celebrated Down Syndrome Day.

Many people don't know this, but they do know I have 11 grandchildren. My sixth grandchild and third grandson is Stanley. Stanley has Down's, and Stanley is an amazing, fun child, wonderful.

You know, it is kind of our job as grandparents to make sure that each grandchild believes that they are the favorite, and I do my best to do that, but today I want to recognize Stanley because I want to make sure that people understand that the people and the families that are involved and have Down syndrome children or grandchildren, that we live and we work to make sure that they can achieve to the highest level that they can in life. So this day I want to say, "Stanley, I love you."

We want to recognize all of our children who have Down's and our adults who have Down's and encourage them to be the best that they can be.

LIBERIAN IMMIGRANTS IN MINNESOTA NEED PEACE OF MIND

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

Mr. PHILLIPS. Mr. Speaker, the clock is ticking and thousands of Minnesotans are running out of time. Business owners are going to lose their workforce, workers are going to lose their jobs, and children are going to

lose their parents, and it will be because we here in Congress failed to take simple action when we were called to make change.

We have been handed a game-winning layup or, in Minnesota terms, an empty net, and all we have to do is tap in the puck. All we have to do is say to our Liberian population who came here fleeing bloody civil war and the terrors of the Ebola virus: You matter; you are doing everything right. The world took everything from you, and you came to our country. You work hard, legally, you pay your taxes, and you are valued members of our community.

But because we gave Liberians an immigration status DED, that does not allow a pathway to citizenship; and because that status expires now in 4 days, these friends, neighbors, and family members will be subject to deportation, and it will tear our community apart, and it will be on us.

Mr. Speaker, I recently heard from Nicole Mattson, a healthcare employer in senior care back in the Twin Cities: "We don't have enough workers. At my facility, 60 percent of employees are immigrants, and over half of those are Liberians. We would have to say goodbye to a pool of talent that is highly skilled and educated."

"I have no idea why we would leave behind such a critically important group of people to the healthcare industry. Very simply, we cannot do the work, we cannot care for people, we cannot care for seniors without them. We need them here, and we are glad they are here."

Mr. Speaker, I would say that we need courage to pass a legislative fix to save Minnesota's healthcare industry and keep hardworking members of our population home. I would say that we need courage to keep our families and communities and brothers and sisters together. This is so simple and so easy, that we do not even need courage. We just need to pass a bill.

□ 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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These are immigrants who have done everything the right way: They are here legally; they work hard; they pay their taxes; and they have made themselves irreplaceable contributors to our communities.

Their immigration status has been extended by every President from Bill Clinton to Donald Trump. These would be undocumented citizens of our very own creation.

If you need the human argument, hear it from my constituent, Michael: "Going back to Liberia is not an option for me. My only brother, who we were not able to bring to America, died in Liberia a few years ago. My parents and siblings all live here in the United States."

"I was recently accepted into a doctoral program in education. My whole life is here. This is my home. Liberia is a fragile country still recovering from a decades-long war."

Or Matthew, who could lose his older brother: "It affects me deeply as a U.S. citizen. This is someone I look up to. If he was to up and leave the U.S., that would be very difficult for him, for me. He has a daughter. I cannot take on that responsibility of being my niece's caretaker."

"I cannot even imagine the nightmare that this will create in my community. This is not just about me and my family; it is about our community. We are going to be losing friends and family. I am not ready for this."

We have the legislation. We have a fix ready to go to move DED holders to TPS for 3 years while we pass a more comprehensive fix.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say to my colleagues, ask yourselves: Are we here to make a difference? Are you here to make people's lives better? Are you here to help business owners and workers, or are you here to keep playing politics with people's lives?

Let's rise to the occasion and be better than that and finally, at long last, give our Liberian community the peace of mind that they so richly deserve.

KINETIC KIDS

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

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to spotlight Kinetic Kids, an organization in my hometown that helps more than 2,800 children with special needs in San Antonio, Schertz, and New Braunfels.

A few weeks ago, I joined over 470 Texans in the cold and the wet to support these local children with special needs.

In 2001, Kinetic Kids was founded by Tracey Fontenot and Kacey Wernli, pediatric physical therapists who saw that children with special needs needed more exercise. They needed motivation; they needed camaraderie; they needed the joy that comes from being part of a team.

I am proud to be part of their team, and I will always be here to cheer them on.

Congratulations on a great event, and thank you for the important work you do in the community.

FIGHTING THE BUREAUCRACY

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, my team and I are committed to fighting the bureaucracy for folks I represent across the 23rd Congressional District of Texas who can't battle it on their own.

Recently, my team helped Kinney County in south Texas cut through Federal red tape to secure \$4 million in funding and spare the county from financial ruin. The county was being punished simply for following orders, but due to conflicting information from Washington bureaucrats regarding how much to pay employees at the county detention center, they were told they owed the Federal Government \$4 million.

Once my office heard about this issue, we worked relentlessly with the U.S. Marshals Service to ensure these costs were covered.

I thank Kinney County Judge Tully Shahan for informing me of this issue and the Department of Justice for working with my office to resolve this situation.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Joyce Meyer once said that "teachers can change lives with just the right mix of chalk and challenges."

For Amistad National Recreation Area Education Specialist Lisa Nielsen, her chalk is a trail, a shoreline, and a pair of binoculars. The 28-year National Park Service veteran has created several innovative and interactive programs that have educated tens of thousands of Texans I represent of all ages on the importance of conservation and maintaining our south and west Texas natural treasures for future generations to come.

I am proud to rise today to honor Lisa and all of the women who are making an impact each day across the 23rd Congressional District of Texas as we continue to celebrate Women's History Month.

BUDGET PROPOSAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise out of a deep concern for our country and its ability to sustain investments in growing our economy and making opportunities available for our people.

Our country suffered the longest government shutdown in its history just a few months ago. For 35 days, 800,000 Federal employees and their families were forced to go without paychecks. Our economy was burdened by uncertainty and a lack of confidence in our leaders.

That shutdown was the direct result of the Trump administration's confrontational approach to governing and its irresponsible decision to insist

on a position that Congress had already rejected.

I would have hoped that they learned from that experience, but it appears that that is not the case. Now President Trump and Mick Mulvaney—a former colleague of ours who voted not only to shut down the government, but against the wishes of the Republican Speaker, voted against opening government up—have sent to Congress a budget proposal that ramps up confrontation and sets up an even more difficult impasse.

Their budget proposal rejects 6 years of governing consensus enshrined in three 2-year budget agreements to raise the caps put in place by the Budget Control Act in a bipartisan way and according to the principles of parity, fairness, and equality.

Adhering to that path and working together to raise the caps responsibly and at the same rate for defense and nondefense investments would be, in my view, the best way to ensure that appropriations for next year proceed on a bipartisan basis so that we can do the job of funding the government and avert another unnecessary, dangerous, and harmful shutdown in October.

The administration's proposal of using the overseas contingency operations account to avoid negotiating with Congress on responsibly dealing with the BCA caps and hiding increases in defense funding is a massive gimmick.

Who said that? The Republican majority said that a number of years ago.

It is more than just an accounting sleight of hand, with real implications for our national security planning and long-term strategy.

The OCO account, again, overseas contingency operations account, was created to fund imminent defense priorities outside of the normal Pentagon budget planning cycle.

Now Mr. Mulvaney wants to use OCO at the rate of some \$175 billion-plus as if Afghanistan, in which we have been involved for some 17 years, is a contingency. It is not a contingency. It is an operating expense.

If OCO were used in the way the administration intends, it could cripple multiyear planning by our military by calling into question every penny shifted into that account in future years.

It is also disingenuous for them to demand that Congress pour money into defense through what Mr. Mulvaney himself has called a "backdoor slush fund." That is what he called OCO in 2015 when he was a Member of Congress.

And now that same Mr. Mulvaney, the Acting Chief of Staff and, frankly, I believe, also, the Acting OMB Director, proposes to use what he called a backdoor slush fund without acknowledging the need to compromise elsewhere on the ledger.

□ 1015

This is fiscal irresponsibility at its worst, because it is a veneer of concern