



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 165

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2019

No. 75

## House of Representatives

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

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,  
May 7, 2019.

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

### RECOGNIZING STUDENT ATHLETES FOR GENEROSITY AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring attention to the outstanding community service demonstrated by the student athletes from North Central Sports Club in Nebraska.

Harsh weather and devastating flooding has hit much of Nebraska this spring, causing destruction to many homes and communities and agri-

culture-producing facilities throughout our State. The recovery has not been easy, but the hard work, dedication, and generosity of Nebraskans has been on full display since the disaster struck. I want to highlight one group, the North Central Sports Club, which is made up of student athletes from Rock County and Keya Paha County, Nebraska.

These student athletes were excited for their upcoming trip, an annual tradition, after completing the hard work of not only their competitive sports seasons and academic requirements, but also the fundraising which keeps the program running. However, instead of taking their annual trip, the students decided to donate the funds to help with the recovery of their neighboring community, which suffered much more of the storm's damage.

Mr. Speaker, Nebraskans don't scare from a challenge, nor do they stand by as their friends and neighbors suffer. I am honored to recognize these student athletes from Rock County and Keya Paha County, Nebraska, for their generosity and community service.

### PROTECTING AMERICANS WITH PREEXISTING CONDITIONS

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon to spotlight that, a couple days from now, the House of Representatives will be voting on H.R. 986, which is an act protecting Americans with preexisting conditions.

Again, this is a measure to reverse a decision that was made last October by the Trump administration. It was an administrative guidance in the Department of Health and Human Services which basically opened the doors for States to submit waivers from the Affordable Care Act's protections for pa-

tients, which, almost universally, are supported by the American people.

For example, in the law, it banned the use of preexisting condition exclusions by insurance companies both for individuals applying for insurance and for those who actually got insurance but then had their bills denied because of preexisting conditions.

With the stroke of a pen, in March 2010, the Affordable Care Act abolished that practice by insurance companies, which basically was a discriminatory practice for people, again, who, through no fault of their own, had medical conditions which they could not control.

It also eliminated lifetime limits. In other words, insurance companies capped the amount of medical bills that they would pay, so somebody with a cancer or a serious chronic condition would run into those caps and basically be in bankruptcy land.

And lastly, it established essential health benefits, which were defined by the Institute of Medicine, not a political organization, based on what, in fact, health insurance should cover, for example, behavioral health, maternal and child benefits, et cetera.

This decision by the Trump administration last October basically knocked out the guardrails in the ACA waiver process, which, again, every observer and commentator said would open the door again to insurance companies using the practice of preexisting condition exclusions.

For those who maybe have forgotten what that looked like, I have beside me here a chart which includes a brochure, which Humana insurance was using back in 2009 when it was selling health insurance. Again, it is touting great news for people who buy their own health insurance, new, flexible health coverage.

However, if you read the fine print, it went on to say that there is important information about preexisting conditions for these conditions which would

☐ 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.



Printed on recycled paper.

H3451

not be covered: AIDS/HIV, alcohol or drug dependence, cancer, COPD, connective tissue disorder, Crohn's disease, diabetes, emphysema, heart attack or stroke, hepatitis, inpatient emotional or mental illness, organ or tissue transplant, or ulcerative colitis. Just in case maybe you survived that litmus test, it does go on to say: "This list is not all inclusive; other conditions may apply."

That is what health insurance looked like before 2010: People who, in good faith, were paying premium dollars for coverage, whether they were individuals, small businesses, or large employers, suddenly found, with the fine print back in those days, medical underwriting was excluding people from getting the coverage for the health insurance they thought they were buying.

Also, the rude awakening of people who had insurance suddenly having their bills reversed—again, in good faith, depending on insurance companies—to pay for an operation or for a hospitalization or a doctor's visit.

This country turned the page in 2010. It is time to, once and for all, say that those practices are a thing of the past.

Our bill this week, H.R. 986, will restore those patient protections which the Trump administration's executive order, last October, reversed. Hopefully, the people in this Chamber will listen to the universal support for these patient protections all across the country, Republicans and Democrats—the polling shows it is off the charts—and support this bill and block this executive order which would turn the clock back for American patients and America's healthcare system.

#### HONORING BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN "ODIE" SLOCUM

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

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding member of our community and our military on his retirement. For more than 35 years, Brigadier General John "Odie" Slocum served our country, most recently as the commander of the 127th Wing at Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Michigan's 10th District, a post he held from November 2014 until his retirement this past weekend.

General Slocum's career of more than 35 years and 4,100 flight hours began in 1984 when he received his Air Force commission through East Carolina University's ROTC program. After receiving his wings, Odie served his 8 years of Active Duty as an F-4 Phantom and F-16 pilot and then served as an instructor at bases in both Georgia and Arizona.

In 1992 he joined the Arizona Air National Guard where he served in a variety of Operations Group and headquarters-staff positions, many related to F-16 flight training, before taking over as Arizona Air National Guard's 162nd Fighter Wing's chief of safety

and squadron commander. During his tenure in Arizona, he created a new Air National Guard maintenance training curriculum, worked to increase mental health and suicide prevention resources in the Air National Guard, initiated a DOD-wide midair collision avoidance program, and more. Because of these actions, in 2013, Odie was inducted into the Air Force Safety Hall of Fame.

After 1 year as the Inspector General of the Air National Guard based at Joint Base Andrews, in 2014 Slocum was promoted to brigadier general and assumed command of the 127th Wing and Selfridge Air National Guard Base, in my home district. It is home to 1,700 airmen operating both the A-10 Warthog and KC-135 Stratotanker, as well as host to more than 45 tenant organizations from all branches of the military and numerous DHS organizations. Nearly 4,500 Active Duty, Guard, Reserve, and civilian personnel call Selfridge Air National Guard Base home.

Selfridge is unique, with diverse needs due to its many missions, and General Slocum has been an exceptional leader of Selfridge and our community. Under Slocum's leadership, the 127th Wing earned the Spaatz Trophy, presented to the top flying wing in the Air National Guard; earned an Air Force Meritorious Unit Award; and celebrated milestone anniversaries of the base, 100 years, and the 127th Wing's two flying units, the 107th Fighter Squadron, 100 years, and the 171st Air Refueling Squadron. Further, last year, the 127th Wing was named Macomb County Economic Development Partner of the Year, and Slocum was inducted into the Macomb County Hall of Fame.

I have had the honor to work with General Slocum since before I joined Congress, and I have greatly appreciated our professional relationship, as well as the personal friendship that has grown the last 5 years. In our nearly weekly phone calls, Odie has worked with me to ensure I know what is going on at the base, I am aware of the base's needs, and we work together to address the needs of the men and women who serve in Selfridge.

It is extremely clear Odie cares deeply about Selfridge, the men and women he commands, Michigan, and our Nation. We are all extremely grateful for his decades of dedication to our Nation.

While I will miss having him commanding Selfridge, I know General Slocum will continue to remain heavily involved in our community to make our place a great place to live. On behalf of our community and our Nation, I wish to extend him all the best in retirement, and I thank him for his many years of exemplary service.

#### EQUAL RIGHTS TO TRIBAL TRUST LANDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government has an obligation to equally protect the rights of all 573 federally recognized Tribal nations.

Since the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, those rights have included the ability to have lands placed into trust. The intent of the original Indian Reorganization Act was clear: to restore and to protect Tribal homelands for all sovereign Tribal nations.

Congress clearly did not intend to limit this right based on the date of a Tribe's recognition. After all, Tribal nations did not get to decide when the Federal Government would give them the recognition they were due. But in 2009, the Supreme Court ruling in a case of *Carcieri v. Salazar* called into question whether Tribes recognized after 1934 should have equal rights to trust land.

Tribal leaders united to ask Congress for legislation to fix this problem, to right this wrong, and I am honored to have worked hand in hand in a non-partisan fashion with my good friend, Congressman TOM COLE, to lead that effort.

Tomorrow the House will vote on H.R. 375, a clean legislative fix that is necessary to ensure that we are fulfilling one of our country's most sacred obligations. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support a clean *Carcieri* fix.

#### THE GOLDEN SPIKE

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, on May 10, 1869, a Salt Lake paper wrote that the people of Utah—the great pioneers of the Rocky Mountains—received with acclamation the glad news of the completion of the mighty work to which as a people they had contributed their part; and hand in hand with the great circle of States and territories, now rejoicing in union over the event, did thank God for its accomplishments.

They were referencing the Golden Spike which had been driven completing the first transcontinental railroad.

That date, May 10, will forever stand as a tribute to the men of vision who foresaw the potential of an empire stretching from coast to coast in the United States, bound together not only by iron rails but also by a common interest.

From the time of the Civil War when this project started until three or four decades later when the railroad system was completed, America changed. In 1860, the United States was third in the world in production of wheat. When the railroad was completed, we were first. In 1860, England produced three times as much coal as the United States. When the railroad was complete, not only did we lead the world, we were producing 110 million tons of coal more