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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 17, 2019.

I hereby appoint the Honorable SCOTT H. PETERS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
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.

COMMEMORATING CONSTITUTION DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, when our country was founded, the idea of a democratic republic was not foreign; it was nonexistent. Besides intermittent cooperation to win independence, the Colonies had no sense of unity, and being American had little meaning. Few citizens could have realized the amount of sacrifice needed

to write and ratify a document to unite them all.

Our Constitution truly is a miracle. Aside from its genius, its history helps us appreciate the blessing it is. Our colleague, Congressman CHRIS STEWART, and Judge Ted Stewart wrote a wonderful book, "Seven Miracles That Saved America." In it, they offer three reasons to believe God had a hand in the crafting of the Constitution.

For the remainder of my time today on Constitution Day, I would like to quote them.

"One, Timing. The window of opportunity for the writing and ratification of the Constitution was very small. Every effort to make the Articles of Confederation workable between 1776 and 1787 had already failed. But then suddenly, in May of 1787, a group of 55 patriots came together with both the wisdom of the ages and enough youth to energetically fight for the ratification of the Constitution.

"Any attempt to create a constitution later than 1787 would have almost certainly resulted in failure as well. Just 2 years after the Convention finished its work, France became embroiled in its own revolution, which lasted a full decade and degenerated into a bloody, violent affair.

"Surely, this example of failure would have frightened the Founding Fathers, giving them reason to think very differently about the degree of power to be retained by 'the people.'

"Making matters worse was the fact that the Founders split into two distinct political camps in the years that immediately followed the Convention. Had the Constitutional Convention been called just a few years later than 1787, many of these men would have been unwilling to stand together. And without their input, the Convention would never have had a chance of success.

"Two, Miraculous Compromise. The second way in which the Constitution

is demonstrably a miracle is the manner in which it came about.

"During the course of the Convention, every delegate had to give up on some cherished principle.

"James Madison, who had come to the Convention more prepared than anyone and was primarily responsible for the general outline of the government established by the Constitution, lost on many issues. Most dear to him was his belief that the House and the Senate should be based on proportional representation.

"Franklin wanted an executive council voted for life, rather than a single executive. He did not want the chief executive to have the power of the veto. He did not want anyone in the executive position to receive a salary. He lost on all counts.

"But during the course of the 560 roll calls, no man lost every time, and everyone was part of a winning vote on some occasion. These men of social stature, political and business success—'demigods' all—swallowed their pride, accepted defeat of personal agendas, and went forth and convinced a nation to accept the product of the Convention.

"Three, 4,400 Miraculous Words. Perhaps the greatest miracle of the Constitution is the document itself. In essence, the Constitution has had only 13 substantive amendments in over 200 years.

"History has proven that the Constitution creates a system that defies despotism and tyranny.

"How was it able to do this? Primarily through the underlying premise, part of Madison's gift to the world, that the Constitution comes from the people. Madison coined the phrase 'We the People.' These words are far more than a clever phrase. They restate the principle, first asserted in the Declaration of Independence, that God gives man rights and the only legitimate purpose of government is to protect those rights.

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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“In short, the Constitution not only survived the evolution of this great Nation but permitted the American people to exercise the greatest level of individual liberty in history.

“Further, it has been the ‘shining light on the hill’ that has provided the inspiration for peoples all over the Earth to seek liberty and freedom for themselves.

“Is that not a miracle?”

STANDING IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG

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

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in solidarity with the people of Hong Kong.

Last month, I had the opportunity to hear directly from leaders in Hong Kong dedicated to both religious tolerance and to democracy, as promised in the “one country, two systems” agreement.

The people of Hong Kong wave American flags during their protests as a symbol of the freedoms that they desire.

Now is the time for Congress to support the people of Hong Kong and pass Representative CHRIS SMITH’s bill, the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act. This measure states without question that the United States Government supports the people of Hong Kong and their right to freedom of expression and democratic governance guaranteed under their 50-year arrangement agreed to in 1997 by China and the United Kingdom.

STOP IGNORING RED LINES IN IDLIB, SYRIA

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today again to bring attention to the travesty happening in Idlib province, Syria.

Since mid-August, the brutal dictator Assad, his protector Putin, and Iranian coconspirators have repeatedly bombed Idlib and the surrounding region. Their aerial slaughter and shelling have displaced all but 2 percent to 3 percent of the population. They have bombed hospitals, even killing a former kindergarten student of the Wisdom House School, a school supported by constituents in my home of Arkansas, supported before the school was closed due to bombing.

After nearly 10 years of death and destruction, some say this conflict is drawing to a close. When we look back on this calamitous conflict, we and our allies in Europe will hang our heads in shame for ignoring red lines that gave a green light to Assad’s slaughter of his own civilians by the hundreds of thousands.

HONORING BOB SHELL

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of my friend Bob Shell, who passed away last month at the age of 88.

In 1950, Bob joined The Baldwin Company for a job scheduled to last 9

months and ended up staying for almost 70 years. Bob started in the field as a payroll clerk and worked his way up in the company, eventually becoming president, chairman, and chairman emeritus. The company’s name was changed when Bob became president and CEO to Baldwin & Shell Construction Company, the name it holds today.

Bob is one of the five charter members of the Arkansas Construction Hall of Fame. He was named Arkansas Business Executive of the Year in 1990 and was featured by Arkansas Business as one of 10 business icons for our State in 2016.

During his time with the company, he had been involved in more than 2,700 projects, including hospitals, offices, schools, churches, and industrial plants.

I admired this good and decent man. He was a role model and a friend to many across our State of Arkansas, and I extend my respect, affection, and prayers to his friends, family, and loved ones.

HONORING NICHOLAS BURRELL

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize an amazing young man from my district, Nicholas Burrell from Benton, Arkansas.

Nicholas started as a Cub Scout in third grade and, at age 14, became the youngest Eagle Scout in Troop 99 in Benton. He is also a cancer survivor.

Nicholas was diagnosed with cancer of the brain and spine when he was 11. He has had multiple tumors and underwent 26 rounds of chemotherapy but was always back to participating in projects with the Boy Scouts just a few months after his last treatment.

For his Eagle project, he built a free outdoor pantry called the Blessing Box at Salem United Methodist Church, where Troop 99 holds its meetings.

Nicholas is currently a ninth-grader at Bryant Junior High School, and his cancer has been in remission since 2017.

Nicholas’ strength and perseverance are a testament and witness to us all. I wish him much continued success as he grows and makes Arkansas proud.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

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

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, on September 15, we began National Hispanic Heritage Month, one that celebrates the histories, cultures, and contributions of Americans of Hispanic descent.

I recently learned the story of a former Kansas City resident, the late Hector Berretto, Sr., who served as a voice for his local Hispanic community. Hector founded the Kansas City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and, later, the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, to counter disadvantages of Hispanic business owners in the Kansas City area and around the country.

The Hispanic population in the United States contributes enormously to our country, both culturally and economically. Most of the Hispanic individuals I have had the pleasure of knowing, many of them patients of mine, have been remarkably dedicated to faith and family and preserving their own culture centered around faith and family.

Many of my OB patients were Hispanic women, often accompanied by their loving mothers, grandmothers, sisters, and aunts concerned for the health of their family member and the baby. Every visit was a family event of great importance to the family.

Now numbering over 55 million individuals, the Hispanic American population is projected to combine for an estimated buying power of \$1.7 trillion in 2020. Hispanics are more likely than average Americans to open a business. Now with over 3.2 million Hispanic-owned businesses in the United States, millions more American workers have jobs, thanks to these industrious entrepreneurs.

I am grateful for this opportunity to reflect on the unique contributions of the Hispanic American community to our great Nation and to Kansas. I look forward to continuing working with communities of all backgrounds in pursuit of our shared goal of a free and equal America, an America where anyone can live the American Dream if they are willing to work hard enough.

DEMOCRATS WILL DO ANYTHING TO STOP PRESIDENT TRUMP

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, rather than focusing on bipartisan trade agreements, Congress is being put on pause for a charade, a charade that hopes to undo the will of American voters.

Democrats aren’t sure what they are doing in the Judiciary Committee today. You might hear that it is an impeachment inquiry, a meeting about rules for impeachment, or, perhaps, a group therapy session.

We know Democrats are more interested in tearing down the President than in building up America. They will do anything to stop President Trump at any cost.

Democrats want to throw the brakes on a thriving economy. They want to turn back the clock on record-low unemployment in Hispanic and African American communities, tax cuts for families and small businesses, and more, all in the name of bitter politics after a loss. They, the Democrats, embody the term “poor loser.”

If my colleagues on the other side of the aisle were to abandon their tired and baseless attacks on the President, we could move forward in a bipartisan way to pass the USMCA trade deal, secure our borders, and reform our very broken immigration system. We can work on lowering the costs of prescription drugs and healthcare.

Americans desperately need Congress to deliver these solutions. Unfortunately, House Democrats have chosen