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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. TONKO).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 31, 2019.

I hereby appoint the Honorable PAUL TONKO to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Dear God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We ask Your special blessing upon the Members of this people's House. They face difficult decisions in difficult times, with many forces and interests demanding their attention.

Give them generosity to enter into their work. May they serve You in the work they do as You deserve; give of themselves and not count the cost; fight for what is best for our Nation and not count the political wounds; toil until their work is done and not seek to rest; and labor without seeking any reward, other than knowing they are doing Your will, and serving the people of this great Nation.

Bless them, O God, and be with them and with us all this day and every day to come. May all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOYCE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. JOYCE of Ohio 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF ELIAS "SKIP" ASHOOH

(Mr. PAPPAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of all Granite Staters to recognize the life and legacy of Elias "Skip" Ashooch who passed away this week. He embodied the spirit of the Queen City and left this world too soon.

As a lifelong Manchester resident and Saint Anselm College alum, Skip dedicated his career and life to bettering his community. He was a successful businessman, local leader, and philanthropist who never gave up on the potential of Manchester and all its residents. He was a community fixture who loved taking in the downtown area he helped revitalize.

As chair of the Manchester Development Corporation, Skip was instrumental in making the civic center

project a reality, one of the city's most consequential economic development projects since the industrial revolution. His immense impact was known by all, which is why he was named Citizen of the Year in 2000.

I hope we can honor Skip Ashooch's legacy by continuing to work together to move Manchester and New Hampshire forward.

I offer condolences to his wife, Gail, the Ashooch family, friends, and all who knew him.

May Skip's memory be eternal.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF U.S. ARMY SERGEANT THOMAS COLE WALKER OF CONNEAUT, OHIO

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

Mr. JOYCE of Ohio. Madam Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise to honor the life and service of U.S. Army Sergeant Thomas Cole Walker of Conneaut, Ohio.

Sergeant Walker, who enlisted after graduating from Conneaut High School in 2016, was tragically killed on October 20 during a training exercise at Fort Stewart.

Just 22 years old, he had been awarded the Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Korea Defense Service Medal, and the Army Service Ribbon.

His dedication to protecting this Nation was nothing short of heroic and serves as an inspiration to us all. But Sergeant Walker was more than a patriot. He was also a son, a brother, and a husband. His loss is felt by many.

Madam Speaker, please join me in extending condolences to the friends, fellow soldiers, and family of Sergeant Walker, especially his wife, Taylor; his brother, Jared; his sisters Payton, Whitney, and Wendy; and his father, Thomas.

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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I pray that the outpouring of support from the Conneaut community will help ease their sorrow during this difficult time. I know this entire Chamber joins me in thanking Sergeant Walker for his service, honoring his life, and praying for his family.

LIMOUSINE SAFETY STANDARDS

(Mr. TONKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TONKO. Madam Speaker, this month marked the painful anniversary of one fateful afternoon in Schoharie, New York, when 20 precious souls were lost in the preventable crash of a limousine that should never have been allowed on the road.

The families of those lost—many from my hometown of Amsterdam, New York—the families of eight young people devastated by the Cutchogue crash on Long Island in 2015, and countless others touched by these preventable tragedies have raised their voices to demand action.

Last week we introduced bipartisan legislation that answers their call. It is important, I believe, to respond to that call and to that request. The SAFE Limos Act, the Take Unsafe Limos Off the Road Act, and the End the Limo Loophole Act have responded to them with great sensitivity.

I thank my friend, ANTONIO DELGADO, for joining me in sponsoring this life-saving legislation, and I thank our colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have signed on in support. These commonsense measures will save lives and ensure that this never happens to another family.

Madam Speaker, I urge this body to raise our Nation's limousine safety standards without delay.

SKILLED NURSING SHORTAGE

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

Mr. MCKINLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend the House for passing H.R. 728, the bipartisan Title VIII Nursing Workforce Reauthorization Act.

My wife, Mary, was a critical care nurse for over 45 years, and we could tell you firsthand the role that nurses play in patient care.

But America is facing a shortage of skilled nurses. Our nursing workforce in America is aging, and the average age is 50 years old. By 2022 there will be 1 million nursing jobs open and available.

We must find a way to encourage people to go into nursing. This bill helps not only to recruit nurses but to provide rural and underserved communities a competitive way to attract and keep talent.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 728 is a step forward in addressing our Nation's growing need for nurses.

VENTURE ACADEMY: MOCK TRIAL WORLD CHAMPIONS

(Mr. McNERNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McNERNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a group of talented students in my district who recently earned the title of Mock Trial World Champions.

Venture Academy's mock trial team was one of 38 teams that traveled to New York to compete for this honor in the Empire Mock Trial World Championship. They successfully argued a fictional case involving a construction company that was accused of failing to take proper safety precautions by portraying the prosecutors and defendants as well as the witnesses in the case. They ended up bringing back the top prize to Stockton.

This isn't Venture Academy's first big success. Last year the team placed fifth in the Empire contest, and for the past 6 years they have won first place in the San Joaquin County mock trial competition.

One day some of these students could come here and stand at this podium, putting their debate skills to work while arguing for or against important legislation.

So, Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Venture Academy's mock trial team, the Mock Trial World Champions.

PHONY IMPEACHMENT INQUIRIES

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, today we will vote on a resolution that will somehow try to legitimize the last 5 weeks' worth of phony impeachment inquiries going on downstairs in a se-cure room.

Instead of voting on and taking up the issues that matter to the American people, we continue to chase this witch hunt trying to take down the accomplishments of our President, Donald J. Trump. Indeed, the economy we have, the low unemployment we have, and the success we are having in the Middle East and other areas around the world aren't good enough.

When my colleagues on the other side of the aisle admit that they probably won't win another election and they have to try to use the impeachment process to try to take the President down, that shows how phony this process is.

So to try today to pass a resolution to somehow legitimize the last 5-plus weeks' worth of work and, indeed, really 2½ years' worth of attacking this President shows that this place has a misplaced set of priorities.

Instead of doing the work of the American people, they are using this as a political process to attack what we have all been able to accomplish.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

(Mr. CARBAJAL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARBAJAL. Madam Speaker, I rise on behalf of the people of my district, California's central coast, who are worried about healthcare and the high cost of prescription drugs.

Earlier this month at home, I spoke with people at retirement communities, town halls, and at their doorsteps delivering food for Meals on Wheels. Throughout these conversations, one thing was made clear: We need to lower the cost of prescription drugs.

I am proud the House passed H.R. 987 to strengthen health protections and bring down drug costs. I am excited that we are looking ahead to do more to ensure people never have to choose between lifesaving medicine and putting food on the table.

That is why I cosponsored H.R. 3, the Lower Drug Costs Now Act. When we give the power to Medicare to negotiate prices directly with drug companies and make these lower prices available to everyone, we all win.

H.R. 3 gives power back to the patients. It is what people in my district are working for, and I am proud to support it.

IMPEACHMENT INQUIRY

(Mr. SPANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SPANO. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the resolution that attempts to justify the sham impeachment process that I have personally witnessed. The majority claims this resolution will ensure a "fair, open, and transparent process."

Madam Speaker, do you want to know how fair this process is?

The resolution names the Financial Services Committee as part of the investigation. Earlier this month, the chairwoman of that committee said that President Trump should be "placed in solitary confinement."

Further, Republicans will only be allowed to subpoena witnesses with Chairman SCHIFF's approval, as deemed necessary to the investigation.

If we have learned anything from the investigation so far, we know the majority does not think due process is necessary. They don't even think basic fairness is necessary.

A "yes" vote on this resolution today gives a stamp of approval to a process that has been damaged beyond all repair and is a blatant and obvious coup to unseat a sitting President of the United States. I will not support a resolution that promises an open and fair process without the basic, fundamental procedures necessary to ensure it.