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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
December 9, 2019.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEVEN HORSFORD 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.

PASS USMCA NOW

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

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, this week, I hope and I pray that we are on the verge of passing the United States-Mexico-Canada trade deal, a deal that will literally mean millions of dollars in new market opportunities for Kansas agriculture products, new customs and trade rules for our small businesses, and thousands of new jobs for Kansas that will allow more goods and materials to be manufactured in this great country.

Today, once again, I join nearly 160 of my colleagues in signing a letter urging Speaker PELOSI to hold a vote on this trade agreement. The agreement will set farmers, ranchers, workers, and businesses in Kansas up for long-term success. This will lead to more exports, more jobs, and higher wages. It would be a great Christmas present for all of Kansas and for all the hardworking Americans across this great Nation.

With now just 2 weeks remaining, the House has so far squandered this entire first session of the 116th Congress. There is no excuse for holding a trade agreement up that is expected to create 176,000 jobs, deliver a \$70 billion boost to our economy, and make us stronger in our trade negotiations with China.

Speaker PELOSI, I beg you, stop putting politics ahead of our producers. The House has a great chance to secure a victory for the American people. Let's deliver a win for our economy, pass the United States-Mexico-Canada trade agreement, and give America a great Christmas present this year.

CELEBRATING THE COMPANIONSHIP OF PETS

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, this week is pet week in our office, to celebrate our furry companions and the happiness they bring to our lives.

In this spirit, this is an opportunity to recognize that the pet food industry is simply huge for Kansas. Pet food manufacturers in the animal health corridor stretching from Manhattan, Kansas, to Columbia, Missouri, and from Emporia, Kansas, to Omaha, Nebraska, account for more than half of all pet industry sales in the United States and provide thousands of jobs to Kansans.

Many of our State's finest agriculture commodities go into our domestic animal food production network. As companion animal pet products gain a larger foothold in the overall food market, it is vital we continue

to do all we can to capitalize on that growth and deliver high-paying new jobs for Kansas and encourage the development of the industry to not only benefit our farmers but all of Kansas.

Aside from the obvious economic reasons to support the pet food industry in our State, there are genuine benefits of companion animals to humans. Pet ownership has grown for a reason. Many studies show that having a companion animal, a pet, in the home can reduce depression and blood pressure and provide other mental health benefits. Additionally, there is incredible work being done with companion animals for our military servicemembers when they return home suffering from PTSD and other mental and physical challenges.

Some of the most successful and innovative pet companies in the world are in Kansas, incorporating our agriculture products in their pet food supply. There is a direct link between the pet food industry and the Kansas economy, and I will continue to work to expand those opportunities for the industry, both domestically and, very importantly, internationally.

The House has a chance to secure and encourage pet innovation going on across the country. We look forward to that market growing.

SENATE SHOULD ACT ON HOUSE-PASSED BILLS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. HAALAND) for 5 minutes.

Ms. HAALAND. Mr. Speaker, I reflect on all that House Democrats have done for the people this year and how much harm the grim reaper of the Senate, MITCH MCCONNELL, has done by purposefully stalling our legislative agenda.

Our Democratic House majority has worked relentlessly for the people to

□ 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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strengthen the health, economic security, and well-being of every family in every community, and we have made real progress.

We ended the Trump government shutdown, which inflicted needless pain and chaos into the lives of our fellow Americans and New Mexicans whose paychecks, financial security, health, and well-being were held hostage by the President.

We stood strong and prevailed for the American people and did not give him the immoral, illegal border wall.

To improve the safety of our communities, we sent to the Senate common-sense, bipartisan gun violence prevention legislation that would make our children safer.

As vice chair of the Democratic Women's Caucus, I am proud that we have worked to strengthen women's personal and financial security by passing a strong reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, the Debbie Smith Reauthorization Act, and the Paycheck Fairness Act to ensure equal pay for equal work.

To bolster the paychecks and retirement security of working families, we passed the Raise the Wage Act to increase the Federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour, giving a raise to 33 million Americans, including 20 million women. We also passed the Butch Lewis Act to protect the pensions of more than 1 million workers and retirees.

To live up to the promises that we made to our veterans, we have passed dozens of bipartisan bills, including fixes to end unjust and unfair taxes on military families; expanded benefits for blue water Navy Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange; and legislation to reduce barriers for women veterans to access the VA, including an antiharassment initiative.

To address our climate crisis, we passed the Climate Action Now Act and multiple bills to protect our public lands for generations to come. I have introduced legislation myself to promote natural solutions to climate change, such as H.R. 4269, the Climate Stewardship Act, and for the adoption of clean energy, H.R. 5221, the 100% Clean Economy Act.

I am especially proud to have led the bipartisan effort on House passage of the Chaco Cultural Heritage Area Protection Act to protect my ancestral homeland from oil and gas drilling.

We have fought for those who have been the targets of hateful rhetoric and policies of this administration. We passed H.R. 6, the American Dream and Promise Act, to help Dreamers stay right here in the United States, their home, the only country they know.

Democrats have taken a stand to end discrimination against LGBTQ Americans by passing the historic Equality Act, H.R. 5.

To stand up for human rights, we passed bipartisan legislation to recognize the Armenian genocide as the atrocity that it was, hold Turkey ac-

countable for attacking our Kurdish allies, reject the President's disastrous decisionmaking in Syria, and uphold America's commitment to human rights and the rule of law in Hong Kong.

In light of the threats our democracy faces from foes foreign and domestic, we passed H.R. 1, the For the People Act; the SAFE Act; and the SHIELD Act to strengthen our elections and democracy and boost our defenses against foreign attacks on these systems. We passed H.R. 4, the Voting Rights Advancement Act, to protect the right of all Americans to participate in our democracy.

The Democratic House has sent Senator MCCONNELL more than 275 bipartisan bills, yet he still refuses to take them up. The American people deserve and demand action, and we call on Senator MCCONNELL to put our legislation up for a vote.

I am proud to have worked alongside my colleagues in this House majority to move these important issues forward for the people.

STOP IGNORING CRISIS IN IDLIB, SYRIA

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 again to bring attention to the travesty happening in Idlib, Syria.

A week ago, Syrian dictator Assad, his protector Putin, and his Iranian co-conspirators continued to bomb civilians in the town of Idlib.

The Wisdom House School, a school supported by my constituents in Arkansas, has had to close for the third time due to this bombing and the massive attacks.

I recently watched a video posted on Twitter of the airstrikes hitting a civilian home in the same town where Wisdom House School is located. Many of the children attending the Wisdom House School are now orphans. There are no military targets in this area, which has been repeatedly bombed by the Assad regime.

When we look back on this calamitous conflict, the United States 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.

FUND NATO TO COUNTER RUSSIA

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, since its formation, NATO has served as the foundation for security between the United States and our allies in Europe.

Years ago, the now-29 members agreed to a goal of spending at least 2 percent of their gross domestic product on defense. When President Trump took office, only three countries met that objective. Now, it is nine. President Trump has done a good job urging NATO to meet its obligations among members.

Russia, under Putin, is a threat to freedom that many in the post-Cold War world have fought and died for. For decades, Russia has engaged in propaganda and political meddling in the Western democracies. It has invaded Ukraine and annexed Crimea and territories in Georgia.

NATO members need to meet their defense spending guidelines now more than ever. Actions speak louder than words, and NATO must continue to counter Russia and Russia's political and military actions around the world.

HONORING LIFE AND LEGACY OF JERRY MCKINNIS

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of one of Arkansas' great outdoorsmen, Mr. Jerry McKinnis, who recently passed away at the age of 82.

A longtime Little Rock, Arkansas, resident, Jerry was a pioneer in outdoor cable TV programming. He was best known for his television program "The Fishin' Hole," which featured fishing trips with celebrity guests like Hall of Fame baseball player Ted Williams.

Jerry created the show after playing baseball professionally for a short time. "The Fishin' Hole" aired for 44 years and was the longest running show on ESPN short of "SportsCenter."

Jerry has been inducted into the International Game Fish Hall of Fame, the Arkansas Sports Hall of Fame, the Arkansas Outdoor Hall of Fame, the National Fishing Hall of Fame, and the Bass Fishing Hall of Fame.

Jerry was an inspiration and friend to many across our State, and I extend my respect, affection, and prayers to his friends, family, and loved ones.

CONGRATULATING RACHELLE STEWART

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Chief Deputy Rachelle Stewart for receiving the Lifesaving Award from Saline County Sheriff Rodney Wright.

Stewart responded to an unknown medical emergency to assist EMS personnel with a patient who was unconscious and not breathing. Chief Deputy Stewart quickly recognized the patient was experiencing an opioid overdose and administered Narcan to save the patient's life. Chief Deputy Stewart's action marked the fifth life saved by Saline County sheriff deputies successfully using Narcan in the field.

I extend my congratulations to Chief Deputy Rachelle Stewart and the Saline County Sheriff's Office for saving lives and continuing the hard work of protecting and serving central Arkansas.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 14 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.