

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.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DESAULNIER) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

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

We ask Your blessing in these days to come. You know well the contentiousness of this session. Look into the hearts of all the Members of this people's House to discern the goodwill within.

May the goodwill You find be rewarded with Your grace. May any contrary spirit be banished.

In the days that come, help each Member to understand well and interpret positively, as they are able, the positions of those with whom they disagree. Grant to each the wisdom of Solomon and to us all the faith and confidence to know that, no matter how difficult things appear to be, You continue to walk with our Nation, as You have done over two centuries.

May all that is done in the people's House 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.

Mr. ROSE of New York. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. ROSE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. ROSE of New York led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

CONGRATULATING THE TOTTENVILLE PIRATES FOOTBALL TEAM

(Mr. ROSE of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROSE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Tottenville Pirates football team on an incredible season that took them all the way to the New York PSAL championship game at Yankee Stadium last week.

Now, although they came up just short of their ultimate goal, the Pirates should be incredibly proud of what they accomplished this season. After a loss in their season opener, the Pirates bounced back with a remarkable 11-game winning streak, including a dramatic last-second victory in their first matchup with the eventual champions, Erasmus Hall.

In the championship game, their star running back, Roland Dempster, battled through a hamstring injury until he literally couldn't run anymore and had to be helped off the field by his teammates.

I think I speak for all of Staten Island when I say how incredibly proud I am of Coach Brian Neville and the entire Pirates team for putting up a hell of a fight.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating them, particularly the graduating seniors, and wishing them well in whatever comes next, both on and off the field.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 9, 2019.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on December 9, 2019, at 10:07 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 743.

That the Senate passed with an amendment H.R. 2486.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 3 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1501

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CUELLAR) at 3 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

MSI STEM ACHIEVEMENT ACT

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4372) to direct Federal science agencies and the Office of Science and Technology Policy to undertake activities to improve the quality of undergraduate STEM education and enhance the research capacity at the Nation's HBCUs, TCUs, and MSIs, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4372

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "MSI STEM Achievement Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Evidence suggests that the supply of STEM workers is not keeping pace with the rapidly evolving needs of the public and private sector, resulting in a deficit often referred to as a STEM skills shortage.

(2) According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the United States will need one million additional STEM professionals than it is on track to produce in the coming decade.

(3) STEM occupations offer higher wages, more opportunities for advancement, and a higher degree of job security than non-STEM occupations.

(4) The composition of the STEM workforce does not reflect the current or projected diversity of the Nation, with Hispanics, African Americans, and other racial and ethnic minorities, significantly underrepresented in the STEM workforce compared to their presence in the workforce more generally.

(5) A stronger national commitment to increasing the diversity of the STEM workforce is needed to help address the STEM skills shortage.

(6) According to a 2019 National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine report entitled "Minority Serving Institutions: America's Underutilized Resource for Strengthening the STEM Workforce", two- and four-year minority serving institutions enroll nearly 30 percent of all undergraduate students—a percentage that is expected to grow in the coming years—in the United States higher education system and play a critical role in providing important pathways to STEM-related education, training, and careers for students of color.

(7) HBCUs, TCUs, and MSIs are highly successful at educating underrepresented minority students in STEM fields and can serve as best