



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 166

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2020

No. 219

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
December 24, 2020.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DEBBIE DINGELL 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: Loving God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Lord, on this day, Christmas Eve, You know there are many Americans who look to the people's House as uncertainty about the future of the economy and their livelihoods hangs in the balance. While agreements have been reached, further uncertainty has been introduced, causing frustration for many.

We ask again that You bless the Members of the people's House during such a stressful time. Help them to remain men and women of hope as they attend to their public service.

Above all, may all who possess power here in the Nation's capital be mindful of those whom they represent who possess little or no power and whose lives are made all the more difficult by a failure to work out serious differences.

May all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 4(a) of House Resolution

967, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. WITTMAN 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.

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 21, 2020.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
*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 21, 2020, at 11:08 p.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 2429.

That the Senate agrees to House of Representatives amendment to Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 1520.

That the Senate agreed to without amendment H. Con. Res. 128.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 3250.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 5126.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 5472.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,
CHERYL L. JOHNSON,
Clerk.

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 22, 2020.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
*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 22, 2020, at 11:39 a.m.:

That the Senate agrees to the House of Representatives amendment to the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 133.

That the Senate agreed to without amendment H. Con. Res. 127.

That the Senate passed with an amendment H.R. 3153.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 1418.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 1492.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 2502.

Appointment: Independent Mexico Labor Expert Board.

With best wishes, I am,
Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON,
Clerk.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 4 of rule I, the following bills were signed by Speaker Pro Tempore Beyer on Monday, December 21, 2020:

H.R. 1240, to preserve United States fishing heritage through a national program dedicated to training and assisting the next generation of commercial fishermen;

H.R. 1520, making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2021, and for other purposes;

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.

H.R. 4031, to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, and for other purposes;

H.R. 5458, to modify the boundary of the Rocky Mountain National Park, and for other purposes;

H.R. 5852, to redesignate the Weir Farm National Historic Site in the State of Connecticut as the “Weir Farm National Historical Park”;

H.R. 6535, to deem an urban Indian organization and employees thereof to be a part of the Public Health Service for the purposes of certain claims for personal injury, and for other purposes;

H.R. 7460, to extend the authority for the establishment by the Peace Corps Commemorative Foundation of a commemorative work to commemorate the mission of the Peace Corps and the ideals on which the Peace Corps was founded, and for other purposes.

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 23, 2020.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
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, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on December 23, 2020 at 3:29 p.m., said to contain a message from the President returning, without his approval, H.R. 6395.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON,
Clerk of the House.

WILLIAM M. (MAC) THORNBERRY NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021—VETO MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 116-174)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following veto message from the President of the United States:

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning, without my approval, H.R. 6395, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (the “Act”). My Administration recognizes the importance of the Act to our national security. Unfortunately, the Act fails to include critical national security measures, includes provisions that fail to respect our veterans and our military’s history, and contradicts efforts by my Administration to put America first in our national security and foreign policy actions. It is a “gift” to China and Russia.

No one has worked harder, or approved more money for the military, than I have—over \$2 trillion. During

my 4 years, with the support of many others, we have almost entirely rebuilt the United States military, which was totally depleted when I took office. Your failure to terminate the very dangerous national security risk of Section 230 will make our intelligence virtually impossible to conduct without everyone knowing what we are doing at every step.

The Act fails even to make any meaningful changes to Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, despite bipartisan calls for repealing that provision. Section 230 facilitates the spread of foreign disinformation online, which is a serious threat to our national security and election integrity. It must be repealed.

Additionally, the Act includes language that would require the renaming of certain military installations. Over the course of United States history, these locations have taken on significance to the American story and those who have helped write it that far transcends their namesakes. My Administration respects the legacy of the millions of American servicemen and women who have served with honor at these military bases, and who, from these locations, have fought, bled, and died for their country. From these facilities, we have won two World Wars. I have been clear in my opposition to politically motivated attempts like this to wash away history and to dishonor the immense progress our country has fought for in realizing our founding principles.

The Act also restricts the President’s ability to preserve our Nation’s security by arbitrarily limiting the amount of military construction funds that can be used to respond to a national emergency. In a time when adversaries have the means to directly attack the homeland, the President must be able to safeguard the American people without having to wait for congressional authorization. The Act also contains an amendment that would slow down the rollout of nationwide 5G, especially in rural areas.

Numerous provisions of the Act directly contradict my Administration’s foreign policy, particularly my efforts to bring our troops home. I oppose endless wars, as does the American public. Over bipartisan objections, however, this Act purports to restrict the President’s ability to withdraw troops from Afghanistan, Germany, and South Korea. Not only is this bad policy, but it is unconstitutional. Article II of the Constitution makes the President the Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States and vests in him the executive power. Therefore, the decision regarding how many troops to deploy and where, including in Afghanistan, Germany, and South Korea, rests with him. The Congress may not arrogate this authority to itself directly or indirectly as purported spending restrictions.

For all of these reasons, I cannot support this bill. My Administration has

taken strong actions to help keep our Nation safe and support our service members. I will not approve this bill, which would put the interests of the Washington, D.C. establishment over those of the American people. It is my duty to return H.R. 6395 to the House of Representatives without my approval.

DONALD J. TRUMP.

THE WHITE HOUSE, December 23, 2020.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The objections of the President will be spread at large upon the Journal, and the veto message and the bill will be printed as a House document.

Pursuant to section 4 of House Resolution 1271, further consideration of the veto message and the bill will be postponed until Monday, December 28, 2020.

REQUEST TO CONSIDER H.R. 9047, CARING FOR AMERICANS WITH SUPPLEMENTAL HELP ACT OF 2020

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Speaker of the House of Representatives and myself, and consistent with the request of the President of the United States, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on the Budget be discharged from further consideration of the bill, H.R. 9047, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under guidelines consistently issued by successive Speakers, as recorded in section 956 of the House Rules and Manual, the Chair is constrained not to entertain the request unless it has been cleared by the bipartisan floor and committee leaderships.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. HOYER. Can the Speaker inform us as to what that committee consists of?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Floor leadership in this context has been construed to apply only to the minority leader, and not to the entire hierarchy of minority leadership, where the Chair has been assured that the minority leader has no objection.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the Speaker for the clarification.

REQUEST TO CONSIDER H.R. 9046, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2021

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, on behalf of the minority leader of the House and on behalf of the wishes of the President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Appropriations be discharged from further consideration of the bill, H.R. 9046, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.