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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 18, 2022.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DEBBIE DINGELL 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 10, 2022, 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, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

ENHANCE, DON'T CUT, SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, the COVID virus has impacted our senior citizens more severely than any other population. With over 1 million deaths now in the country, more than 750,000 of them are people over the age of 65.

This global pandemic has also brought with it inflation, as well, and

people on fixed incomes are the people who are most hurt by inflation.

Madam Speaker, those are our fellow senior citizens who are struggling now in this pandemic. Martin Luther King used to say that it is important to always recognize the fierce urgency of now. The fierce urgency for the 65 million Americans on Social Security is that we do something now.

It has been more than 51 years since Congress enhanced Social Security benefits. This is not something the President can do by executive order, although I commend President Biden for his straightforward support of Social Security, calling it a sacred trust with the American people. Indeed, it is.

Now, in the midst of this pandemic and in the midst of what has transpired with regard to inflation, our senior citizens need direct relief from Congress. Congress is the only body that can provide it.

The good news is that President Biden and the House of Representatives have a bill to do just that, a bill that will enhance benefits that haven't been taken up in more than 51 years. People will see an across-the-board increase in their Social Security. People who were paying taxes on Social Security will no longer be paying those taxes. People who have gotten a COLA some years and other years not will now get a COLA based on their actual expenses. There will be no more waiting period for disability victims.

There will also be the repeal of WEP and GPO, as the President of the United States has called for, making sure that firefighters, policemen, and teachers all across this country will now be able, as will their spouses, to receive the benefits that they richly deserve.

These are consequential times that we live in, Madam Speaker, and the spotlight is upon us as we approach the summer recess.

There are plans as to how to deal with Social Security, and they are

pretty straightforward. The Republicans have put forward three plans. RICK SCOTT from Florida calls for ending Social Security in 5 years. The Republican Study Group has more than 20 specific cuts and a 21 percent across-the-board cut to Social Security by raising the age of Social Security recipients. For every year you raise the age, it is a 7 percent cut. There is no logic to the fact that people are living longer so they should receive less.

Madam Speaker, you know that, in 1971, the last time Congress expanded Social Security benefits, Richard Nixon was President of the United States and a gallon of milk cost 72 cents. There has not been an improvement and enhancement to Social Security since 1971. It is our responsibility as a Congress to do so.

The Republicans have a plan. God bless his soul, Sam Johnson, who I admired, a Vietnam war hero, a person who had incredible integrity, put forward a plan. His plan called for cuts in order to make Social Security solvent.

The Democratic plan says, no, it is time to enhance Social Security. More than 5 million people live in poverty and receive a below-poverty-level check from their government. It is time for us to act.

PROTECT ENERGY GRID FROM GREEN NEW DEAL POLICIES

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

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, as temperatures rise, our energy grid has been left unprepared to keep up with the power demands to keep up with this intense summer heat.

Instead of investing in the coal, natural gas, and Marcellus shale that is under the feet of my constituents in Pennsylvania, President Biden has turned his back on my communities in

□ 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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order to enact Green New Deal policies that fail to meet our energy needs, fail to meet the needs that, right now, in the heat of July, are expanding.

It has become abundantly clear that solar panels and windmills cannot produce the power needed to keep the lights on and keep the air-conditioners humming.

This failed pivot to radical energy policies that could lead to rolling blackouts and has led to skyrocketing electric bills across the country needs to be addressed and needs to be addressed right now.

It is time for the Biden administration to protect our energy grid, and it is time to ensure that we are using the resources that we have right here at home to serve the American people. It is not time to turn to OPEC for additional support when we have the resources right here in America. It is time that we come together and serve the American people with the resources that are right here in America.

WHITE HOUSE IS MISLEADING AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Mr. ROSE. Madam Speaker, on July 2, the President of the United States sent out this message to small business owners across America: "My message to the companies running gas stations and setting prices at the pump is simple: This is a time of war and global peril. Bring down the price you are charging at the pump to reflect the cost you are paying for the product, and do it now."

When I first read this message, I was perplexed. After all, the President should know that gas stations already offer their fuel at a price just slightly above what they buy from wholesalers. There is basically no room for cost savings at this final step in the supply chain. In fact, most gas stations make their money on what is sold in the convenience store and not at the gas pump.

This ill-advised message does nothing to help solve the problem but only confuses and angers the small business owners who own gas stations and convenience stores. Even billionaire Jeff Bezos called out the White House, saying: "Inflation is far too important a problem for the White House to keep making statements like this. It is either straight-ahead misdirection or a deep misunderstanding of basic market dynamics."

I agree with Mr. Bezos. This is far too important of an issue for the White House to keep misleading the American people. Apparently, President Biden missed the lesson on economics the day they studied it in class, or maybe he has just forgotten what he learned.

The bottom line is that the President needs to take this issue more seriously and stop pointing the blame at others.

First, it was Russia; then, it was the oil companies; and now, it is the gas station owners. It is only a matter of time until the President finds a way to blame this on Republicans or perhaps former President Trump.

Ultimately, the buck stops at the White House, and the President must take responsibility for his anti-energy policies that have made it more and more difficult to explore and drill for oil right here under our feet in the United States.

BAD BEHAVIOR AT NLRB

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, the National Labor Relations Board, NLRB, under the Biden administration is so tightly wound around the little finger of union bosses that the circulation has been cut off entirely. Workers and employers are getting stiffed at every turn.

Under Republican administrations, the NLRB took practical measures to protect the rights of workers and job creators. The times have indeed changed.

The current NLRB's radical leftward lurch proves one solitary thing: Democrats will always twist themselves into a legislative pretzel to push the progressive policies of Big Labor.

We are seeing a concentrated effort by the NLRB to expand Big Labor's power. For instance, the NLRB is exhuming policies from days gone by like the Joy Silk doctrine, which would allow unions to organize a workplace without ever receiving majority support in a secret ballot election. By eviscerating the secret ballot, a hallmark of democratic elections, card check makes workers more vulnerable to harassment from union organizers.

Don't forget, a prominent union leader testified before the House Education and Labor Committee that union workers need workers' personal information to harass them at the grocery store or in their own homes to pressure them into supporting the union. Their admission tells you all you need to know about the political hackery of unions today.

The Biden-appointed NLRB general counsel has also challenged longstanding precedent regarding employers' rights to educate their employees about the downsides of union representation. General Counsel Jennifer Abruzzo believes that such efforts are at odds with the fundamental labor laws of this country.

Yet, this precedent was established in 1948, and no other general counsel ever found reason to challenge such a significant precedent. Coincidence? I think not.

With a union cheerleader as the NLRB general counsel, the current NLRB is hell-bent on supporting the agenda of union bosses. Abruzzo is a

former union executive and is pushing radical pro-union policies.

Having former union employees serve in a union-regulating agency creates a clear conflict of interest. But under the Biden administration, this is the norm, not the exception.

Every level of the NLRB, and the Biden administration, is packed with former union employees. Even his Labor Secretary was a former union boss who still walks the picket lines.

But such actions are totally on brand for this administration. President Biden swore to be the "most pro-union President" in American history, and Big Labor is now the kingpin of this administration. At this rate, President Biden might as well be a stooge.

Republicans must work to rein in the NLRB union's zealotry. Its heavy-handed actions infringe upon the freedoms of workers and hamstring employers.

□ 1215

INFLATION DENIAL

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, President Biden has allowed the American people and Main Street businesses to suffer while his reckless spending policies continue to make things even worse.

With this crisis weighing heavy on us all, the President and Senate Democrats are pushing to add a trillion dollars in higher taxes on Main Street small businesses. That will only lead to more higher prices, wage cuts, and supply shortages, exacerbating the inflation problem significantly.

Instead of working to address America's inflation crisis, House Democrats will spend this week pushing for trillions more in government spending, which will only worsen America's inflation crisis further.

Instead of addressing the economic crisis, Democrats are prioritizing liberal initiatives and increasing Federal spending with some accounts receiving double-digit and triple-digit percentage increases.

Some of these out-of-touch woke spending priorities include taxpayer-funded abortion. Funding for FDA—the same agency that failed to prevent the infant formula crisis—has increased 10 percent. And partisan climate change initiatives, even though the American people are facing the highest gas prices on record.

The American people don't need any of these far-left priorities.

They need a responsible spending plan.

They need the Biden administration to unleash American energy independence and domestic production.

They need the Republicans to stop the Biden administration's radical policies from driving our Nation straight into another recession.