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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

March 7, 2023.

I hereby appoint the Honorable BEN CLINE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

KEVIN MCCARTHY,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 9, 2023, 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.

CALIFORNIA'S WATER FLUCTUATIONS

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the extreme winter storms that continue to batter California and the West Coast, leaving some Californians stranded in their homes and communities across the State with damaged infrastructure. Approximately 16 million people have been impacted in recent weeks.

Last week, Governor Newsom declared a state of emergency for 13 coun-

ties, including Tulare County, which I represent, and other important areas. State officials estimate damage costs could surpass \$1 billion.

California's snowpack is approaching record levels in California's Sierra Nevada. In most cases, that would be good news. Officials believe this may rival the 1982-1983 snow year.

However, this is good news for a State that has suffered long-term drought that forced residents to cut usage and ration water, farmers to fallow hundreds of thousands of acres of productive land, and left landowners with a record number of dry wells in the Central Valley. That was just a few months ago.

However, now the situation has changed. We now have to do a better job of managing in real time long-term water regulations that aren't working. We need to be better prepared to avoid what happened in communities like Planada and others where flooding damaged farms and displaced farmworkers.

That is why we need to fast-track improvements to our water infrastructure, using every tool in our water toolbox to divert water to recharge overdrafted aquifers. You can see from the snowpack here and from the flooding there, this is what has been occurring since the beginning of the first of the year. Therefore, we must increase water storage in all ways in wet years, like this one, to ensure that we can withstand the dry spells.

If we would have completed projects like the Sites Reservoir, which has been talked about for years, we would have been able to store 1.5 million additional acre-feet of water.

Thanks to the bipartisan infrastructure law, we do have Federal dollars available to expand projects that are currently in progress: Los Vaqueros and Del Puerto Reservoirs and raising the dam at the San Luis Reservoir, which is expected to be filled in the next 45 days.

Mr. Speaker, in addition, this weekend, we are going to have a major test in California because forecasters are predicting another atmospheric river that will provide warm storms, which could melt recent snow up in the mountains. When warm water hits that snow, it melts. If that happens, our rivers will carry a deluge of water toward vulnerable communities that we may not be able to protect.

These massive fluctuations, from extreme wet years to extreme dry periods, are a result of climate change, and we need to make smart investments to do a better job to prepare for the new reality. Knowing this, we need to make real changes in how we allow water managers to adjust and focus on real-time operations, not some predetermined date rooted in decades-old data.

I commend Governor Newsom for issuing an executive order to expand California's capacity to capture storm runoff during these wet times by accelerating groundwater recharge projects, which is absolutely necessary.

Last week, the Bureau of Reclamation announced an initial allocation of 35 percent for south-of-the-delta agriculture and water service contractors. We can and should do better. It is understandably a conservative initial allocation, but now we have more heavy rains coming. It is time to raise those allocations to the highest feasible levels. We must divert water to our communities and farmers who are ready and willing to take water to recharge groundwater.

Toward the future, I am working to rewrite the farm bill this year to improve water conservation, enhance opportunities for groundwater recharge so that our overdraft aquifers reach sustainability. The people of the San Joaquin Valley deserve no less.

California, with a new water blueprint needs to invest, invest the \$1.2 trillion in the bipartisan infrastructure law, \$4.5 billion for drought relief. Taking action and mastering real-time

□ 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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management will mean that no one goes without having access to clean drinking water; our farmers can grow food—where water flows, we say food grows—for our country and for other parts of the world that need that food; and our environment can thrive. That is what we must do.

We have a current crisis. We must act now to address that crisis, and that is a challenge we face.

CONGRATULATING MAJOR GENERAL BENJAMIN CORELL ON HIS RETIREMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Major General Benjamin Corell of Strawberry Point, Iowa, for his outstanding service as a 37-year member of the Iowa National Guard.

Major General Corell retired last week after serving as Iowa National Guard's top general since 2019, leading the Guard through the COVID pandemic.

Throughout his decorated career, Major General Corell has deployed overseas to Iraq, Afghanistan, Romania, and Kuwait, and has led several of the National Guard's infantry divisions. He retired with a master's degree and a career full of military awards and accomplishments.

Major General Corell plans to spend his retirement with his wife, Beth, and their seven grandchildren, passing along the values that guided him through his career. All three of his sons are noncommissioned officers in the Iowa Army National Guard. I wish them the very best as they follow in the footsteps of an excellent father and role model.

Coming from a financially challenged family in rural Iowa with no college education, Major General Corell's life journey represents the very best of Iowa and the rest of the country and serves as a shining example for generations to come.

I am grateful for Major General Benjamin Corell's service, and I wish him a relaxing and fulfilling retirement.

O'HARA TRUE VALUE HARDWARE CLOSING AFTER 83 YEARS IN BUSINESS

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize O'Hara True Value Hardware in Ottumwa, Iowa, which is closing after 83 years in business.

Martin and Florence O'Hara opened the doors of O'Hara Appliance in January of 1940, but before long, the appliance store quickly shifted into a hardware store, too. Martin had offered home repair advice for years, and the shift came naturally.

The O'Haras value being family owned and operated, and their children each grew into employees at the shop, including their son Mike, who ultimately took over the business and who I know well.

For years, Mike O'Hara has continued his family's legacy in Ottumwa, offering the best service and advice for all things plumbing, electrical, automotive, construction, and repairs. You could take in any kind of screw from any kind of product, and they could tell you what it went for and how to replace it.

The store is also famous for having the best Christmas decorations in town, to include live reindeer in a stable outside throughout December.

O'Hara has overcome numerous challenges over the last several decades, including major fires, the flood of 1993, and most recently, the COVID pandemic.

Mike's commitment to serving his community has always remained clear and steadfast. I am proud to know Mike and his family, and I wish him the very best in retirement—they so deserve that—but they are going to be greatly missed. The town will cherish their memories from O'Hara's and we will all miss going there for home repair needs.

HOSTING CUBA'S BORDER GUARD AND MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IS UNACCEPTABLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ROUZER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROUZER. Mr. Speaker, I found out on Friday of this past week that Cuba's Border Guard and Ministry of Foreign Affairs had been hosted in the North Carolina congressional district that I am honored to represent. The Wilmington Port facilities visit was planned and authorized by the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State.

As one of our Nation's oldest adversaries and a state sponsor of terrorism, Cuba's Communist Government is no friend of the United States or anyone else who believes in freedom. Cuba has a history of being a strategic Western asset to our greatest adversaries, including China, Russia, and Iran, and they regularly cooperate with narcotics traffickers, bringing cocaine, fentanyl, and other deadly drugs to our country.

Now I am told this trip, as well as others in the past, have been arranged as part of a reciprocal relationship to turn back Cubans fleeing to the United States. We apparently have this arrangement where we view their ports and security protocols, and they view ours.

There is no reason any nation with a state sponsor of terrorism designation should be hosted by the United States, let alone be allowed to analyze sensitive coastal and maritime security protocols. Ironically, the decision to designate Cuba as a state sponsor of terrorism and the decision to authorize this trip were made by the same agencies. This action flies in the face of the purpose of both the Department of

Homeland Security and the Department of State and makes a mockery of American strength against our adversaries.

The shores of North Carolina's Seventh Congressional District are used and enjoyed by its residents and countless tourists from across the country. It is our responsibility to ensure the security of our maritime borders, and our Coast Guard often serves as the first line of defense against these threats.

Mr. Speaker, this visit was a clear national security risk. I don't know how one could view it otherwise. The bottom line is, this visit should never have happened, and the American people deserve to know what steps were taken to protect our national security interests.

HONORING THE LEGACY OF EDWARD FORD WEBER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the productive life of the Honorable Congressman Edward Ford Weber of Toledo, Ohio, a gifted lawyer and a man for others.

Throughout his life and during his congressional service, beginning in 1981, he worked hard to serve the people of northwest Ohio during those tumultuous economic times.

He was a gentleman and a veteran, dedicated to his family, to our community of Toledo, and to our country. He earned a Phi Beta Kappa from Denison University, was president of his fraternity, and captain of the men's tennis team. He was married to the love of his life, Alice Hammerstrom, for 66 years. They reared three wonderful children, six grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter.

Ed was committed to education and to music, as well. He tutored children in reading within the Toledo public school system, some of our most challenged neighborhoods, in addition to the teaching he did at the University of Toledo Law School.

Ed practiced law in Toledo for nearly half a century at Marshall Melhorn first, and then eventually founded his own firm and generously kept giving of himself to numerous endeavors to improve Toledo: Our zoo; the Toledo Museum of History, which is world class; the Boy Scouts; the YMCA; the Toledo Museum of Art, also world class; the Red Cross; and numerous charitable foundations. He kept giving back, through his deep commitment to the people of Toledo and surrounding communities, and we needed him. He understood the impact and importance of civic duty.

Today, America salutes Edward Ford Weber for his lifelong, noble, honorable service. We honor and remember his constructive life and the ethic that imbued his spirit.

The last time I had the pleasure of seeing him was at the Toledo Club. He