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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. STRONG).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

November 7, 2023.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DALE W. STRONG to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

MIKE JOHNSON,

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 11:50 a.m.

AMERICA REMAINS UNITED AND THE BEACON OF LIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY AROUND THE WORLD

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, we are at a seminal moment in world history, comparable to times in the 20th century, like the Depression, World War II, and the 1960s.

The world is on fire with conflict. Democratic countries like Israel, Ukraine, and Armenia are under attack from terrorists and other authoritarian

regimes that want to reshape the world order and take away basic freedoms and human rights.

These authoritarian regimes and these attacks from terrorists are anti-Semitic, they involve hate crimes that are sadly on the rise for other ethnic groups, as well.

Terrorist groups like Hamas and bad actors like President Putin of Russia and Xi of China are spreading misinformation to create discord. We see the impacts of that propaganda here at home.

Our actions today, therefore, will determine the future success of free societies throughout the world, and that is why it is important for us to stand firm in our support of democracies around the world.

We must stand against the attempts to undermine Israel's very existence. It is disturbing to see the chants of "from the river to the sea." This is a phrase used by Hamas—a rallying cry of terrorists calling for the destruction of the Jewish state. It is anti-Semitic, and it is hateful.

Israel has the right to defend itself. It has an obligation to protect its citizens and secure its borders.

Let us not forget the families, the children, and the elderly who were slaughtered in their homes a month ago by the terrorists who carried out a planned, coordinated attack on innocent Israeli civilians on October 7.

We should also hold sorrow for the Palestinian people. Many of those who live in Gaza are equally victims of Hamas and their barbaric actions against humanity in using these Palestinians as human shields.

Hamas, therefore, is responsible for this terror and their suffering. Congress must help the Palestinian people out of this horrific situation, starting with humanitarian aid. The Palestinians have a right to determine their own future.

Congress also must send military and economic resources to Israel. It must

work to expand and strengthen the Abraham Accords, which are critical. We cannot allow Iran and its proxy terrorist groups like Hamas and Hezbollah to disrupt the accomplishments of this diplomacy.

Let's understand what is at stake here. Iran wants to have hegemony over the entire Middle East, and we must be mindful of that with their alliances with Russia and China.

Congress must also send additional aid to Ukraine. These Ukrainians, these brave people, are defending their sovereignty. We must give them everything they need to win their fight for freedom and defeat Putin, who I believe is a war criminal by the actions he has carried out in the last 18 to 19 months. Russia today, really, is a syndicate masquerading as a country, and its mob boss is Putin.

For some of my Republican colleagues who are having second thoughts on funding additional support for Ukraine, I remind you of President Reagan and Senator John McCain who always recognized the threats of Russia's Communism to our democracy. I believe in Putin's heart he is still a Communist.

It is important that we have this bipartisan package to support the President's proposal and the supplemental package that will provide funding for the next year for Ukraine, Israel, Taiwan, additional border security and humanitarian assistance. This could benefit Armenia and the over 120,000 Armenians who have been displaced from their historic homeland as a result of Azerbaijan.

These are all critical issues in the foreign affairs of America and the world security if we are to remain the beacon of light around the world.

These are critical times, to be sure, therefore, America must be together with our allies in Europe. We cannot lose sight of what is at stake if we do not stop these threats against freedom,

□ 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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whether it is in the Middle East, whether it is in Asia, or elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, this is the test of our time. It is the test of our generation, and historians will look back 10 to 20 years from now and they will determine: Did we make more good decisions than poor decisions in standing up for human rights and the freedoms we cherish?

I pray that we make more good decisions than poor decisions and that America remain united and the beacon of light for democracy around the world.

DELTA 8

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

Mr. FLOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to address the growing threat of Delta 8 across communities in Nebraska.

For anyone who may not be following this issue yet, Delta 8 is a variant of THC and is derived from cannabis. Today, retailers across Nebraska are selling THC-laced products aimed at kids. For example, a retailer in Madison County has allegedly been selling gummies containing 200 times the level of THC needed to send a kid to the hospital. Delta 8 products are made to look like common types of candy or snacks to appeal to children.

I am glad Nebraska is cracking down on Delta 8, which are illegal even in States that have legalized recreational marijuana. Attorney General Mike Hilgers has filed complaints in 10 counties across Nebraska as he works to confront this challenge.

I commend him and others across the country who are taking action to stop the threat of Delta 8 that is hurting our children.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage everyone watching to visit AGO.Nebraska.gov to learn more.

SALUTING NEBRASKA STATE TREASURER TOM BRIESE

Mr. FLOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute the service of newly-appointed Nebraska State Treasurer Tom Briese.

For almost 7 years, Tom honorably served the people of District 41 in the unicameral. I sat next to him on our State's revenue committee. During those years, he fought hard to reform the State's high property taxes and school funding formula.

Over the course of time in the legislature, he worked with both Governor Ricketts and Governor Pillen to deliver historic tax relief.

Earlier this year, Governor Pillen announced that he would appoint Senator Briese to fill a vacancy in the role of State treasurer.

Tom brings with him a wealth of experience in working with the legislature and State senators to shape public policy. He leads an office that manages the State's college savings plan and unclaimed property programs while watching over the State's resources.

I know Tom will do an outstanding job in his new role and I wish him all the best as he takes on this new challenge.

Mr. Speaker, I wish the treasurer best wishes in the years ahead.

CONGRATULATING HAMPTON ENTERPRISES ON 75 YEARS OF BUSINESS

Mr. FLOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Hampton Enterprises on 75 years of business. The late Joe Hampton opened the real estate and construction company in Lincoln, Nebraska, in 1948 when he was just 22 years old.

Throughout the past 75 years, Hampton has constructed everything from houses to offices to the Pinnacle Bank Arena. Hampton has an impressive and extensive list of arenas, schools, and offices, and with all of these buildings comes numerous tenants and customers.

One tenant has been renting office space from Hampton for nearly 40 years. He says they offer a complete spectrum of services. Hampton prides themselves on maintaining their core values of integrity, quality, work ethic, relationships, and stewardship, which is likely why they have found so much success.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Nebraska's First Congressional District, I congratulate Hampton Enterprises on 75 years.

BIDEN-XI MEETING

Mr. FLOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the upcoming meeting between President Joe Biden and China's President Xi Jinping.

President Biden and President Xi are expected to meet later this month during the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit. Leading Biden Cabinet members have been meeting with high-level officials from the Chinese Communist Party in recent months.

The focus of these meetings has been framed as "engagement." While that might sound nice, the Biden administration's approach has weakened America's position in relation to China.

The CCP respects strength, and America must project it if we are going to succeed in this new era of competition. If President Biden wants to find success in this policy area, he needs to be willing to communicate clear principles around national security, trade, and human rights as he meets with their President. Failure to do this will only mean America's ability to compete against China will fade away.

Mr. Speaker, I wish President Biden all the best as he takes on this challenge. I hope he is up to it.

RECOGNIZING BECKENHAUER CONSTRUCTION ON 145 YEARS IN BUSINESS.

Mr. FLOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Beckenhauer Construction of Norfolk, Nebraska, on 145 years in business.

Since 1878, Beckenhauer has built everything from churches to schools to hospitals and community projects built around the good life. Today, it is still a family business being run by the fourth and fifth generations.

They have been involved in the Box Butte General Hospital and the Boone County health clinic. The University of Nebraska had them renovate the UNL Barkley Memorial Center in Lincoln just last year.

Beckenhauer Construction's reach extends beyond Nebraska. They recently broke ground on a new law enforcement center in Clay County, South Dakota.

The Beckenhauer commitment is to hold the standards of quality, reliability, integrity, safety, and honesty to provide unparalleled service to their clients. That is why they are likely to grow for another 145 years and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Beckenhauer Construction and wish them the best in the years to come.

SECOND AVENUE SUBWAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ESPAILLAT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to thank President Joe Biden for the investment of \$1.2 trillion—that is right, Mr. Speaker—trillion with a t, of the Bipartisan Infrastructure and Jobs Act.

We hear a lot of noise from the other side every single day, but when we see those shovels going in the ground and when we see those major projects coming forward across the Nation, those same Members that are making noise on the other side of the aisle will show up to the ribbon-cutting, Mr. Speaker, and some of them may be there to take credit for the project.

The biggest investment in the history of our Nation with regard to infrastructure and jobs. It is not just infrastructure; it is an economic development machine that will generate hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of jobs across our Nation.

I thank our President for his investment in our Nation, and particularly in the 13th Congressional District, which is an iconic district that has Harlem; East Harlem, also known as El Barrio; Washington Heights—yeah, some of you may have seen the movie "In the Heights"—Inwood; and the Northwest Bronx. The second phase of the Second Avenue subway just kicked off this past weekend.

Mr. Speaker, I thank our Secretary of Transportation, Pete Buttigieg, for coming to our district to kick off the second phase of the Second Avenue subway right in East Harlem. This phase is such an important phase for a community that has for far too long been subjected to a transportation desert.

On Saturday, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration stood hand in hand with East Harlem leaders to sign off on a \$3.4 billion Full Funding Grant Agreement.

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This was part of the capital investment grant program that received