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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 28, 2023.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ANNA PAULINA LUNA 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 on January 9, 2023, the Chair will now recognize Members from the 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.

KPMG AUDIT

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I have had enough with the Biden Department of Education's utterly dishonest accounting tricks. The Department of Education's 2022 financial statement doesn't have a leg to stand on.

KPMG, an independent auditor, stated that there were material weaknesses in the department's estimates regarding how much the Biden administra-

tion's student loan debt relief plan would cost.

The Biden administration claims that its plan would cost \$30 billion annually over 10 years, but this is assuming that the Department of Education has properly estimated the participation numbers. According to KPMG, the Department has no evidence behind these numbers, and these numbers matter a lot.

If these numbers are off by just 10 percent, then the cost of Biden's program would rise to \$400 billion according to the Congressional Budget Office.

Folks in the Biden Education Department need to go back and learn some math.

At worst, the department is trying to hide the true cost to taxpayers of these debt bailout schemes. At best, the department is practicing shoddy accounting again. Either way, this is a completely irresponsible way to govern such a major program.

It is obvious to anyone paying attention that the department hasn't learned anything from its past mistakes. It was assumptions like this that got our student loan systems into this mess in the first place.

When Democrats passed the Income-Driven Repayment program, IDR, they grossly underestimated the number of borrowers who would participate. This, in conjunction with the student loan moratorium, has led to a \$311 billion budget deficit within the Federal student loan program.

In other words, the Federal student loan program is already costing taxpayers a fortune, and the Biden administration's actions will make the problem far worse.

To put salt in the wound, the Biden administration's proposed changes to IDR will cost far more than they are letting on. While the department claims that its changes will cost taxpayers \$138 billion over the next 10 years, a nonpartisan student loan ex-

pert has estimated that the true cost could be \$1 trillion.

Senator Everett Dirksen said: "A billion here, a billion there, and pretty soon you are talking real money."

This is real taxpayer money.

Once again, the Biden administration is trying to pull the wool over our eyes.

As chairwoman of the Education and the Workforce Committee, I cannot let this pattern of deception and mismanagement continue. I will spend the 118th Congress doing everything in my power to hold this administration accountable. Taxpayers deserve nothing less.

DEMOCRATS PUT PEOPLE OVER POLITICS

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

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Madam Speaker, House Democrats are putting people over politics by lowering healthcare costs and creating better-paying jobs.

We are cutting costs for healthcare coverage, capping insulin at \$35 for Medicare patients, and giving Medicare the power to negotiate lower drug prices. We expanded the Affordable Care Act program which will lower premiums for over 13 million Americans.

Just in my district alone, 62,000 seniors with Medicare will pay less for prescription drug coverage, and 29,000 people in my district will have access to affordable healthcare coverage due to lowered premiums under the Inflation Reduction Act.

Meanwhile, some extreme MAGA Republicans are threatening to cut Social Security and Medicare.

House Democrats will always protect seniors from Medicare cuts or Social Security cuts because we put seniors over politics. In fact, House Democrats increased benefits by 8.7 percent last year to ensure a dignified retirement for Americans who worked hard for

☐ 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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these vital benefits. Let me repeat that: They worked hard for these vital benefits.

This increase helped more than 80,000 people in my district who are on Social Security. That is more than 10 percent of my constituents.

These are retired workers, disabled workers, widows, and children who need these critical funds to survive. They have earned them. They paid into them.

Social Security and Medicare are a lifeline for our seniors and especially those in my district. We will always defend these programs, and we will always put seniors over politics.

We will never cut Medicare. We will never cut Social Security. We will fight for our working families until the end.

Madam Speaker, House Democrats are creating good-paying jobs for all our American families. Democrats have created a record 12 million jobs since President Biden took office, and we aren't stopping there. Let me repeat that: 12 million, and we are not stopping there. That is almost as many jobs in 2 years as any President has created in a 4-year term.

House Republicans are trying to undermine all this through bad lies and make-up stuff suggesting that President Biden has hurt our economy. He has not.

Republicans want to raise the cost of everything 30 percent while giving the wealthiest Americans cuts on their taxes. This is outrageous and just plain wrong.

While extreme MAGA Republicans hand out tax breaks to the wealthy, Democrats are focused on lowering everyday Americans' costs.

We will continue to fight for working families.

I am not willing to use politics over people. I will always put people over politics and always, always people first.

RECOGNIZING JOHN "BARRY" DAGENHART AS AN OUTSTANDING CITIZEN

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

Mr. NORMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the dedicated service and call to the ministry of Dr. Barry Dagenhart who has served as a pastor for over 40 years.

Dr. Dagenhart grew up in Statesville, North Carolina, and was spiritually nurtured in the New Sterling Associate Reformed Presbyterian (A.R.P.) Church.

Graduating in 1979, he studied economics at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte. He also holds a master of divinity degree and a doctor of ministry degree from Erskine Theological Seminary. While at Erskine, he met his loving wife, Sarah Lynn Richie, of Fairfield, Virginia, and they were married on June 26 of 1982.

Dr. Dagenhart had the honor and privilege of serving on various boards and agencies throughout the A.R.P. denomination. He served on the board of stewardship and A.R.P. Foundation, as well as the Erskine College and Seminary Board of Trustees. He was also blessed to serve as the vice moderator of the A.R.P. General Synod.

He currently serves on the Bonclarken Board of Trustees, the conference center for the A.R.P. denomination. In addition to his service at the Synod level, he also has served on various commissions and committees on the Presbytery level in First Presbytery, Second Presbytery, and, most recently, Catawba Presbytery where he served as moderator from 2013 to 2014.

Not only has Dr. Dagenhart generously served on various boards and committees in his community, he also enjoyed being able to use his call to the gospel ministry to impact youth, adults, and individuals with special needs at various week-long summer camps at Bonclarken located in Flat Rock, North Carolina.

Throughout his decades of ministry, Dr. Dagenhart has frequently served as camp minister for Camp Joy, a camp for those affected by physical and mental disabilities. Dr. Dagenhart's caring and generous heart is what makes him stand out as an honorable citizen and follower of Jesus Christ, sacrificing his time to help those around him.

Dr. Dagenhart has an encouraging and loving family—his wife Sarah, son Jamey, and daughter Rachel—who support him in walking his path of placing others above himself.

Dr. Barry Dagenhart has set the gold standard for decades of dedicated service and commitment to his congregation and to the community. He will long be remembered for that.

Madam Speaker, we all join in saying thank you and Godspeed in his well-deserved years of retirement.

TOXIC WASTE IN MICHIGAN

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

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the 12th Congressional District and the State of Michigan to say to Norfolk Southern: Don't dump your toxic waste in our State.

Late last Friday, we learned that shipments of solid and liquid toxic waste from the East Palestine train derailment in Ohio were being transported to Michigan for disposal.

Norfolk Southern chose to dispose truckloads of hazardous materials at multiple sites, including one operated by U.S. Ecology, one of our region's most negligent and notorious corporate polluters. These companies treat poisoning our communities as the cost of doing business, and we are done with it.

I am so proud of our residents who spoke up and who helped halt further shipments into our State. I want to

thank every single one of them from the bottom of my heart for speaking the truth and demanding better from all of our officials from the State and the Federal EPA.

We will never give permission for corporate polluters to continue sacrificing the health and well-being of our communities and our families.

Our environmental regulators State and Federal must aggressively protect all of us from this threat and hold these polluters accountable.

DTE ENERGY

Ms. TLAIB. Madam Speaker, I rise today to say that DTE Energy, an investor-owned utility monopoly in my district, charges some of the highest rates in our Nation while providing some of the most unreliable service and performs hundreds of thousands of utility shutoffs per year.

Right now many of my residents are in the seventh day of no power: no gas, heat, or electricity.

This past week has been yet another nightmare for more than close to 1 million DTE customers as well as 200,000 consumer energy customers in our State who have endured days on end without power and heat after a completely foreseeable winter storm.

Why?

Because DTE doesn't invest in reliability. It invests in profits and pays for shareholders and executives. The company made \$1.1 billion in profits last year alone.

Investor-owned utilities like DTE will always put profits over the people whom we serve in this Chamber.

During the worst of the pandemic in 2020, Madam Speaker, DTE shut off power to customers more than 80,000 times despite being subsidized by our Federal Government to the tune of \$268 million in CARES Act funding.

The reason?

They paid out \$807 million to shareholders instead of keeping the power on for our residents who were struggling through the pandemic.

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Since 2015, DTE has received over \$775 million in rate hikes, the second highest rate of increase in our Nation, and they just announced their intention to seek another massive rate hike.

DTE has failed to invest in the infrastructure upgrades necessary to prevent outages, instead choosing to maximize profits for its shareholders and spending millions on campaign contributions to avoid real accountability.

I am sick and tired of wealthy corporate executives lining their pockets while our communities suffer and continue to be exploited.

That is why, last year, I introduced the Resolution Recognizing the Human Rights to Utilities with Representatives CORI BUSH and JAMAAL BOWMAN.

Madam Speaker, access to utilities is not a privilege; it is a fundamental human right. People depend on it for medical and for safety, again, in their