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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

With what can we come before You, O Lord, this day? How shall we honor You, O Lord, most exalted?

Shall we come before You with the sacrifice of our time and energy as proof of our dedication to serve You and the people we have been set apart to represent?

Will You be pleased with the multitude of our meetings and appointments, with the bounty of our hard-earned achievements? What should we lay before You to make up for our mistakes and missteps? How can we possibly atone for the transgressions of our souls?

Take away all that blinds us from what You have already shown us is good and acceptable in Your sight. Let us place before You the only sacrifice You require of us:

To do what is fair and just in all facets of our lives.

To be patient and compassionate, taking the initiative to show kindness even to those who are hard to be kind to.

To humble ourselves enough that we demonstrate that our love for You far exceeds our own self-interests.

In these offerings alone may we achieve what is the good pleasure of Your desire for our service to You and to this Nation. In your merciful name we pray.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House the approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LAMALFA 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

CALIFORNIA'S WATER SUPPLY

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I am going to report on the situation of California's water supply, which really is the Nation's water supply, as so much of our food source comes from California.

Mr. Speaker, 90 to 95 percent of our specialty crops—tomatoes, pistachios, almonds, walnuts—come from California if we are allowed to grow them.

Water supply is a core part of that.

We have a situation in northern California where each year it is a challenge to refill our lakes. Lake Oroville holds 3.5 million acre-feet; Lake Shasta, 4.5; Trinity Lake, 2.5 million—which is a total of about 10.5 million acre-feet. That is a lot of water.

We have the potential to build Sites Reservoir, another 1.5 million acre-feet. We could raise Shasta Dam and gain another 600,000 acre-feet for a total of 12.5 million acre-feet.

Yet, we aren't allowed to store that water. There is so much water now being devoted for other purposes that aren't for people, that are not for hydroelectric power. Indeed, they are tearing out hydroelectric dams in my district right now at a time when we want to go green with more CO₂-free power and electrify everything.

We have to do much better with corraling and saving our water supply for people's needs in California so it benefits the whole country.

RECOGNIZING SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

(Ms. GARCIA of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard-working school board members in my district in recognition of School Board Member Appreciation Month.

I am incredibly grateful for the extremely devoted school board members across Aldine ISD, Galena Park ISD, Channelview ISD, Sheldon ISD, Pasadena ISD, and Humble ISD.

These folks were elected by their communities to do some of the most important work a public servant can do. They are fostering the next generation of leaders by ensuring that our public schools are places where students can learn, explore, dream, and thrive.

I know that keeping our schools running smoothly comes with plenty of late nights and a lot of behind-the-scenes work. I know this firsthand because many of my family members have served or are serving on school boards.

Thanks to their work, our public schools continue to be the foundation of the great American Dream.

We must support our public schools. I thank them for their service, and we wish them Godspeed this year.

□ 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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WINTERGREEN COMMUNITY NEEDS EMERGENCY EXIT

(Mr. GOOD of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOOD of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise to support the ongoing efforts of the Wintergreen community to build an emergency exit road to keep their residents safe.

The Wintergreen community is located within the Blue Ridge National Park in Nelson County, Virginia, and is home to up to 10,000 residents at any given time. It is situated in a box canyon, but it only has one road that leads in or out.

For 20 years, the community has tried to work with the Park Service to construct an emergency exit but has been denied every time. The community is trying to fund and create a 400-foot emergency exit road to the Blue Ridge Parkway, which would be critical to saving lives in the event of a fire.

The Park Service continues to insist they do not have the authority to approve this action, so to remedy the situation, I am introducing the Blue Ridge Fire Safety Act to make it clear that the Park Service does have the authority to grant an emergency road construction permit.

Madam Speaker, I hope that common sense will prevail and prioritize the safety of this community.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF OFELIA VALDEZ-YEAGER

(Mr. TAKANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of Ofelia Valdez-Yeager—a trailblazer for the Latino community in the Inland Empire.

She was a champion for all students, both in the classroom as a teacher and in her capacity as the first Latina to serve on the Riverside Unified School Board of Trustees.

As a founding member of LaNet, commonly referred to as the “Latino network,” she helped give a voice to the growing Latino population in Riverside.

Ofelia enriched our community and helped mobilize efforts that created the Cesar Chavez memorial and established The Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art and Culture to downtown Riverside. I will miss her unwavering spirit and fierce advocacy dearly. My thoughts and prayers are with her family as they mourn the loss of a mother, wife, and grandmother.

RECOGNIZING MITCHELL WRIGHT

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mitchell Wright, a

social studies teacher at Watauga High School in North Carolina’s Fifth District.

Recently, I nominated Mitchell for the United States Capitol Historical Society Civic Education Workshop, a competitive program that selects only 16 educators from across the Nation to participate.

Last week, he was selected as part of this cohort and will travel to the Ruth-erford B. Hayes Presidential Library and Museum in Fremont, Ohio, in the latter part of February.

There, these 16 educators will develop new lesson plans and a variety of instructional materials relating to the electoral college that they will be able to share with their students.

Madam Speaker, I congratulate Mitchell on his selection to this program, and I thank the U.S. Capitol Historical Society for their continued work in creating novel instructional workshops such as this.

UKRAINE AND ISRAEL AID

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, it has been 687 days since Putin invaded Ukraine.

It has been 379 days since we secured our last aid package for the Ukrainians.

It has been 97 days since Hamas launched its brutal terror attack on Israel and took numerous Israelis and Americans hostage.

It has been 79 days since MIKE JOHNSON became speaker, 71 days since he made aid to Israel contingent on completely unrelated partisan IRS cuts, breaking not only 75 years of bipartisan precedent but also the principles of the One Subject at a Time Act, which he sponsored back in 2017.

Madam Speaker, how many days will it be until Congress stands up for freedom and democracy once again? The answer ought to be today.

Instead, we find ourselves mired in the chaos sown by a majority party that refuses to give us a clean vote.

It must stop or I fear democracy’s days may be numbered.

Let us act and let us act now for the Ukrainians and for the Israelis, to oppose criminal invasions and terrorism.

RECOGNIZING UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN FOOTBALL TEAM

(Mrs. McCLAIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. McCLAIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the University of Michigan football team for winning the national championship.

It is great to be a Michigan Wolverine.

Monday night, the Michigan football team completed their final test and stood atop as national champions.

Capping off a 15–0 season, team 144 will be enshrined as Big Ten champions, Rose Bowl champions, and now national champions.

Despite the accolades, this season for Michigan has been met with adversity on and off the field, but the players and the coaches and the team never wavered.

Michigan has a saying: “Those who stay will be champions,” and champions they have become.

These players are champions on and off the field. Team 144 is the epitome of what it means to be Michigan men and stand as champions because of it.

We are proud of these young men. We are so proud of Coach Harbaugh and his staff and all of those who are involved with this great program.

Madam Speaker, I congratulate Michigan. They are national champions. Go Blue.

RECOGNIZING RICHARD FRANCIS BRANI

(Ms. SPANBERGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SPANBERGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Staff Sergeant Richard Francis Brani, a U.S. Army veteran who served during World War II and was recently awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his gallantry during the Battle of the Bulge.

Nearly 80 years ago, Mr. Brani valiantly served in three campaigns in the European Theater, including on the Western Front, where he distinguished himself as part of the 84th Infantry Division “Railsplitters.”

From the beaches of Normandy to the forests of the Ardennes, Mr. Brani and his regiment faced freezing temperatures, fierce enemy fire, and insurmountable odds as they warded off German forces. Amidst trials that tested their resolve, their bravery never wavered.

Last month, and at 100 years old, Mr. Brani was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for demonstrating extraordinary heroism during this critical turning point in World War II.

Mr. Brani’s service is a reminder of the sacrifices made by an entire generation, the sacrifices that led to the freedoms we hold dear today.

On behalf of a grateful Nation, I stand before the United States House of Representatives to thank Staff Sergeant Richard Francis Brani for his devoted service to our extraordinary country.

□ 0915

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD RE- LATING TO “STANDARD FOR DE- TERMINING JOINT EMPLOYER STATUS”

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 947, I call up the