

costs more to see patients than you are getting for the cost of care.

When I ran a private practice, I stayed up many, many nights, Saturday nights, trying to find out how to squeeze out money—to find each paper clip, make sure that we knew where the staplers were—just to make sure that we made payroll and that we paid the light bill.

Oftentimes I did not take a salary when we could not do that, but that was private practice. We were our own destiny. We knew how to take care of patients. We had an ownership in patients.

When adjusted for inflation over the last 20 years, the Medicare fee schedule for physicians has been cut by 20 percent.

What other profession expects to be cut year after year rather than receive raises, especially during this inflationary period?

One of ObamaCare's directives was to starve private practice, to force them, to drive them into employment. My former practice is employed now by a hospital. They have done well, but this is an entirely different tenet with patient care.

Physicians are being cut every year in their pay. Hospitals, albeit smaller, get raises every year.

□ 1045

While this still may not be much to carry the cost of care in these hospitals, but why are the people who are providing care to the patients the ones who are being cut?

Why is this a bad model?

It is because I think employed physicians tend to be a different bird from private practice physicians. They tend to be more working on the clock, they tend to decrease efficiency, and they actually increase the cost of care.

There is much more ownership with private practice physicians. When a private practice physician comes into a community, they establish roots, and they become part of the community. They join churches, and they join civic groups.

Unfortunately, the employed physician model as we see it now is much more transitory. There is a contract, and if that doesn't work out, then they move in 3 years. Then patients are left in the lurch. My doctor—it is always my doctor—took care of me for 20 years. That is starting to stop; that is ceasing.

The Medicare fee schedule cuts must stop. This is why I introduced H.R. 6683, the Preserving Seniors' Access to Physicians Act. The legislation stops this year's cut while we work on a permanent solution.

Mr. Speaker, this is one of the reasons I came to Congress: to fix Medicare. We are experiencing a critical doctor shortage now, but it is going to be off the cliff in 3 to 5 years, especially with surges.

No other profession, as I just said, expects to be cut every year rather than

get raises. Every day now we add 10,000 new patients to Medicare. Imagine a hardware store, Mr. Speaker, where you bought a hammer for a dollar, and you were paid 60 cents. It doesn't make sense.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support the bill.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 46 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MIKE GARCIA of California) at noon.

#### PRAYER

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

Holy and immortal God, we pause to offer our prayers of both gratitude and grief for Your servant, Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson. Words cannot adequately express our appreciation to You for allowing us to share the journey of life with such a woman of perseverance and presence, leadership and legendary impact. Thank You for allowing her to touch the lives of so many in both her nursing and political careers.

While we mourn Representative Johnson's passing, with hearts bereft of her friendship and mentorship, and with compassion for her grieving family, in the face of the fragility of life, we do not grieve as those without hope. For we trust in the promise she held dear, that those who have departed this life will be united with You in everlasting glory.

May her memory be a blessing, and may Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson be blessed as she rests now from her labor in lifelong service to You and to Your people.

Into Your everlasting arms we commend our lives, and in Your eternal name we offer our prayer.

Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr.

WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina 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 PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

#### CELEBRATING KANE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS POST'S CENTENNIAL

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate 100 years of the Kane Veterans of Foreign Wars charter located in McKean County.

The Kane VFW post is a top-tier post in the State. In 2023, they qualified and were awarded All State status for the second time and were also awarded the coveted All American Post award for the first time.

The post will mark this anniversary with a celebration at the end of January with numerous guest speakers, camaraderie, and friendship.

The Kane VFW post's first meeting to establish their charter was held on December 11, 1923, in the Eagle Hall, and they were granted their charter on January 29, 1924, with just 79 founding members. Over the years, the club grew in size, serving as a place for veterans and community members alike to gather in fellowship.

Mr. Speaker, VFW posts are so important to our communities because they offer veterans a place to gather together and connect. From hosting local Scout troops to important community meetings, the Kane VFW post has seen it all over the last 100 years.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Kane VFW and their dedicated members on this monumental anniversary.

#### MOURNING THE LOSS OF THE HONORABLE EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

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

Mr. ALLRED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a Texas giant, a trail-blazer, a leader, my mentor, and my friend, Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson.

Congresswoman Johnson was unrivaled in her ability to deliver for Dallas and Texas. She always put Texans first and fought every day for her constituents in Dallas.

Congresswoman Johnson broke so many barriers. It is not hyperbole to say that I would not be here today serving in Congress if it weren't for Congresswoman Johnson.

Everywhere you look, Texans can see the mark that she made on our State in her 50 years of public service, from improving the VA, to investing in transportation, to fighting for Texans' civil rights, and to her work as the chair of the House Science Committee to pass the Chips and Science Act and invest in high-tech manufacturing.

Texas lost a giant, and I lost a friend. We all mourn this loss for our Texas community.

#### RECOGNIZING NATIONAL SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION MONTH

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring awareness to the fact that January is National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month.

Human trafficking erodes personal dignity and destroys the moral fabric of our society. Sadly, it is the fastest growing illicit trade in the world, with an estimated 40.3 million people living as slaves worldwide.

In this day and age, it is easy to think of human trafficking as a problem that happens elsewhere, but sadly, the U.S. accounts for almost 52 percent of global human trafficking, with the sex trafficking of minors accounting for the largest percentage.

Unfortunately, this problem has been exacerbated by the Biden administration's weak border policies, which criminal cartels are exploiting. Obviously, we need to secure the border immediately and hold traffickers accountable.

During National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month, we must reaffirm our unwavering commitment to eradicate this crime against humanity and to support victims of this horrific crime.

#### BIDEN BORDER DESTABILIZATION

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last week, I joined Speaker MIKE JOHNSON and Republican colleagues from 26 States at the border in Eagle Pass, Texas.

What I witnessed and heard was madness. Each month, Border Patrol agents, county sheriffs, and public safety personnel are assaulted with unaccompanied children and tens of thousands of illegal aliens crossing.

Since Biden took office, there have been over 7 million illegal crossings, including 300 on the terrorist watch list. The irresponsible failure of Biden

encourages drug smugglers, human traffickers, and terrorists to enter, with terrorist attacks imminent in America.

Democrats should promote the Republican-passed H.R. 2 border security bill to stop destabilization, as condemned by New York Mayor Eric Adams.

In conclusion, God bless our troops who successfully protected America for 20 years in the global war on terrorism as it continues moving from the Afghanistan safe haven to America with Biden open borders for terrorists. It is sadly clear there will be more 9/11 attacks across America imminent, as warned by the FBI.

#### PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 788, STOP SETTLEMENT SLUSH FUNDS ACT OF 2023; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 98, PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD RELATING TO "STANDARD FOR DETERMINING JOINT EMPLOYER STATUS"; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S.J. RES. 38, PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION RELATING TO "WAIVER OF BUY AMERICA REQUIREMENTS FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGERS"

Mrs. HOUCIN. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 947 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

##### H. RES. 947

*Resolved*, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 788) to limit donations made pursuant to settlement agreements to which the United States is a party, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 118-18 shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees; (2) the further amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, shall be separately debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question; and (3) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 98) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to "Standard for Determining Joint Employer Status". All points of order against consideration of the joint resolution are waived. The joint resolution shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the joint resolution are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 3. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the joint resolution (S.J. Res. 38) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Federal Highway Administration relating to "Waiver of Buy America Requirements for Electric Vehicle Chargers". All points of order against consideration of the joint resolution are waived. The joint resolution shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the joint resolution are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to commit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Indiana is recognized for 1 hour.

Mrs. HOUCIN. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

##### GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. HOUCIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

Mrs. HOUCIN. Mr. Speaker, last night, the Rules Committee met and produced a rule, House Resolution 947, providing for the House's consideration of several pieces of legislation.

The rule provides for H.R. 788, the Stop Settlement Slush Funds Act, to be considered under a structured rule. It provides 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary, or their designees, and provides for one motion to recommit.

Additionally, the rule also provides for H.J. Res. 98, a joint resolution related to a rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to the "Standard for Determining