



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 118th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 170

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, JULY 8, 2024

No. 112

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 8, 2024.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JERRY L. CARL 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, 2024, 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.

INFLATION TAXES ALL AMERICANS

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

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, in the 3½ years since President Biden first took office, our country has seen inflation grow by over 20 percent.

By failing to control runaway prices that have seen the cost of gasoline spike by 50 percent and the cost of groceries rise by over 20 percent, President Biden has failed the American people.

Instead of addressing the fact that the average family is now paying an additional \$1,000 a month to afford the basics, President Biden has canceled student loan debt, increased government spending, and mandated Green New Deal initiatives that only drive costs higher and higher.

This inflation is simply a tax on every American. As a result, real wages have fallen by nearly 4 percent since 2021.

Throughout his Presidency, while Americans have been forced to use their savings just to make ends meet, President Biden has been asleep at the wheel. The American people deserve a President who will once again put their needs first. It is time to rein in the wasteful spending of the Biden administration and return to the fiscal restraint that we saw under President Trump.

ENHANCE OUR ELECTION SECURITY

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this past week, as we celebrated the Fourth of July, we recognized the 248th anniversary of declaring that we could govern ourselves.

As American citizens, it is our right to elect our representatives at every level of government. In recent years, however, we have seen States and localities permit noncitizens to register and vote in U.S. elections. Allowing this to occur directly undermines the sanctity of our elections.

It is time to confront and address this issue by passing the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility Act, which would ensure that anyone registering to vote provides proof of U.S. citizenship.

Further, this legislation would provide States with access to existing Federal databases, giving them the tools that they need to clean up voter registration rolls and remove non-U.S. citizens.

Let's make this clear: Only eligible U.S. citizens should vote in each and

every American election. It is time to enhance our election security, and it is time to put a stop to noncitizens voting in U.S. elections.

RECOGNIZING THOMAS HAGER BLATNIK ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM HOUSE SERGEANT AT ARMS

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

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Thomas Hager Blatnik on his 37 years of service to the U.S. House of Representatives.

For over 37 years, Tom worked right here in the U.S. Capitol. Shortly after graduating from Curry College, he started at the Capitol, working for the Doorkeeper of the House. Over the course of his career, he worked under five different Sergeants at Arms.

He was a familiar face to many in the House galleries and check stands, where he greeted hundreds of thousands of visitors. He loved the jobs he held, and it showed. He considered it a genuine honor to work every day in an important place where policy decisions were made and debated and laws were being passed.

He took special pride in working in the same place as his father, Congressman John A. Blatnik, who represented Minnesota's Eighth District for 28 years. Like his father, Tom enjoyed sharing information and giving tours of the Capitol, and he never missed a chance to give mementos of the Capitol Building to friends, family, and others he thought would enjoy a token of the place that was so special to him.

Tom had great admiration and affection for colleagues he worked with in the Office of the Sergeant at Arms and for the Capitol Police. He valued and admired their dedication, hard work, and bravery and stayed in close touch with many of them after they retired or moved on.

□ 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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He genuinely and deeply cared for others. He had enormous empathy for those with disabilities and those for whom life presented special challenges because he was diagnosed with dyslexia as a child. When Congress passed the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, it was deeply meaningful to him, and he considered it a privilege both to be in the front row seat of the House gallery for the debate and was honored to join legislators and other special guests at the White House for the signing of the act into law.

I offer my hearty congratulations to Tom and thank him for nearly four decades of service to the U.S. House.

RECOGNIZING STAFF SERGEANT KEITH ORMSBY

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 honor Muscatine County Vietnam veteran Staff Sergeant Keith Ormsby, who has finally received an Air Medal and his Purple Heart for injuries sustained in battle 54 years ago.

As Mr. Ormsby's Representative in Congress, I had the privilege of pinning him with the Purple Heart and personally thanking him for his dedicated service to our country during a special ceremony that took place on our Nation's Independence Day.

On January 31, 1970, while leading his platoon through the Vietnamese jungle and unloading a helicopter at a landing zone, Mr. Ormsby's unit was ambushed, resulting in him being shot and wounded.

Due to the chaotic nature of those times, the paperwork for his Purple Heart was never processed, and he was air-evacuated out of Vietnam immediately. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of the Muscatine County VA, we were finally able to properly recognize this hero.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Ormsby for his service to our country and expressing our gratitude to the Muscatine County VA and Eric for their exceptional work. God bless our veterans, and may God bless the United States of America.

HONORING DAWNELL DOREO ON HER RETIREMENT

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service and career of Dawnell Doreo, who will be retiring after nearly four decades serving our Nation's heroes at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Dawnell is a lifelong resident of Iowa's First District, having grown up on a small farm in Washington, Iowa. She began her service at the Iowa City VA Medical Center in 1986 as a ward clerk and rose up through the ranks over the decades to become a management and program analyst today.

Because of Dawn, the Iowa City VA was able to provide world-class healthcare and benefits to our vet-

erans. In her free time, Dawnell also volunteers as a court-appointed special advocate, where she serves as a fierce advocate for child welfare.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Dawnell's amazing career and wishing her the absolute best on a well-earned retirement.

JENSEN WEDEKING RECEIVES MEDAL OF MERIT

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Jensen Wedeking of Bellevue, Iowa, for receiving the American Medal of Merit.

As a member of Bellevue's Boy Scout Troop 86, Jensen achieved the prestigious Eagle rank in 2023 after leading various community projects. However, his most remarkable achievement came when he saved the life of his friend.

During a nighttime drive, Jensen's friend suffered an allergic reaction to peanuts. Acting swiftly and drawing on his Boy Scout training, Jensen administered lifesaving epinephrine via an EpiPen before rushing his friend to the hospital.

This quick thinking and exemplary first aid skills really underscore Jensen's exceptional character and deep concern for others, qualities that define recipients of the Medal of Merit. This national award is bestowed upon Scouts who demonstrate uncommon valor and compassion in critical situations, criteria that Jensen undoubtedly fulfilled.

I congratulate Jensen on this well-deserved recognition and on his quick thinking.

THANKING TOM WOODRUFF

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a remarkable man whose passion for history has led to the immortalization of some of Iowa's forgotten heroes. Tom Woodruff stands as a testament to the dedication and tenacity in preserving the legacy of the Littleton brothers, Union soldiers who gallantly fought during the Civil War.

Tom's journey began with a faded scrapbook, a gift that sparked a relentless pursuit of truth. Through decades of meticulous research and community-driven efforts, he immortalized the Littleton brothers in granite, ensuring that their story endures along the Great River Road.

His leadership in constructing the Toolesboro memorial exemplifies his commitment to honoring our past with dignity and respect. His unwavering dedication and selfless service to Louisa County's history resonate deeply with us all.

I thank Tom Woodruff for his indomitable spirit and for reminding us that history, when cherished and honored, binds us together as a community and Nation.

CONGRATULATING IOWA HAWKEYES PARTICIPATING IN SUMMER OLYMPICS

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate and honor all the Iowa Hawkeyes who have qualified for the Paris 2024 Summer Olympics.

These incredible athletes, ranging from disciplines like wrestling, track

and field, rowing, and basketball, embody the excellence and determination encouraged in Iowa City.

The athletes competing have worked hard their entire lives for this opportunity, the opportunity to represent their countries in the sport that they love while the entire world watches them. Their journey to this global stage exemplifies the dedication and resilience that define what it means to be a Hawkeye.

As they prepare to represent Iowa and showcase their skills before the world, let us unite in cheering them on and sending our support. May their performances inspire future generations of athletes. Bring home the gold. As always, go Hawkeyes.

Mr. Speaker, I wish a very boisterous happy birthday to my sister Mari-Eleanor Martino.

REAUTHORIZING LONG ISLAND SOUND PROGRAM FUNDING

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5441, the Long Island Sound Restoration and Stewardship Reauthorization Act of 2023, which I introduced as the lead Democratic sponsor along with my Republican colleague and Long Island Sound Caucus co-chair, NICK LALOTA from New York.

This overdue, bipartisan bill, which will be voted on this evening, reauthorizes critical Long Island Sound program funding, which expired at the end of the 2023 fiscal year. Congress must reauthorize this important program as soon as possible to ensure that Federal funds can continue to preserve and protect this unique body of water in the most densely populated area of our country.

Mr. Speaker, Long Island Sound is a national treasure. It is a tidal estuary that stretches 110 miles west to east, from the East River in New York City to Block Island Sound in Rhode Island. Its depth ranges from 65 feet to 230 feet, allowing transit for large and small ocean-going vessels.

Eighteen freshwater rivers flow into its salt waters, inducing an abundant array of plant life, fish, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, crustaceans, and birds.

It has been inhabited by humans for centuries, before European settlement up to the present. Now, more than 20 million Americans live within an hour's drive from its shores.

It is also a powerful engine to the region's economy, including maritime transportation, commercial and recreational fishing, ecotourism, and other water-dependent industries, including shipbuilding. Submarine construction at Electric Boat shipyard in Groton, Connecticut, in my district in southeastern Connecticut, employs 16,000 workers and another 7,000 at Quonset Point in Rhode Island.