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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 9, 2024.

I hereby appoint the Honorable GLENN THOMPSON 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.

GUN VIOLENCE EPIDEMIC

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

Mr. NICKEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in devastation and anger following the shooting at Apalachee High School, the deadliest outbreak of school violence in Georgia's history.

As a father, I am heartbroken. As a Congressman, I am beyond frustrated that our work to improve school safety can't keep pace with the gun violence epidemic that is plaguing our country.

The time for thoughts and prayers is over. It is time for action. Our kids deserve much more from the United States Congress.

Guns are the leading cause of death for children in this country. This isn't normal, and it shouldn't be. Our students, families, and communities deserve to feel safe from gun violence. That means taking action, not just talking about it, and I believe we can do that together with responsible gun owners.

I am a responsible gun owner. We want commonsense measures, too: universal background checks, safe storage laws, and banning assault weapons. These are mainstream ideas supported by the vast majority of the American people. They are about saving lives.

Let me be clear, Mr. Speaker. We will not accept mass murder and gun deaths to be the norm. Mass school shootings are not a fact of life. We don't have to live this way.

This year, I had the opportunity to go to Parkland, Florida, with Congressman MOSKOWITZ where we met with survivors of the deadly 2018 shooting to hear their stories. They lived through the worst, and yet they keep pushing for change.

We have failed to do our part in the few short years since that horrific school shooting, even when the majority of the American people agree on how to move forward.

In an April 2023 survey, FOX News found overwhelming support for commonsense gun violence prevention measures. Over 80 percent of Americans support background checks, making 21 the legal age to buy guns, and requiring mental health checks on all gun buyers.

In Congress, I am part of the House Gun Violence Prevention Task Force and cosponsor of the Bipartisan Background Checks Act. It is simple. If you want to buy a gun, you should have to pass a background check. That applies

to sales between private parties, too. Right now, there are loopholes that let guns slip into the wrong hands. That has to end.

I have also cosponsored the Assault Weapons Ban. No civilian needs an assault rifle. These weapons belong on the battlefields, not in our schools and not in our neighborhoods.

There is also Ethan's Law. This is about accountability. It promotes the safe storage of firearms, so they don't end up in the hands of kids. It is about being responsible for your weapon, for your family, and for your community.

I support a ban on high-capacity magazines, and I support closing the boyfriend loophole. That is the one that lets domestic abusers buy guns. Domestic violence and gun violence are often linked. This loophole costs lives.

Let's not forget mental health. We need to fund mental health care and expand access to it, but mental health alone isn't the issue. This is also about guns.

We need to act now. We need to keep our kids, our neighbors, and our communities safe with no more delays. Over 40,000 people lost their lives to gun violence last year alone. There are no more excuses. Massacres carried out using high-capacity magazines and bump stocks must end.

There should be no more indifference. Poor and minority communities cannot continue to be disproportionately impacted by gun violence. No more inaction. Over 20,000 Americans die by gun suicide every year, which is why we mark tomorrow, September 10, Firearm Suicide Prevention Day.

There should be no more deadly outcomes. Domestic violence should never turn fatal because of easy access to guns. We have waited long enough. It is time to act. There is no question that gun violence is out of control, and it is time we face it head-on.

I will work with anyone—Republicans, Democrats, and Independents—

□ 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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to make sure that happens. It is not just about policy. It is about people. People are dying. We can't wait any longer.

ADDRESSING RECKLESS SPENDING

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

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, as Congress returns to Washington to address the Biden-Harris administration's reckless spending, the American people are continuing to face consequences of runaway inflation.

According to a recent Census Bureau survey, more than 35 percent of Pennsylvanians struggle to afford basic goods, gasoline, and groceries.

With prices rising by more than 20 percent since President Biden and Vice President HARRIS took office, it is the American people who have been left to pay the bill for the administration's failed spending policies.

Instead of working to lower prices and supporting American families, Vice President HARRIS championed reckless policies, including subsidies for purchasing electric vehicles and a student loan bailout paid for by hard-working American citizens.

America cannot afford another 4 years of far-left spending. It is time to put a stop to reckless spending that has brought on this inflation and once again return to the fiscal restraint and the strong economic policies put in place by President Donald J. Trump.

FOOD SECURITY IS NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, from the dairy farms, cornfields, and orchards of Pennsylvania to the cattle ranches of the Midwest, American farmers produce the meat, the dairy, and the vegetables that feed American families.

However, that food supply has been put in danger as the Chinese Communist Party affiliates have begun to purchase our farmland, creating a dangerous American security risk.

By adding the Secretary of Agriculture to CFIUS, we can create the oversight that is needed to prevent our farmland from being purchased by the Chinese Communist Party.

It is time to pass the Protecting American Agriculture from Foreign Adversaries Act to ensure that the CCP is not continuing to make purchases in the production, development, transportation, or storage of our food supply.

Food security is national security. Shielding these assets from outside interference will help to ensure that American interests are the top priority for the farming industry.

Let's make sure that our fields are cared for by American farmers and American growers and that our food security is preserved.

RECOGNIZING ALPHA FIRE COMPANY OF CENTRE COUNTY

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Alpha Fire Company of Centre County, Pennsylvania.

This year, the Alpha Fire Company is celebrating 125 years of dedicated emergency services to the State College community.

In 1899, a group of volunteers recognized the need within their community to establish a fire company to protect and to serve the region. For the last 125 years, the Alpha Fire Company has remained steadfast in this commitment.

In its early years, the Alpha Fire Company, originally Union Fire Company, used hand-drawn hose carts to fight fires in the few blocks of homes and buildings that surrounded the Pennsylvania State College campus, which had its own student-run volunteer fire company.

Since its founding, the Alpha Fire Company has seen many changes as the community continues to grow. Still, they have continued to provide dedicated emergency services for the past 125 years. This fire company is entirely volunteer based and often includes multiple generations of firefighters. Mr. Speaker, this dedication is what keeps the Alpha Fire Company top-notch.

Currently, there are 100 volunteers, and they handle the four primary municipalities it covers: State College Borough, College Township, Ferguson Township, and Patton Township. It also provides automatic aid to Halfmoon and Harris Townships.

The men and women of Alpha Fire Company are more than just firefighters. They are our neighbors, our friends, and family members. These dedicated volunteers give their time and energy, often balancing demanding jobs and personal responsibilities, to ensure our safety. Their commitment to protecting lives and property is inspiring and deserves our deepest gratitude.

The Alpha Fire Company is more than just a group of fire stations that protect and serve the State College region. It is truly an integral part of the community.

Aside from their lifesaving efforts, these volunteer firefighters make the Centre Region a better place. Whether it be a Fourth of July carnival, a school demonstration, or aiding in a fundraiser, the men and women of the Alpha Fire Company embody the spirit of community service.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time I have recognized the Alpha Fire Company on the House floor. In the fall of 2023, an all-woman crew bravely led the initial attack line in a three-alarm fire, making a historic milestone in our journey of service and dedication.

Throughout its 125 years of dedicated service, the Alpha Fire Company has lost three brave men in the line of duty. Philip Foster, Larry Oberle, and Charles Zeigler selflessly laid down

their lives to protect the community they called home.

These heroes are not forgotten. The memorial honoring these fallen firefighters in the borough station will forever preserve their memory.

In a time when resources are often stretched thin, volunteer firefighters fill the gap, ensuring that no call for help goes unanswered.

They are trained professionals who bring their skills, courage, and compassion to the front lines, whether it is battling blazes, responding to accidents, or providing essential assistance for medical emergencies.

Over the past 125 years, the Alpha Fire Company has grown and evolved, continually adapting to meet the needs of our community. They have embraced advancements in technology and training, ensuring their brave men and women are prepared to handle any emergency with professionalism and expertise.

I know firsthand the dedication and passion volunteer firefighters have for protecting their communities. I am deeply grateful for the unwavering dedication and passion of the Alpha Fire Company's volunteer firefighters in protecting our neighborhoods.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Alpha Fire Company for their bravery, their service, and their commitment to our community and congratulate them on 125 years of service.

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CONGRATULATING INARF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. HOUCHIN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. HOUCHIN. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to offer my congratulations to the Indiana Association of Rehabilitation Facilities on receiving an extraordinary milestone: 50 years of service. Over the past five decades, INARF has proudly represented its members who serve more than 50,000 citizens annually and employ nearly 15,000 dedicated professionals.

INARF plays an indispensable role in our southern Indiana community, shaping the landscape of disability services to provide the highest quality of care and support for nearly 900,000 people with disabilities.

Last month, I had the privilege of visiting one of INARF's member organizations where I witnessed the vital work that they do. Their unwavering commitment ensures that everyone has the opportunity to thrive and to reach their full potential.

As we celebrate 50 years of impact with our local disability service providers, I extend my sincere gratitude. I thank them for their tireless dedication to ensuring Indiana residents have access to the resources and services they need.

RECOGNIZING LISCHKE MOTORS

Mrs. HOUCHIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a remarkable milestone, Lischke Motors' 100 years of