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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
November 18, 2024.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN S. DUARTE 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.

HOLDING SECRETARY BLINKEN ACCOUNTABLE

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

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, over the past 3 years, Secretary of State Antony Blinken has withheld critical information and worked to conceal the truth about the decisions that were made in the weeks and months leading up to the disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan.

The American people deserve to know the details about the failed strat-

egy that allowed the Taliban to topple the Afghan Government.

These failures have created a crisis that once again is providing a safe haven for terrorists in Afghanistan, giving space to al-Qaida and ISIS-K so that they can train, equip, and arm themselves to attack Americans and our allies.

It is time to hold Secretary Blinken accountable for this coverup and for the State Department to fully comply with the congressional investigation into the withdrawal that has put Americans into danger and the failures that resulted in the deaths of 13 courageous American servicemembers at Abbey Gate.

BRENDAN CARR TO BE NAMED FCC CHAIR

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, last night, President-elect Donald Trump announced that Commissioner Brendan Carr would be named as the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission.

Over the past several years, I have been proud to work with Commissioner Carr to help deliver reliable high-speed internet to the communities across south central and southwestern Pennsylvania. Together, we have sat down with teachers, doctors, and businessowners in Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District and heard firsthand about the hardships that occur with the lack of access to internet connectivity.

We spoke to a teacher who could tell which students had internet access by how well they had prepared their homework assignments. We spoke with a doctor about how spotty connections made it impossible to conduct telehealth visits for patients who cannot leave their homes. We spoke with businessowners who were struggling to reach new customers and work with vendors because of slow connection speeds.

Commissioner Carr will help lead the way on internet connectivity, and I

look forward to working together to ensure that everyone in Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District can have access to affordable and reliable internet throughout the district.

UNLEASHING AMERICAN ENERGY

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, under President Donald J. Trump, we used the energy that is underneath the feet of my constituents in Pennsylvania. President Trump lowered gas and electricity prices and expanded our national security through energy dominance.

In sharp contrast to that, on his first day in office, President Biden sent a clear message to Americans when he canceled the Keystone XL pipeline and halted new permits for oil and natural gas development.

With President Trump set to return to the Oval Office, we have a chance to unleash American energy by reissuing these permits and encouraging the development of new technologies that harness the oil and natural gas that we can produce right here in the United States.

I look forward to working with President Trump's nominee, Chris Wright, once he is confirmed as our next Secretary of Energy, to utilize Pennsylvania's energy resources to power our Nation and to provide to our allies throughout the world.

USE EXECUTIVE ORDER TO IMPOSE FINANCIAL SANCTIONS ON EXTREMIST SETTLER MOVEMENT LEADERS

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

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, last month, Congresswoman DELAURO and I, along with Senators VAN HOLLEN and DURBIN, led over 80 congressional Democrats to urge the Biden administration to impose financial sanctions on certain members of the Netanyahu

□ 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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government—specifically, Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich and National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir for their role in the rise of settler violence, settlement expansion, and general destabilization of the West Bank.

I represent one of the largest Palestinian populations in the United States. I have had constituents who have lost loved ones, have had family land seized, and even, as American citizens, have been detained in Israeli prisons simply for the crime of visiting their families.

I am also a staunch supporter of Israel and categorically support their right to defend themselves and recover hostages taken during the horrific acts of October 7.

Let us be very clear: There is no conflict between supporting the Nation of Israel and the dignity of the Palestinian people so long as you are committed to a permanent and durable regional peace in this lifetime. That peace will never be realized until people on both sides of the green line have equal property rights, security, and opportunity.

That is not possible as long as Israeli hostages are being detained or as rockets continue to fly into Israel from Hezbollah, Hamas, and Iran, but it is also not possible as long as Palestinians on the West Bank are having their property confiscated, livestock killed, and their communities bulldozed.

Violent settlers in the West Bank have carried out almost 1,300 known attacks against Palestinians since October 7. At least 25 new outposts have been established. Seventy illegal outposts were recognized and are eligible for funding by the Israeli Government. All of these actions are illegal under international law.

Earlier this year, President Biden issued Executive Order No. 14115 that authorized the imposition of sanctions on anyone determined “to be responsible for or complicit in, or to have directly or indirectly engaged or attempted to engage in . . . actions . . . that threaten the peace, security, or stability of the West Bank.”

To date, President Biden has used this order to sanction Palestinian militant groups, organizations involved in violent extremist activity, instigators from the settler movement, and the outposts from which violent attacks are launched.

Just as it is appropriate for Israel to target Hamas leadership in their response to October 7, it is necessary for the United States to target financial sanctions on the leaders of the extremist settler movement.

This brings us to Ministers Smotrich and Ben-Gvir. They have distributed rifles to extremists. They have allowed those extremists to attack humanitarian aid convoys. They have prevented the Palestinian Authority from accessing the international banking network. These ministers’ stated goal is the annexation of the West Bank,

and they have acted in ways that violate both the spirit and letter of the President’s executive order.

Frederick Douglass famously said that “the best friend of a nation is he who most faithfully rebukes her for her sins—and he her worst enemy who, under the specious . . . garb of patriotism, seeks to excuse, palliate, and defend” those sins.

It is out of love for the Palestinian people and a deep, abiding friendship with Israel that we must now rebuke Ministers Smotrich and Ben-Gvir for their sins.

Mr. Speaker, I urge President Biden to heed the calls of over 80 Members of Congress and use his executive order to issue these sanctions and to help put a stop to settler violence in the West Bank.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate National Apprenticeship Week.

Each year, industry, labor, workforce, education, and government leaders come together to showcase the successes of apprenticeship programs.

This week is a time to highlight apprenticeship programs, which offer earn-and-learn opportunities that are proven to build careers. It is a time to celebrate the power of learning through hands-on experience and the vital role that apprenticeships play in strengthening our Nation’s workforce and economy.

Apprenticeships are more than just a job training program. They represent opportunity. They are pathways that open doors for individuals from all walks of life, allowing them to earn while they learn and develop the skills they need to thrive in their chosen careers.

Whether it is in manufacturing, healthcare, technology, or the skilled trades, apprenticeships bridge the gap between education and employment in ways that benefit workers, employers, and communities alike.

For individuals, apprenticeships provide a foundation for success. They are not just about acquiring technical skills. They are about gaining confidence, building networks, and setting a course for long-term career growth.

In today’s rapidly changing economy, having a trade or skill you can rely on is invaluable. For many, the apprenticeship model, where learning happens in a real-world environment, is far more impactful than sitting in a traditional classroom.

For employers, apprenticeships are a game changer. They offer a direct pipeline to a highly skilled workforce tailored specifically to the needs of their industry.

By investing in apprentices, companies aren’t just filling jobs. They are

building their future. They are fostering loyalty, reducing turnover, and ensuring their teams are equipped to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

As co-chair of the bipartisan Career and Technical Education Caucus and a senior member on the House Education and the Workforce Committee, I will continue to support policies that promote work-based learning and equip Americans of all ages with the skills necessary to climb the next rung on the ladder of opportunity.

As we celebrate National Apprenticeship Week, let’s also look ahead. Our challenge is to expand access to these programs and ensure that they are as inclusive and diverse as the workforce that we envision for our Nation’s future.

We must break down barriers, from lack of awareness to outdated perceptions, and create opportunities for everyone, from young people exploring their first career options to midcareer workers seeking to re-skill and adapt.

Mr. Speaker, often students graduate high school unaware of their educational options and potential career paths. By highlighting skills-based education and recognizing apprenticeship programs, we are putting our students in a position of success.

These programs put our workforce back in the driver’s seat of careers. By participating in apprenticeship programs and other skills-based training, our workforce develops knowledge and skills for long-term, family-sustaining jobs.

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CO₂’s ROLE IN CLIMATE CHANGE

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I want to point out the continued deception that keeps being fostered by government and by those who would tax us, by those environmental groups that want to corral us into their idea of where we should live and what their utopia is.

That keeps coming back to the carbon dioxide in our atmosphere that some believe actually is the greatest existential threat to the U.S. and to mankind. I have to continue to point out to folks that hear this and are scared into it, that the government does a good job and the media does a good job of scaring people into things like a good percentage of the COVID situation and then climate.

So what are we talking about here?

Here is my handy chart. When I ask people, what percent of the atmosphere is CO₂—you hear all this hype—I even ask it in committee hearings where we have expert panelists coming in to tell us about how they think we should shift our vehicles, even trucks and trains, to all electric, things like that—experts. They already know the number.