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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
December 9, 2024.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DALE W. STRONG 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.

THANKING VIRGINIA'S SEVENTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Virginia (Ms. SPANBERGER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank the people of Virginia's Seventh District. The greatest honor of my life has been to serve them in the U.S. House of Representatives.

For these three terms, I have had the privilege of representing a cross-section of what makes this extraordinary country, the United States of America, the greatest in the world.

I have spoken with hardworking families going through their proudest days or their darkest moments. I have met with brilliant entrepreneurs who are not only pursuing their own dreams but making sure their employees can succeed.

I have worked alongside dedicated public servants, law enforcement officers, first responders, and healthcare workers, who put the safety of Virginians first. I have met crop and livestock producers who work sunup to sundown to keep America fueled and fed, and I have represented the men and women who put on the military uniform to protect our shores.

As my time serving them in Congress comes to an end, I am reflecting on what we have achieved together.

When I was first elected to Congress, I promised to work tirelessly for the people I serve. I promised to be effective and responsive.

In response to Virginia's seniors struggling to afford their medication, I voted to lower drug costs for Medicare beneficiaries. In response to the fentanyl crisis, I worked with both parties to strengthen America's investment in prevention, treatment, and recovery programs. Both former President Trump and President Biden have signed into law the bills that I have led to crack down on fentanyl trafficking.

To fix our crumbling infrastructure, I helped negotiate and voted to pass the bipartisan infrastructure law which has already delivered more than \$10 billion of investment to Virginia.

In response to the threats from America's adversaries, I led efforts that were signed into law to build a nationwide 5G strategy and hold cybercriminals accountable, and I made clear that I will always stand up for the role of U.S. global leadership.

In response to the threat of climate change, I brought farmers, producers, conservation groups, and Fortune 500 companies to the table. We got bipar-

tisan legislation signed into law that will not only help protect our natural resources but will help protect the bottom line of Virginia's producers.

After we heard from retired police officers struggling to get their benefits, we closed a loophole that was stopping them from getting the retirement they deserved.

For those who have borne the battle, I voted to expand healthcare benefits for thousands of Virginia's veterans who have faced toxic exposures. My bill was signed into law to deliver surplus computers to veterans so they can access new job opportunities, and I led the charge to make sure America's atomic veterans, many of whom are no longer with us, are recognized every year.

For me, being responsive has also meant making responsible investments in our public schools, our law enforcement, and critical infrastructure. My office has secured more than \$42 million that went directly to 40 projects across the Seventh District. I thank our local leaders for working with my team to realize these investments.

We have also focused on delivering for individual constituents. Since 2019, my office has returned nearly \$50 million to Virginians who have had challenges with a Federal agency. They are seniors who needed help to pay bills. They are veterans who finally secured the VA benefits they had earned. They are Virginia businesses who needed to cut through red tape. Along the way, we have proved that we could do all of this by bringing people together.

I am honored to be ranked the most bipartisan Member of Congress from Virginia. It is not a talking point, but it is because that is how we make sure we achieve progress across the long haul. That is how we get things done, and we can get things done without sacrificing our principles or what makes us who we are.

In office, I have endeavored to be responsive, transparent, and accountable

□ 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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because that is at the very heart of what I believe is a responsibility of every Member of Congress.

In this role, I believe that trust is earned, and I promise that I have never taken this trust for granted.

Today, I thank those who have also made it possible for me to serve in this role. I thank the love of my life, my husband, Adam, for being my biggest supporter and someone who has made it possible for me to serve the people of Virginia's Seventh District every day. I thank my daughters, Claire, Charlotte, and Catherine, for seeing that every effort I take in the political space is for them, their future, and the future of their peers in Virginia and beyond at the center of all I do.

I thank my parents. I am the daughter of Martin Davis, a retired law enforcement officer, and Eileen Davis, a nurse. They taught me service, and they taught me that a life committed to helping others is one that every person can find value and dignity in.

I thank my sisters, Hilary and Meredith, who are and always have been my best friends, my greatest supporters, and the two who remind me consistently of who I am.

I thank my parents-in-law, my brothers- and sisters-in-law, my nieces, my nephews, my aunts, my uncles, my cousins, and my late grandparents, everyone who had a part in making me who I am.

I also thank every single member of Virginia's Seventh District team. They are extraordinary people who have used their time, talents, and tenacity to deliver results for the people of Virginia. I believe in them. They made people believe in what is possible with good governance. I am grateful for them. I am grateful for their service.

I am so grateful for the privilege to have served the people of Virginia's Seventh District.

CONGRATULATING PENN STATE UNIVERSITY'S FOOTBALL TEAM

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

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Penn State University's football team on reaching the first NCAA 12-team playoff.

With both a shutdown defense and an efficient offense that kept the ball moving all season long, the Nittany Lions have put themselves in a strong position to play for a national championship title next month.

While these students have done an incredible job on the field to reach this position, it is also important to remember their success in the classroom.

Over the past 10 years, Penn State University is one of only eight schools that has won at least 10 NCAA championships while concurrently achieving at least a 90 percent graduation rate for student athletes. Their commit-

ment to excellence both on and off the field are an example for the thousands of students across Pennsylvania who look to our football team as role models.

On behalf of the Nittany Lions nation and across Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, I congratulate the team on reaching the college football playoffs.

REMEMBERING GARY WASHINGTON

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to remember the life of a friend, Gary Washington. Gary was a member of the Bedford County community who dedicated his life to serving others.

After graduating from Bedford High School in 1965, Gary's education and work took him away from central Pennsylvania until later in life when he returned to Bedford to cofound the Extended Family Program, which supports students who are having difficulty in school. The program, which Gary led for 16 years before his retirement, provides a lifeline to students who are struggling academically or at home.

Today, Gary is remembered by the students that he mentored throughout the Extended Family Program and those that he coached on the Bedford High School football team.

Later in life, Gary was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. He and his wonderful wife, Mable, became strong advocates for both patients and patients' caregivers.

Throughout his life, Coach Washington was committed to helping others and ensuring that the students in Bedford County had the tools and the support that they needed in order to succeed.

On behalf of everyone in Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, we mourn the loss of Coach Gary Washington, and we pray for his family and for his friends and all of those who helped him throughout this journey in life.

NATIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR HIGHWAY

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this week, as we commemorate both the 83rd anniversary of the attack at Pearl Harbor and the 80th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, we are reminded of the incredible bravery and sacrifice made by our servicemembers.

The highest decoration that our Nation can bestow upon those who served in uniform is the Congressional Medal of Honor for acts of bravery at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty.

This week, we have the chance to honor the soldiers, the sailors, the airmen, the marines, and the coast guardsmen who have received the Medal of Honor by designating U.S. State Route 20 as the National Medal of Honor Highway.

Stretching from Massachusetts Bay to the Oregon coastline, historic Route 20 is the longest highway in this great country, and it is fitting that this road

be designated to honor the 3,516 Medal of Honor recipients who have fought to keep our Nation safe and our Nation free.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this important legislation to honor those servicemembers.

DESIGNATING SINGLE, UNIQUE ZIP CODES

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of a bill that the House will be voting on this week, H.R. 8753, which directs the U.S. Postal Service to designate a single, unique ZIP Code for certain communities.

H.R. 8753 will provide long overdue relief to 45 mostly small towns in 13 States from Connecticut to California by fixing a chaotic situation where the residents' ZIP Codes are hopelessly carved up in a hodgepodge that results in lost mail, delayed mail, and wrong deliveries.

One of the towns included in H.R. 8753's list is the small town of Scotland, Connecticut, located in the heart of eastern Connecticut, which I have the great privilege to represent.

□ 1215

Scotland is the quintessential historic New England small town with a population of 1,576 people. It may be small, but its history is rich.

One of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, Samuel Huntington, was born in his family's home located in Scotland, and today it is the significant part of the Rochambeau National History Trail which was the route that the American Continental Army under the leadership of George Washington and John Baptiste Rochambeau marched in 1781 from Newport, Rhode Island, to Yorktown, Virginia, where the Battle of Yorktown took place and the small army of colonists defeated the greatest military power of the British Empire.

Today, in 2024, it is a town that the U.S. Postal Service has assigned five, that is right, five ZIP Codes that caused endless aggravation and harm to the towns' residents. Delivery of Social Security notices, checks, Medicare information, prescription medication, notices from banks, employers, absentee ballots and absentee ballot applications are all disrupted day in and day out.

Town leaders in my office have tried, along with Senator CHRIS MURPHY, to get this ridiculous almost Monty Pythonesque absurdity resolved for many years with the Postal Service, to know avail.

This week's action by the House will mandate that USPS address this problem once and for all by designating a single, unique ZIP Code for these 45 small towns.