

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

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

Immortal, invisible, and only wise God, in this season of darkening days and sober skies, Your light seems inaccessible, Your presence hidden from our eyes. Though we do not see You, we love You and call upon You to reveal yourself as light in our darkness.

Though we walk in life-quenching shadows and cannot see Your hand to guide us, yet we believe in You and trust You to lead us on paths of righteousness.

Strengthen our faith that, in the face of all that overwhelms and undermines our best intentions, we would be filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy that dispels all gloom and releases us from the grip of despair.

This day and always, cultivate in us the hope of salvation, that through us, Your light of love would shine.

In the name of You, O Lord, our redeemer, our sustainer, our guide, and our friend, we offer our prayers.

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 gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. BUDZINSKI) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. BUDZINSKI 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.

RECOGNIZING PHILIP REGULSKI ON HIS RETIREMENT

(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 recognize the outstanding commitment of Ridgway, Pennsylvania, volunteer fireman Philip Regulski.

Mr. Regulski has tirelessly served the Ridgway Fire Department for over 65 years.

Starting in March of 1959, Mr. Regulski has served as the department

treasurer, sat on the Ridgway Fire Department Board of Directors, was the representative of the Tri-County Firemen's Association, and enjoyed volunteering at the department's Tuesday-night bingo.

As a former volunteer firefighter, I understand how important Mr. Regulski's service to the community has been and how much of an impact he has had on so many people's lives.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I thank and congratulate Mr. Regulski on his 65 years of service to the community of Ridgway and the 15th Congressional District of Pennsylvania. I am proud to represent such incredible leaders and public servants like Mr. Regulski. I wish him all the best in his retirement.

INVEST IN BLACK WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

(Mrs. LEE CARTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. LEE CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the contributions of Black women entrepreneurs.

Black women own approximately 2.1 million businesses, representing 52.1 percent of all Black-owned businesses. Despite challenges, they continue to drive innovation for communities and create lasting legacies.

Kim Roxie is the founder of LAMIK Beauty, which started with a \$500 investment and was inspired by her mother, who passed from breast cancer, to create natural, safe, paraffin-free makeup.

MELODRAMA Boutique is a pillar of empowerment and sisterhood in Houston, featuring local fashion and empowering local designers.

I also honor Kim Aitch, founder of Camera Ready, a beauty, fashion, and wellness lifestyle brand. She is a force in the industry and also president of the Citywide Beauticians & Barbers Association that uplifts entrepreneurs across Houston.

These are but a few examples of extraordinarily talented Black women in business who join the many who employ over 528,000 people and generate \$98 billion in revenue for our Nation.

There could be more. They lack access to capital, and they often are left out of venture capital funds, where less than 2 percent of those dollars go to Black women. Yet, still, with great determination, they carry on.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that we continue to invest in Black women entrepreneurs.

HONORING DENISE KAREN PENCE

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my wife of 43 years tomorrow, Denise Karen Pence.

She is the mother of Nicole, Lauren, Emily, and John; the mother-in-law of

Jason, Chris, and Giovanna; and the grandmother of Emma, Andrew, Colin, Kate, Matthew, Mary, Luke, Gregory, Jack, and Vivienne.

She is the love of my life, and I thank her for all of her love and support over these last 43 years, particularly for the last 6 years as I have served here.

God has blessed me with Denise Karen Pence.

CELEBRATING THE CAREER AND SERVICE OF ADJUTANT GENERAL CHRIS CALLAHAN

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

Mr. MAGAZINER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Rhode Island Adjutant General Chris Callahan, who is retiring at the end of this year after four decades of service to our State and country.

General Callahan joined the Army National Guard in 1984 and quickly ascended up the ranks. He served as headquarters commander for the First Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment, brigade commander for the 56th Troop Command, and commander of the Task Force Dragonwing Aviation Battalion in Iraq.

In 2015, he was named the 44th Adjutant General of Rhode Island and commanding general of the Rhode Island National Guard.

Under his leadership, the Rhode Island National Guard deployed more than 3,000 soldiers and airmen on missions across the globe, ran point on Rhode Island's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, providing mass testing and administering hundreds of thousands of vaccinations. He also activated thousands of soldiers and airmen to respond to blizzards and hurricanes, establish warming shelters, and fight wildfires in Rhode Island, among many other missions.

General Callahan's exemplary service to our country was made possible by the support of his wife, Donna; and his children, Devin, Grace, and Katie.

Together, they kept Rhode Island National Guard's promise to be: Always ready, always there.

I thank Chris Callahan for his service to our country and our State.

CONGRATULATING IOWA STATE SENATOR CHRIS COURNOYER

(Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my heartfelt congratulations to my good friend, Senator Chris Cournoyer, on her appointment as Iowa's new Lieutenant Governor.

This is a historic moment, as Iowa now has two women in the top two executive positions for the first time. It

is a testament to the strength, leadership, and dedication of women across our State.

Governor Reynolds has made an excellent choice in appointing Chris to this important role. I had the pleasure of serving alongside Chris in the Iowa Senate and have seen firsthand the kind of leader she is.

Chris has been a tireless advocate for education, technology, innovation, conservative budgeting, tax cuts, and accountability in government during her time in the Iowa Senate. Her ability to roll up her sleeves and find practical solutions makes her uniquely qualified to serve our State in this capacity.

From her leadership on the school board of the Pleasant Valley School District, to her work in the technology sector, Chris has proven herself time and time again. I am proud to call her a friend and excited to see the continued success she will bring to Iowa in this new role.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Senator Cournoyer. Iowa is fortunate to have her.

CONGRATULATING ROBERT GAO, NATIONAL STUDENT POET

(Ms. BUDZINSKI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BUDZINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Robert Gao from Champaign-Urbana on being selected as one of five National Student Poets.

The National Student Poet Program is one of our Nation's highest honors for youth poets presenting original work. It is an incredible accomplishment that reflects Robert's talent, artistry, and the power of his work to inspire others.

Robert says that his writing is influenced by his family and exploring his identity. He described that he fell in love with poetry because it allowed him to put his soul onto paper in a way that nonfiction writing couldn't.

Previously, Robert has been recognized by The New York Times, the National Young Artist Foundation, and the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers.

We are all so proud of Robert and cannot wait to see him continue to grow as an author and an artist.

CONGRATULATING MACON COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM

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

Mr. ROSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Macon County High School football team for securing their first State championship.

The Tigers advance to the playoffs often. They have done so 20 times in the last 55 years. This year, they captured the big Class 4A BlueCross Bowl title after defeating Melrose 45-15.

Twin brothers, Zach and Gabe Borders, are credited as standouts. Gabe ran for 117 yards and completed his team's only pass for a touchdown. His brother, Zach, earned MVP after his 250-yard performance, which included four rushing scores in the second half.

The Tigers were fortunate to have both brothers on the field, especially considering that Zach has undergone surgery and has pins after multiple breaks to his collarbone.

I congratulate all of the players, their families, and Coach Kyle Shoulders, and I congratulate all who prayed over the health of this senior class.

Go Tigers.

END GUN VIOLENCE IN THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

(Ms. PLASKETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address a crisis in the Virgin Islands.

On December 13, a shooting claimed the life of another of my constituents. My deepest condolences go to the families and loved ones of each of the 42 victims who have died by homicide in 2024 in the Virgin Islands.

Throughout the Caribbean, gun violence, driven by unemployment and drug and human trafficking, is pervasive.

During a recent codel to Barbados, led by Leader JEFFRIES, we heard similar concerns from our Caribbean allies.

The Senate must pass the ONDCP Reauthorization Act, which includes my Caribbean Border Counternarcotics Strategy Act, to combat the illegal trafficking of deadly drugs which traverse through American territories in the Caribbean.

In the Virgin Islands, 93 percent of guns recovered by law enforcement were trafficked illegally into the territory, and the homicide rate is nine times higher than the continental United States.

We need our Federal partners, especially ATF, to provide resources and maintain a presence in the territory.

MAKING AMERICA GREAT AGAIN

(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, led by President-elect Donald Trump, House Republicans are looking forward to 2025 and the 119th Congress with great enthusiasm, advancing a conservative agenda.

With the new Republican majority in the Senate, we will work hard on behalf of American families to deliver solutions to drive down the crippling costs of inflation, eliminate regulations, lower energy prices, and provide for a reduction in Federal overreach in schools, and much more.

House Republicans are committed to securing the borders, promoting family values, supporting small businesses, creating jobs, and backing our allies while establishing peace through strength.

House Republicans, led by the leadership of Speaker MIKE JOHNSON, will resume, making America great again.

In conclusion, God bless our troops as the global war on terrorism continues. Open borders for dictators put all Americans at risk of more 9/11 attacks imminent as warned by the FBI. Trump will reinstitute existing laws to protect American families with peace through strength.

□ 1215

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MAYOR MARK MURPHY

(Mr. CORREA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to honor the life of my good friend, Mayor Mark Murphy, and to recognize his lifetime of service to the city of Orange.

Mark was a loving husband, a lifelong Orange County resident, and a committed public servant. He served our community for more than 30 years as the Orange County Transit Authority chairman, city of Orange councilmember, and then city of Orange mayor.

It is because of his love for his neighborhoods and his community that he earned the nickname "Mr. Orange."

Mark's passion was improving our community's parks and recreation centers. He oversaw the construction of Grijalva Sports Center, the expansion of the Orange library, and the acquisition of several park spaces.

While many know Mark for his strong advocacy, his voice as a singer is less known. He actively participated in his church choir and even sang on stage during park concerts.

Mark was also known as a Harley-Davidson bike rider.

Mr. Speaker, we love Mark and his legacy continues.

CALIFORNIA NEEDS A WATER STORAGE SUPPLY

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I can't emphasize enough how important it is for the ag economy and for the security of this country that my home State of California provides so many of these essential crops in high percentages. Many of these crops you see, 90 to 99 percent, even 100 percent, are grown in my home State.

What does that underline for you? It underlines the need for my home State to have a water supply to grow those crops. Each year it seems more and