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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 5, 2024.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CLAUDIA TENNEY 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.

RECOGNIZING THE 52ND ANNUAL THON

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and thank, and express my sincere gratitude for, an incredible group of students at Penn State University.

This group of students has spent the last year dedicating countless hours to support a fantastic cause benefiting pediatric cancer patients.

THON is a yearlong fundraising effort that culminates in an annual 46-hour dance marathon to support, financially and emotionally, more than 4,500 families with children who are battling cancer.

On February 16, Penn State students, staff, families, friends, volunteers, and spectators filled the Bryce Jordan Center for the 52nd annual THON to raise money for the Four Diamonds foundation.

THON was founded in 1973 by Penn State fraternities and sororities. What began as a small fundraiser, bringing in \$2,000 in its inaugural year, flourished into a campus-wide effort with more than 16,000 student volunteers across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

In 1977, THON partnered with the Four Diamonds foundation. Since then, not a single Four Diamonds family has received a medical bill, thanks to the tireless work and dedication of Penn State students.

The Four Diamonds foundation was founded by Charles and Irma Millard in 1972 after their son, Christopher, lost his battle with cancer at 11 years old.

Before Christopher passed away, he wrote a story about a great knight who sought four diamonds of courage, wisdom, honesty, and strength to be saved from an evil sorceress. His parents realized these four qualities were all necessary to overcome cancer. They created the Four Diamonds foundation in his memory.

Over the past 50 years, THON has grown into the largest student-run philanthropy in the world. Students stood from 6 p.m. on Friday, February 16, until 4 p.m. on Sunday, February 18. It was an impressive feat to behold.

What is even more incredible is the drive, fortitude, and flexibility these students showed in their commitment to this cause.

This year, Penn State students raised a record-breaking \$16,955,683.63. This surpasses THON's 2023 record-breaking

total by nearly \$2 million. To date, students have shattered records and raised more than \$200 million.

Of course, their dedication is to be applauded, but ask any Penn State student, and they will agree: THON isn't about them. It is about the children and families fighting cancer.

THON is for the kids, and it is for families to focus on celebrating more birthdays, piano recitals, science fairs, graduations, and every other milestone a child should celebrate without fear. THON exists so one day, parents don't have to hear the words: "Your child has cancer."

Madam Speaker, I am proud of these students, but more importantly, I am proud of the children and families who have the courage to fight back against pediatric cancer.

Once again, I congratulate everyone involved in this year's THON. We Are.

SAVING SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about the Nation's number one insurance program, Social Security.

It has been that way since Franklin Delano Roosevelt first introduced it. It continues to be the number one anti-poverty program for the elderly and, frankly, Madam Speaker, the number one anti-poverty program for children.

Yet, Congress has been derelict in its duty. There has not been a vote to enhance Social Security since 1971. Richard Nixon was President of the United States.

As we speak today, there are close to 70 million Americans who rely on Social Security. Of those 70 million, it is important to understand that 10,000 baby boomers a day become eligible for Social Security.

☐ 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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More than 5 million of our fellow Americans have worked and paid into a system and get below poverty-level checks from their government, the wealthiest in the world, with the Nation's number one antipoverty program that this body has not acted on in more than 50 years.

It is long overdue that we take the initiative and have a vote in the United States Congress that will help the American people.

Social Security is bedrock. Whether you are a Democrat, Republican, or Independent, you understand this.

Now, our colleagues on the other side have put forward something they call a study commission. We don't need to study Social Security. We know what needs to be done.

To have a study that goes behind closed doors and has an up-or-down vote that is unamendable, with no input from this body, is absurd, anti-democratic, and anti-elderly and -children from the standpoint of the havoc that it would wreak on this system.

The idea that they are doing this to save Social Security is a fallacy. They are doing it so they can go behind closed doors and cut the very program that sustains so many Americans. For more than 40 percent of all Americans who are on Social Security, this is the only pension benefit that they will have.

Madam Speaker, you know as well as I that it is not only a pension benefit. It is a disability benefit, as well as taking care of spouses and children.

Imagine, for our viewers in the audience, Congress has not taken a vote in more than 50 years for the Nation's number one antipoverty program.

It is long overdue that we not study this but do what we are elected to do by the public and actually vote.

If you have a better idea, put it out there, but we believe this, as well. I commend President Biden for saying, look, the way that we are going to pay for this is to lift the cap, or what is called Scrap the Cap, on people making over \$400,000.

This past month marked when millionaires have already stopped paying into the Social Security program. Bill Gates stopped paying back in January.

That is wrong. It is not right. To lift that cap will allow us not only to extend the solvency of Social Security but increase benefits across the board for its members, to make sure that WEP and GPO, which have hurt teachers and municipal employees over the years, is finally scrapped; to have in there a tax cut for more than 23 million Americans who continue to pay taxes on their Social Security; and to make sure that everyone's benefits are enhanced.

Where does that money go, Madam Speaker? The money from Social Security goes right back into every single Congressional district, and it allows those individuals in that district to sustain themselves. Nobody's going out and buying stock options with Social Security 2100.

HONORING SECRETARY BILL NORTHEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Iowa (Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Madam Speaker, today, I am proud to recognize the passing of Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey.

Secretary Northey's tenure as Iowa's Secretary of Agriculture left a remarkable legacy and included countless contributions to Iowa's agricultural heritage and Iowa's agricultural landscape.

Under his leadership, Iowa saw significant advancements in conservation practices, soil health initiatives, and water quality improvement efforts.

Beyond his policy achievements, Secretary Northey was known for his genuine kindness, approachability, and dedication to serving the people of Iowa.

Secretary Northey's legacy will inspire future generations to continue to his work and uphold his vision for a vibrant and prosperous Iowa.

Bill's love for Iowa and Iowa agriculture was known to all, and his dedication to our farmers and the environment will be sorely missed.

RECOGNIZING 51ST RAGBRAI

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Madam Speaker, today, I am thrilled to share exciting details about the upcoming 2024 Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa, also known as RAGBRAI.

Earlier this year, it was announced that the route of the 51st edition of this renowned bicycle ride will cross southern Iowa towns for the first time in 5 years. The route will extend 424 miles from Glenwood to Burlington, Iowa. At the end of the ride, cyclists can take on the challenge and power their way up Snake Alley.

The ride will take place this summer from July 21 to July 27, and I look forward to cheering on everyone who will participate in this upcoming adventure.

CONGRATULATING ANDREW MARTINO

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I wish my nephew, Andrew Martino, a blessed confirmation.

Congratulations, Andrew, on this milestone.

RECOGNIZING CAITLIN CLARK

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I have introduced this resolution with the entire Iowa delegation. This resolution congratulates Iowa native Caitlin Clark on becoming the National Collegiate Athletic Association's Division 1 basketball leading scorer.

Whereas, on March 3, 2024, during a baseball game between the University of Iowa Hawkeyes and the Ohio State University Buckeyes, Caitlin Clark, referred to in this preamble as Clark, became the National Collegiate Athletic Association, referred to in this preamble as NCAA, Division 1 basketball all-time leading scorer;

Whereas, because of Clark and the University of Iowa Hawkeyes women's basketball team, referred to in this preamble as the Hawkeyes, women's sports are being covered and talked about at the national level in the United States with the same fervor as men's sports;

Whereas, the Hawkeyes have sold out games at home at the Carver-Hawkeye Arena and on the road in arenas across the United States;

Whereas, every sold-out game is full of young girls watching Clark and the Hawkeyes demonstrate the excitement, competition, and fun that is possible because of women's sports;

Whereas, women's sports serve as an important way for young girls to develop discipline, teamwork, confidence, and leadership skills, and the achievements of female athletes should be celebrated;

Whereas, Clark serves as a role model, demonstrating that dreams are achievable with hard work and dedication;

Whereas, Iowans are proud of Clark and thankful for the opportunity to watch Clark, one of the greatest athletes to ever play basketball, compete for the Hawkeyes;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the House of Representatives congratulates Caitlin Clark on becoming the National Collegiate Athletic Association Division 1 basketball all-time leading scorer and respectfully requests that the Clerk of the House of Representatives transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to Caitlin Clark; the athletic director of the University of Iowa, Beth Goetz; and the head coach of the University of Iowa Hawkeyes women's basketball team, Lisa Bluder.

Go Hawks.

□ 1215

HONORING MARIE RIDDER

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

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, I rise this afternoon to honor the lifetime contributions of Marie Ridder to Virginia and to our Nation.

Marie, a distinguished journalist and one of the most passionate conservationists I have ever known, celebrated her 99th birthday just a few weeks ago. I believe her children have finally gotten her to agree to stop driving herself to every one of her many engagements.

Marie Ridder began her career as a journalist by covering the reconstruction of post-World War II Europe for the Philadelphia Bulletin. Over the years, she wrote for The Washington Post, The Boston Globe, and for Knight Ridder publications.

Not just a writer, Marie edited Vogue, Glamour, Mademoiselle, and also Conde Nast magazines.

I became close with Marie when she hosted my first political event more