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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. NORMAN).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 26, 2025.

I hereby appoint the Honorable RALPH NORMAN 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 3, 2025, 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 11:50 a.m.

COMMENDING MICHAEL KRAAN

(Mr. YAKYM of Indiana was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank an outstanding member of my team as he departs for a new opportunity.

Michael Kraan has served as one of my legislative assistants for the past 2 years. He has covered a broad range of issues, from natural resources to veterans affairs, and has done so with exceptional diligence and precision.

While working in my office, Michael also earned his master's degree in na-

tional security policy studies. He quickly established himself as an indispensable asset. I have often said that a good Member can become a great Member with a great team, and Michael proved that every single day in my office.

Michael played an essential role in creating and advancing key legislation, including the National Veterans Advocate Act of 2025. This bill would help ensure our servicemembers have the support and resources they need when they return home.

After a veteran in my district could not get the timely access to mental health care from the VA that he needed, Michael created the Sergeant Ted Grubbs Mental Healthcare for Disabled Veterans Act. Just last night at dinner, Michael shared how the highlight of his time in my office was meeting Sergeant Ted Grubbs.

I also highlight his critical work on the SECURE American Telecommunications Act, which I recently introduced to protect our Nation's infrastructure from enemy threats.

None of these would have been possible without Michael's dedication and expertise. Although it is also often difficult to see a team member leave, Michael is taking steps to go on to be a military legislative assistant in another office.

Max is getting one of the best. I trust the gentleman will take good care of Michael.

I thank Michael for his hard work, loyalty, and service. He will always be part of the family.

RECOGNIZING MARIAH GREENLEE

Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an exceptional member of my team, my director of operations, Mariah Greenlee.

From day one, Mariah has been an indispensable part of our office. As every Member knows, the director of operations is the person who keeps the trains running on time. While I may be

biased, I truly believe that Mariah is one of the very best.

Whether it was fitting 47 meetings in 2 days, managing our intern program, overseeing travel logistics, or simply keeping the office running smoothly, Mariah did it all with excellence. Her calm under pressure, strong organizational skills, and unwavering dedication helped our office serve the people of Indiana's Second District at the highest level. Hoosiers who visited the Capitol often commented on her customer-service-driven approach.

Over the past 2½ years, I have come to rely on Mariah not only as a trusted colleague but as a friend. Her work ethic, professionalism, and commitment to service to Indiana's Second District have left a lasting impression and mark on our team. While I am sad to see her go, I am incredibly excited for what lies ahead for her in her next chapter.

I thank Mariah for everything. Her contributions have meant so much to me and my team. She will always be part of the Yakym family.

HONORING VINCENT O'NEILL

(Mr. KENNEDY of New York was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. KENNEDY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Vincent O'Neill, a brilliant artist, beloved teacher, dear friend, and cultural giant who transformed the landscape of theater in western New York.

Born in Dublin, Ireland, Vincent carried a deep love for his Irish roots that he shared with western New York and the world. Vincent trained at University College Dublin, Trinity College, the Abbey School of Acting, and under the legendary Marcel Marceau in Paris as a mime.

As a member of the prestigious Abbey Theater, he toured the globe

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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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acting and directing. His one-man show, "Joyicity," inspired by the works of James Joyce, earned international acclaim. He was invited by both the President and Prime Minister of Ireland to perform the piece, a powerful testament to his talent.

Vincent first came to Buffalo in 1985 with his brother, Chris, to perform Samuel Beckett's "Waiting for Godot" in a hotel dining room in Cheektowaga, instantly winning over local critics and audiences.

That performance sparked something greater in Vincent, and in 1989, he returned to Buffalo permanently. Within a year, he cofounded the Irish Classical Theatre Company alongside his late brother, Chris, Josephine Hogan, and Dr. James Warde.

What began as a makeshift stage grew into one of Buffalo's most cherished institutions. For over 30 years as artistic director, Vincent brought his passion, creativity, and vision to the Irish Classical Theatre, directing 30 productions, appearing in 67 more, and setting the standard for excellence in local theater.

From The Andrews Theatre to Shea's 710, Vincent proved that Buffalo's theater scene could rival any in the world. "Waiting for Godot" remained a through line in his life. It was the first show the Irish Classical Theatre staged in its new home, the play that reopened the theater after the COVID-19 pandemic, and also his final role on that stage.

Vincent was more than a performer. He was a mentor, teacher, and leader. At the University of Buffalo, where he served as chair and director of theater performance, he shaped generations of actors, instilling in them discipline, empathy, and love for the craft. He collaborated with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, led Irish cultural celebrations, appeared in local films, and brought people together through art.

Vincent's contributions were recognized by peers and the community alike. He received Artie Awards for acting, directing, and lifetime achievement, along with honors like the Buffalo News Outstanding Citizen Award, Irish Echo Community Champion, and Irishman of the Year. Just 3 years ago, he was honored with a permanent star in the Buffalo Theater District's Plaza of Stars.

Together with his brother, Chris, the O'Neill name became synonymous with artistic excellence in Buffalo, a legacy now permanently etched into the city with the naming of The Brothers O'Neill Way on Main Street in the Buffalo Theater District.

Last week, Vincent O'Neill left us at the age of 75 after a battle with cancer. To lose Vincent is to lose a piece of Buffalo's artistic soul. Vincent was one of a kind: a consummate artist, a devoted teacher, a pillar of our arts community, and, above all, a man of vision, integrity, and warmth.

I thank his beloved wife, Teja; his children, Laura Emily, and Jamie;

their mother, Josephine Hogan; and his sister, Margaret, for sharing Vincent with us. His many friends, colleagues, and all whose lives he touched will honor the legacy he leaves behind. He will be missed beyond measure.

I find comfort in knowing that Vincent's spirit will remain with us in every performance at the Irish Classical Theatre, in every student who carries his lessons forward, and in every audience moved by the power of a great story, especially when told with the heart, soul, and humor of an Irishman.

May Vincent O'Neill rest in peace.
"Eternal peace"; "Suaimhneas siorai."

HONORING THE HORTMAN AND HOFFMAN FAMILIES

(Mr. EMMER of Minnesota was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the people of Minnesota to honor the lives of former Minnesota Speaker of the House Melissa Hortman and her husband, Mark, who were brutally murdered in their home on June 14.

We also express our collective outrage over this politically motivated attack, which resulted in life-threatening injuries to my friend, Minnesota State Senator John Hoffman, and his wife, Yvette.

My wife, Jacquie, and I have known Melissa for more than 20 years. Melissa and I joined the Minnesota Legislature together in 2005, and we served together until 2011.

While we may have disagreed on policy, Melissa was a great colleague who fearlessly fought for what she believed in and devotedly served the people of Minnesota.

One day, while I was in the Minnesota Legislature, I brought my only daughter to work with me. I wanted to introduce her to some of the strong female leaders in our State and my colleagues who were, frankly, exceptional at what they do.

One of the first people who I introduced Katie to was Melissa Hortman. Though we came from different sides of the aisle, Melissa was incredibly gracious with her time and couldn't have been more kind and encouraging to my daughter.

Melissa's warmth and generosity extended far beyond that moment. As speaker of the Minnesota House, she led with integrity and fostered bipartisan collaboration, even during the most challenging times in our State.

While we mourn Melissa and her husband, Mark, we continue to pray for healing and peace for Senator Hoffman and his wife, Yvette, and their daughter, Hope, who were targeted by the same evil coward that night.

I have known Senator Hoffman for many years and have had the pleasure of meeting his daughter, Hope, on several occasions as they visited our office here in Washington, D.C.

John is a wonderful man, devoted husband and father, and friend. He is a commonsense legislator and has been a champion for Minnesotans with disabilities throughout his time in office.

His bravery during the attack, lunging at the gunman to protect his family, likely saved their lives, though it left him with life-threatening injuries.

Yvette, who was also hit by the gunfire, heroically shielded their daughter, Hope, whose quick thinking in locking the door and calling 911 triggered a statewide law enforcement response that, frankly, prevented further tragedy. Their courage and heroism should continue to inspire us all.

We are grateful to the brave men and women of law enforcement for their work to apprehend the evil perpetrator, and we look forward to justice being served.

Let's be clear: There is absolutely no place in our country for politically motivated violence. This attack, carried out by an evil coward disguised as a peace officer, was not just an assault on two Minnesota families, but it was also an attack on the very fabric of our Nation. It sought to silence and strike fear into the hearts of those who dedicate their lives to public service.

As we continue to grieve, we cannot and will not let this tragedy define us. We must show our communities, our State, our country, and the world that Minnesotans are united and that our resolve is stronger now more than ever. From Minneapolis to Mankato and from Delano to Duluth, we come together as one voice to condemn all forms of political violence. We commit to always treat each other with respect, regardless of differing opinions or political affiliations.

Our prayers are with the Hortman family as they grieve the devastating loss of their loved ones, and we also continue to pray for John, Yvette, and Hope as they deal with the physical and emotional repercussions of this horrific attack.

In closing, I will echo the words of Melissa and Mark's children: "Hope and resilience are the enemy of fear. . . . Hold your loved ones a little closer. Love your neighbors. Treat each other with kindness and respect. The best way to honor our parents' memory is to do something, whether big or small, to make our community just a little better for someone else."

May we always adhere to that sentiment.

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HONORING BRIAN JOHNSON, CEO OF EQUALITY ILLINOIS

(Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Brian Johnson, CEO of Equality Illinois, who will be ending his tenure at the end of this month.