



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 119th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 171

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, JULY 21, 2025

No. 124

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

July 21, 2025.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DAVID J. TAYLOR 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 1:50 p.m.

UNLEASHING AMERICAN ENERGY

(Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, throughout his campaign, President Trump promised to unleash American energy and to end the era of overregulation.

In just 7 months, President Trump has already taken those historic steps to boost domestic energy production, resulting in gas prices dropping by 50 cents over the past year.

In March, President Trump and EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin undertook

the largest day of deregulation in American history, releasing the shackles on our energy producers by President Biden's Green New Deal initiatives.

Now, my colleagues and I in the House will take up a strong deregulation package this week that will further streamline the permitting process for our energy producers throughout the U.S.

It is time that my colleagues and I codify President Trump's deregulation agenda so that our energy producers can unleash domestic production, lower costs for all American consumers, and further support our allies abroad on our pathway to energy dominance.

HONORING OUR BRAVE BORDER PATROL AND ICE AGENTS

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of our brave Border Patrol and ICE agents who tirelessly put their lives on the line each day to protect America.

With President Trump back in office, ICE agents can finally do their jobs and enforce the laws that are on the books. These brave officers are producing historic results at our border and in our communities.

In the first 6 months of President Trump's term in office, his administration has removed more than 70,000 convicted criminals, many of whom are convicted of assault, sexual crimes, kidnapping, and even homicide.

Yet, despite their historic work enforcing our Nation's laws, our ICE agents are facing a disgusting string of threats and violence against them and their families, resulting in an 830 percent increase in assaults against ICE agents. This string of threats is a result of months of violent rhetoric coming from the other side of the aisle. Whether in political office or in the media, calling for violence against law enforcement is simply unacceptable.

While a small group of people call for this violence, I know that the Amer-

ican people which overwhelmingly supported President Trump's reelection, are proud of our ICE agents as they work to remove dangerous and often violent criminals from our communities.

NATIONAL PENNSYLVANIA DAY

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, July 20, we celebrated National Pennsylvania Day, honoring the Commonwealth's crucial role in the founding and continuing success of our great Nation.

From the signing of the Declaration of Independence in Independence Hall in Philadelphia to the Battle of Gettysburg during the Civil War, Pennsylvania has always been at the center of American progress as we strive to form that more perfect Union.

Today, Pennsylvania remains at the center of our Nation's growth, especially as we enter a competitive race with China to dominate artificial intelligence.

Last week, President Trump and Senator DAVE MCCORMICK hosted an inaugural Pennsylvania Energy and Innovation Summit in Pittsburgh to highlight how Pennsylvania will lead in the AI revolution. During the summit, President Trump announced more than \$90 billion of investments into the Commonwealth's energy industry and data centers.

Now, with the unleashing of Pennsylvania's energy potential, each and every day will be Pennsylvania Day.

TRANSGENDER AMERICANS SERVE WITH HONOR

(Ms. MCBRIDE of Delaware was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Ms. MCBRIDE. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, I joined my neighbors across Delaware in celebrating the freedoms that define our Nation, freedoms made possible by those who have worn the uniform.

□ 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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It is appalling that while families gathered under fireworks to honor that sacrifice, the Trump administration was all too quietly forcing thousands of patriots from military service. These are Americans who have served with honor, distinction, and unshakable patriotism. They are brave, honorable, and committed patriots who have also dared to have the courage to say out loud that they are transgender. These are qualified, trained, and decorated servicemembers. They have deployed into combat, flown missions overseas, and led troops through danger.

Now, this administration is telling them that despite their qualifications and their exemplary quality of service that they can no longer serve, simply because of how they express their gender. That message is immoral, unfair, and un-American.

I represent Delaware's at-large district, a district that includes thousands, tens of thousands of Active-Duty servicemembers, veterans, and military families. In our State, service isn't abstract. It is personal. We see every single day what honor, discipline, and sacrifice looks like regardless of someone's gender identity.

These individuals met the same rigorous standards as their peers, the same physical exams, screenings, and background checks; and in many cases, under intense scrutiny, they didn't just meet those standards, they exceeded them.

Trans servicemembers are receiving glowing fitness reports and commendations. One was described by her commander as within the top 5 percent of officers I have encountered in 18 years of military service.

Another, an aviator with 60 combat missions under her belt, earned the strongest possible recommendation for promotion, and I quote her commander directly, who attested: "People thrive under her leadership."

A third, a noncommissioned officer and instructor, was called undoubtedly within the top 5 percent of NCOs I have worked with in my 22 years of service.

In a recent hearing, the Secretary of Defense even commended these patriots, only to frantically retract his praise when he decided that their being transgender, one small part of who these soldiers are, somehow outweighed their years of proven high performance and service to this country. These servicemembers were just dismissed by this administration.

The most powerful aspect of our military, the thing that makes it unique against our adversaries, is that it is a military of the people. In the United States, patriotism does not discriminate. In this country, if you are willing to serve, to fight for our core beliefs and to meet the standards, then we welcome you to stand with us, regardless of your race, religion, national origin, or any other aspect of who you are because you are an American, a patriot first.

This decision to remove proven patriots for no justification causes serious

weakness to our force. It turns away proven courage. It wastes billions in taxpayer investment, decades of hard-earned experience, and is a direct blow to readiness because this decision isn't about readiness. It is not about discipline or merit, and it is certainly not about cost.

It is about exclusion. It is about using identity as a wedge to divide and distract. It is a cynical politics, not sound policy. Our military, which should never be a political tool, is paying the price.

Across Delaware, from Georgetown to Wilmington, I have met transgender veterans who served this Nation with distinction. Some stepped forward while hiding who they were, forced to choose between their truth and their country. Others served openly when policy briefly aligned with principle. All of them served with honor.

□ 1210

Mr. Speaker, these are Americans asking to serve their country and to put their last full measure of devotion on the line, just like generations before them. The least we can do is let them.

We are not made safer by sidelining qualified patriots. We are not made stronger by narrowing the ranks of who gets to serve. We are not made freer by telling brave Americans that their truth disqualifies them from service.

This ban weakens our military. It betrays our values. It sends the cruelest possible message to some of our most dedicated citizens. It says their service is unwelcome and that one identity matters more than what they have done, what they have sacrificed, and what they fight for.

Mr. Speaker, I reject that message. I salute every transgender servicemember. I thank them. I see them. I honor them. I will not stop fighting for a country that is truly worthy of their service.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE ALPENA COMMUNITY COLLEGE REMOTELY OPERATED VEHICLE TEAM

(Mr. BERGMAN of Michigan was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary achievements of the Alpena Community College which is remotely operated and located in Alpena, Michigan, in the lower peninsula on the Sunrise Coast. The college's team is known as the Aquajacks. It is a great name, and it tells us right there what they are about.

The Alpena Community College remotely operated vehicle team, the Aquajacks, proudly represented Michigan's First Congressional District at the 2025 Marine Advanced Technology Education ROV World Championship hosted in Alpena, Michigan.

I will digress for just a couple of seconds here on what this team actually

accomplished. For those who don't know the geography of Michigan, as I put my hands up, to those looking at me, this hand is the upper peninsula of Michigan. This hand is the lower peninsula of Michigan. Alpena is located right down here in the lower peninsula on the shores of Lake Huron.

Michigan's First District, which I am blessed to represent, encompasses 48.1 percent of the landmass of Michigan and more freshwater and deepwater shoreline than any other district in the United States. The only singular district that has a larger big water shoreline is Alaska, but that is all saltwater. That is the difference. We catch different kinds of fish in those two different kinds of waters.

What we have in Michigan surrounding the lower peninsula and capping the northern border of the upper peninsula before it transitions into Canada is some of the world's, if not the world's, finest, freshest, deepest, and clearest water that is available on the face of the Earth.

We use it for good. We fish in it. We farm in it. We experiment in it. We advance our country and also other countries in the world through research and development, especially when it comes to underwater activities, whether it is mapping the bottom of the ocean or looking at cables and pipelines that go from continent to continent. All of that education and training on the front end is what is happening at Alpena Community College in my district.

We see all the smiles and happy faces of the team here. They were excited by not only competing but also winning such a prestigious award. These talented students, who both live and study in northern Michigan, showcased remarkable ingenuity, teamwork, and technical skills. They earned an impressive third-place finish against nearly 80 teams from 22 States and 18 countries.

After months of design and testing, their ROV successfully completed complex tasks, while the team impressed judges with their professional presentations and real-time strategic thinking.

Their performance is a testament to Alpena Community College's commitment to hands-on STEM education. I commend their mentor, David Cummins, and their entire faculty for fostering such excellence.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I recognize the Alpena Community College Aquajacks. These students not only represent the future of my district but also highlight the critical role that skilled innovators play in strengthening our Nation's infrastructure and advancing our national security.

IMPROVING COMMUNITY ZIP CODES

(Mr. COURTNEY of Connecticut was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)