

□ 1200

## AFTER RECESS

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

## PRAYER

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

Father of lights, from whom comes every perfect gift and in whom there is no shadow, open our hearts this day to receive Your wisdom. As we commemorate the founding of our Nation's Constitution, illumine our understanding of Your divine will and rekindle within us gratitude for the guidance You offered our Nation's Founders in the establishment of American democracy more than two centuries ago.

For even in the early and precarious years of our country's beginnings, when social anxiety and political turmoil threatened the future of this fledgling Nation, Lord, in Your mercy, You built the house that is our United States so that the framers of our Constitution would not have fought for or built this government in vain.

As You granted our Founders a vision of a more perfect Union, grant to our leaders and all American citizens today the will to preserve national unity to defend freedom and to uphold the common good.

As You revealed the principles of liberty and justice to the first lawmakers, reveal to us anew how, when we ground our faith and live our lives in You, the enjoyment of those rights naturally follows.

Eternal God, we thank You for our noble past. We pray for integrity in the pursuit of peace in our present, and we look with hope toward a future worthy of Your blessing.

In Your sovereign name, we pray.  
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 gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SUBRAMANYAM) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM 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.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests

for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

## PETITIONING TO CHECK PARTISAN MAP

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

Mr. MOSKOWITZ. Reserving the right to object.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Reserving the right to object, the gentleman is recognized.

Mr. MOSKOWITZ. Mr. Speaker, I am reserving the right to object. Does the Speaker know when the Speaker of the House will be addressing Member security in an adequate fashion?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is not asking a proper parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. MOSKOWITZ. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, does the Speaker know what the plan is to keep Members secure due to all the security threats and the assassination attempts and assassinations we have seen around the country?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is still not a proper parliamentary inquiry and is not a question that can be answered by the Chair.

Mr. MOSKOWITZ. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The reservation is withdrawn.

The gentleman from Missouri is recognized.

Mr. BELL. Mr. Speaker, the State legislature may have forced through their partisan map, but in Missouri, the final word belongs to the people. Our constitution gives Missourians the right to check the politicians through the petition process.

No one asked for this map. Communities didn't demand it. Voters didn't vote for it. It was written to serve the administration, not Missouri. When politicians get it wrong, citizens have the chance to make it right.

That is why the petition process is so important. It is a chance for Missourians across the State—urban, rural, north, south, Black, White, Hispanic, Asian—to come together and say our voices matter, our votes matter, and we will decide what representation looks like.

This is bigger than party politics. It is about who holds the power in our democracy. I believe the power is in the people of Missouri—more specifically, in the pen and signatures of the people of Missouri as we petition to save our democracy.

## WARNING ABOUT SUPPRESSING RIGHTS ON CONSTITUTION DAY

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

Mr. MOSKOWITZ. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the right to object.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized on his reservation.

Mr. MOSKOWITZ. Mr. Speaker, I am reserving the right to object because Members of the House are open to all sorts of threats, Mr. Speaker. I am just curious, do you know when the Speaker of the House will be putting forward a plan to keep Members safe?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has already responded that this is not a proper parliamentary inquiry, and the Chair cannot advise further.

Mr. MOSKOWITZ. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The reservation is withdrawn.

The gentleman from New York is recognized.

Mr. LATIMER. Mr. Speaker, today, we celebrate the 238th birthday of the U.S. Constitution, and we reflect on the document that enshrines the freedoms that we hold dear.

At the heart of those freedoms is the First Amendment, the right to free speech. It protects popular speech and speech that challenges, provokes, and offends. That is the point.

This week, the Attorney General said that the Department of Justice would "absolutely target you, go after you" for so-called hate speech, a dangerous misreading of the Constitution. Though she has since walked it back, the message was clear: This administration would rather silence dissent than defend liberty.

I hear defense of the Second Amendment, the right to bear arms, but I want to make sure that we defend all amendments, including the Fifth Amendment for due process, and the 10th Amendment, rights that are reserved for the States and the people from the Federal Government.

Our rights don't come with an asterisk. We don't surrender the First Amendment or any others to political convenience.

On this Constitution Day, let us remember the greatest threat to democracy is not exercising our rights. It is the effort to suppress those rights.

## MEDICALLY TAILORED MEALS SAVE LIVES AND LOWER HEALTHCARE COSTS

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, food is medicine, and medically tailored meals provide people living with chronic illness essential nutrition to improve their health and keep them out of the hospital.

Incredible providers like Community Servings in my home State of Massachusetts, God's Love We Deliver in New York City, and dozens of agencies across the country have proven these meals work.

Among individuals with complex health conditions, MTMs have led to a

70 percent drop in emergency room visits and cut hospital admissions in half. If all eligible patients received MTMs, studies show that we could save over \$32 billion in the first year alone.

Today, I am reintroducing bipartisan, bicameral legislation with Representatives MALLIOTAKIS, PINGREE, FITZPATRICK, and EVANS and Senators BOOKER, MARSHALL, SMITH, and CASSIDY to pilot the coverage of MTMs in traditional Medicare. Our bill, which expands access to these lifesaving meals, will lead to billions of dollars in savings without adding one dime to the deficit.

I urge my colleagues to join the growing bipartisan Food is Medicine movement and pass our medically tailored meals bill. Let's work together to end hunger now.

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#### HONORING DR. G.V.V. RAO

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

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Dr. G.V.V. Rao, a beloved husband, father, grandfather, and true community leader.

Dr. Rao dedicated his life to service, both here in Virginia and around the world. His career and work on global development took him to the World Bank, the United Nations, and the Asian Development Bank.

In the community, Dr. Rao founded the Balavikas of Fairfax, an organization to promote spiritual values and education for kids in Northern Virginia. His PROCEED Project helped mentor low-income students in India as they pursued higher education.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Rao's legacy lives on in all the lives he touched and the communities that he strengthened. May he rest in peace.

#### FILLING FIREFIGHTER POSITIONS ON MILITARY INSTALLATIONS

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

Ms. ELFRETH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give voice to an issue that has gone unaddressed for far too long, and it is one this body must take up before it is too late and lives are lost. We must address the alarmingly low staffing levels of firefighters on our military installations.

Recent reports indicate that the military service intends to eliminate vacant firefighter positions, restrict the use of overtime, and interpret requirements in a manner that could lead to station closures.

Let me be clear. While staffing level shortages have been an ongoing challenge, these new actions, coupled with the continued hiring freeze, put our servicemembers in harm's way.

It is why Congresswoman KIGGANS and I wrote to the Secretaries of the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force to ensure robust emergency services that maintain safety and mission readiness across the Force.

Across the DOD, more than 8,800 civilian firefighters respond to structural fires, aircraft emergencies, hazardous materials incidents, and other life-threatening events each year.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot think of a more critical and all-American cause or more of a win-win than having the backs of our fire firefighters and our servicemembers.

#### DELIVERING FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Mr. WALKINSHAW. Mr. Speaker, across America, hardworking people are struggling to pay their bills. This includes housing, groceries, healthcare, and more. Hundreds of thousands of jobs have been cut due to the DOGE policies. Our economy is sputtering, and the tariffs are jacking up prices.

The so-called big, beautiful bill will decimate Medicaid, taking healthcare from seniors, children, and working families, while driving up premiums.

The President has told the majority not to negotiate with our side to keep the government open. The budget that has been introduced will drive up everyday costs, including healthcare premiums.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for us to come together and deliver what the American people need, which is access to affordable healthcare and a government that is funded and functional.

#### COMMUNICATION FROM THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable HAKEEM JEFFRIES, Democratic Leader:

SEPTEMBER 17, 2025.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives,*  
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR SPEAKER JOHNSON: Pursuant to Section 2(b)(4) of P.L. 118-144, the Commission to Study the Potential Transfer of the Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History to the Smithsonian Institution Act, I am pleased to appoint the following individual to the Commission to Study the Potential Transfer of the Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History to the Smithsonian Institution.

Mr. Philip Darivoff of Short Hills, New Jersey

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

HAKEEM JEFFRIES,  
*Democratic Leader.*

#### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS REFORM ACT

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 707, I call up the bill (H.R. 5125) to amend the District of Columbia Home Rule Act to terminate the District of Columbia Judicial Nomination Commission, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 707, the amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 119-13 is adopted and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 5125

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

*This Act may be cited as the "District of Columbia Judicial Nominations Reform Act of 2025".*

#### SEC. 2. TERMINATION OF DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA JUDICIAL NOMINATION COMMISSION.

(a) *TERMINATION.*—The District of Columbia Home Rule Act is amended by striking section 434 (sec. 1-204.34, D.C. Official Code).

(b) *CONFORMING AMENDMENTS RELATING TO APPOINTMENT OF JUDGES.*—

(1) *DESIGNATION OF CHIEF JUDGES BY PRESIDENT.*—Section 431(b) of such Act (sec. 1-204.31(b), D.C. Official Code) is amended by striking "the District of Columbia Judicial Nominating Commission established by section 434" and inserting "the President".

(2) *APPOINTMENT BY PRESIDENT.*—Section 433(a) of such Act (sec. 1-204.33(a), D.C. Official Code) is amended by striking "Except as provided in section 434(d)(1), the President shall nominate, from the list of persons recommended to him by the District of Columbia Judicial Nomination Commission established under section 434," and inserting "The President shall nominate,".

(3) *QUALIFICATIONS OF JUDGES.*—Section 433(b) of such Act (sec. 1-204.33(b), D.C. Official Code) is amended—

(A) by adding "and" at the end of paragraph (3);

(B) by striking paragraph (4) and redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (4); and

(C) in paragraph (4), as so redesignated, by striking "or of the District of Columbia Judicial Nomination Commission".

(c) *OTHER CONFORMING AMENDMENT.*—Section 11-1528(a)(2), District of Columbia Official Code, is amended by striking subparagraph (C).

(d) *CLERICAL AMENDMENT.*—The table of contents of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act is amended by striking the item relating to section 434.

(e) *EFFECTIVE DATE.*—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to appointments made on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill, as amended, shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, or their respective designees.

The gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GARCIA) each will control 30 minutes.