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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
December 1, 2025.

I hereby appoint the Honorable VIRGINIA FOXX 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.

NURSING EXCLUDED AS "PROFESSIONAL" DEGREE BY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, as this headline from Newsweek magazine reports, a few weeks ago, the U.S. Department of Education issued probably the most out-of-touch, offensive new rule in the history of the Department, excluding nursing from its definition of "professional occupations," part of its new graduate student loan program,

which was created by the one big, ugly bill.

For the 4.7 million actively registered nurses and the 250,000 students enrolled in bachelor's, master's, and doctoral nursing programs across the United States, this decree that they are not professionals is both a disgraceful insult that shocks the conscience and an order which will condemn America's nurses into second-class status for Federal graduate student loan assistance.

Madam Speaker, this legal demotion is happening at a time when our country is experiencing a nursing shortage. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that we have 195,000 unfilled nursing positions in this country. The Department of Health and Human Services goes even higher. It says that it is 280,000. McKinsey & Company, a respected think tank, predicts that the shortage will grow to 400,000 by the end of this decade.

Madam Speaker, Members of this House don't really need to spend much time reading these reports to know that that shortage is real. Just go to any hospital, nursing home, or health clinic in your district, and you will hear the same thing: they are short-staffed in ERs, exam rooms, operating rooms, and on the floors. Short-staffing is bad for patients, and it is bad for nursing burnout.

Despite this blindingly obvious reality, the Education Department's designation is putting a hard cap of \$100,000, with no indexing, on graduate student loans for nurses, all part of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, which my Republican colleagues passed in June. It is a healthcare monstrosity, which cut \$1 trillion from Medicaid, cut out premium subsidies for 22 million Americans for their healthcare exchange plans, and now will suffocate the growth of our Nation's caring professions.

If you doubt my words, then maybe you will listen to the president of the

American Nursing Association, the largest nursing professional organization in America. Jennifer Mensik Kennedy, the president, states: "Nurses make up the largest segment of the healthcare workforce and [are] the backbone of our Nation's health system. At a time when healthcare in our country faces a historic nurse shortage and rising demands, limiting nurses' access to funding for graduate school threatens the very foundation of patient care."

Well said.

Madam Speaker, ANA is doing more. They have organized a petition drive because this rule goes into effect next July. As of the middle of last week, they had 180,000 signatures, and that will grow.

Madam Speaker, it definitely will grow in the coming days. Every Member of this House—and I will be one of them—should write to the Department of Education saying that this rule makes no sense in terms of the healthcare system today and, also, is an insult to the people who go through extensive training, testing, and certification before they are allowed to practice their caring profession.

While we are at it, we should also help the other professions which were excluded by the Department of Education: physician assistants, physical therapists, audiologists, speech-language pathologists, architects, accountants, advanced degree educators, social workers, dental hygienists, and occupational therapists.

This proposal by the Department of Education is madness, and Congress should actually do more than just support the regulatory process in terms of reversing these rules. We should also go back and revisit the One Big Beautiful Bill Act and recognize, again, what our healthcare sector is telling us: We are risking the financial solvency of institutions all across America, and, again, we are damaging our

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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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future in terms of getting young, motivated people to join the healthcare professions.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF SARAH BECKSTROM

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

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and the legacy of U.S. Army Specialist Sarah Beckstrom, a 20-year-old from West Virginia, who was killed while defending Washington, D.C., during an assignment with the National Guard.

In Sarah's 2 years of service, she was distinguished, admirable, and a highly respected individual. Her assassination is nothing more than despicable.

The National Guard in Washington has aided immensely in cracking down on crime. Yet, they have been vilified with dangerous rhetoric. The devastation continues to arise.

On the day before Thanksgiving, America lost one of the best of us. May God watch over Sarah Beckstrom. May God comfort her loved ones and guide our Nation through this heartbreaking time. May we always recognize Sarah as an American hero, and may her sacrifice continue to uphold her legacy.

Please continue to lift Andrew Wolfe, the critically injured National Guardsman, in your prayers, and pray that God guides him and his family through these challenging times.

REGULATORY RELIEF ON COKE OVEN FACILITIES

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, last week, President Trump signed a proclamation providing 2 years of regulatory relief from the Biden-era restraints on coke oven facilities.

These facilities are essential to America's steelmaking capacity, a vital component of Pennsylvania's economic prosperity. Many companies in Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, including JLG Industries; Volvo Construction Equipment; Manitowoc Company; and defense firms such as Lockheed Martin, Leonardo DRS, Kongsberg Defense Corporation, and JWF Defense Systems, all depend on a stable and efficient U.S. steel supply.

This proclamation by President Trump recognizes the need for a robust domestic steel supply supported by U.S. coke oven facilities across our Nation. By balancing environmental standards with economic growth, Congress must support President Trump's efforts to strengthen America's economic resilience and our national security.

HONORING SHIPPENSBURG UNIVERSITY FIELD HOCKEY TEAM

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Shippensburg University field hockey team for winning the NCAA Division II championship.

Overall, this year's title is the seventh national championship for

Shippensburg field hockey. In her first season as head coach at Shippensburg, Rayell Wallace led the Raiders to a record of 20-3. She led them to the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference championship and the NCAA Division II championship.

Kelly Naude's goal in overtime propelled Shippensburg to a victory in that title game. Kelly's post-game comments reflect the team-oriented spirit: "Almost every single goal that our team has scored this year has been a team goal. Yes, there is one individual person who does touch the ball last and it goes in the goal. But every goal has been a team effort, and we do it for the team."

On behalf of everyone in Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, I congratulate Shippensburg's players and coaches for expanding upon a legacy of success.

HONORING MAYOR DEBORAH BARGO

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mayor Deborah Bargo of Lewistown, Pennsylvania, for her dedicated public service as the mayor of Lewistown since 2007.

Beyond her leadership roles in borough government, Mayor Bargo has served as a member of the board of directors and the board of trustees for the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs.

A lifelong resident of Lewistown, Mayor Bargo is widely respected for her active engagement throughout the community. Very impressively, Mayor Bargo has proudly officiated at over 700 wedding ceremonies.

On behalf of everyone in the 13th Congressional District, I express my personal gratitude to Mayor Bargo for her distinguished legacy and her commitment to the service of community.

RECOGNIZING BISHOP MICHELLE C. THOMAS

(Mr. SUBRAMANYAM of Virginia was recognized to address the House for 5 minutes.)

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the newly consecrated bishop, Michelle C. Thomas, a community leader in northern Virginia.

In 2006, Bishop Thomas became the first African-American female pastor to establish a church in our county, Loudoun County, Virginia. She has delivered invocations for numerous dignitaries and heads of state. Now, she is the first female bishop in the history of Loudoun County.

Perhaps the most remarkable accolade is reflected in the lives that she has changed. Faced with her own nightmare in the loss of her son, Fitz, Bishop Thomas went on to inspire countless others, serving as an active role model and advocate for her son's friends and community.

Her work continues to uplift those around her, and I congratulate Bishop Michelle C. Thomas on officially being consecrated to the office of bishop.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF JOHN HOWARD EISENHOUR

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of John Howard Eisenhower, a devoted public servant, veteran, and proud Virginian who, unfortunately, passed away on November 10.

John lived a life rooted in service and civic responsibility. He served our Nation as a tank commander in the United States Army at Fort Hood and went on to a distinguished career in Federal service. John held key roles at the Office of Management and Budget, the Department of Defense, the American Embassy in Thailand, and the National War College. Even after retirement, he continued to lend his expertise as a consultant to the Federal Government.

Locally, John was active in civic life for many years, giving his time and energy to local Democratic politics and community service. John's legacy lives in all of the lives and communities that he touched.

My heart goes out to his family, and may he rest in peace.

CORRUPTION AND CONTROVERSY AT FANNIE MAE

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Madam Speaker, for decades, Fannie Mae has played a critical role in supporting home buyers and renters and has employed many of my constituents.

Madam Speaker, under this administration, it has taken a turn toward corruption and controversy. This year, Fannie Mae's ethics watchdogs have been fired.

A senior Fannie Mae executive shared confidential mortgage pricing data with a competitor at the direction of Bill Pulte, the Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency. In his brief tenure, Director Pulte has weaponized his office to target Democrats with allegations of mortgage fraud.

Earlier this year, Fannie Mae has terminated hundreds of my constituents, as well, over charitable donations, without any due process to them. Months later, Fannie Mae has still not answered my letters or provided these employees with any meaningful explanation for their dismissal.

Instead of confronting the housing affordability crisis, Fannie Mae has turned to advancing the political interests of this administration, turned against the people who worked for them and served them for so many years, and turned against the American people.

GOOD AND BAD NEWS FOR SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr. SUBRAMANYAM. Madam Speaker, we had some good news this week.

One of my constituents was finally able to get an in-person appointment to receive at least an interview about her Social Security benefits. You would think that we would be delighted that appointment is going to happen in a couple of days, but this is also bad news because she had actually reached out to our office in February and is