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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. STRONG).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 11, 2025.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DALE W. STRONG 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.

FOREIGN AID AND NATIONAL SECURITY

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

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Subcommittee on Military and Foreign Affairs, I rise in strong opposition to executive actions taken by the Trump administration to shut down U.S. foreign assistance and undermine America's national security.

Over the past two decades, I have led multiple bipartisan congressional dele-

gations to Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Syria, Ukraine, Somalia, and Gaza, as well as other conflict zones. These oversight missions have examined the implementation of U.S. foreign assistance firsthand, precisely because the security and humanitarian aid that we provide to our international partners is critical to advancing U.S. national security and foreign policy priorities around the world.

Recent executive actions taken by the Trump administration demonstrate a blatant disregard for the important role that foreign aid serves in keeping America, including American servicemembers who are deployed in these conflict zones, safe.

In the first major foreign policy action of his new term, President Trump issued an indiscriminate stop order, suspending U.S. foreign assistance for at least 3 months. That includes the suspension of security and military aid to Ukraine which is entering the fourth year of its fight for independence against the brutal and unlawful invasion ordered by Russian President Vladimir Putin in 2022. Our continued support for Ukraine is vital to the ability of the U.S. and our NATO allies to deter escalating Russian aggression across Europe.

The order also freezes aid to Taiwan which remains the target of Chinese military incursions that threaten peace and stability in a region where nearly 400,000 U.S. military and civil personnel are deployed in support of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. To make matters worse, the Trump administration has halted all mine removal programs led by the State Department in more than 125 countries.

During oversight visits to Lebanon, Iraq, Afghanistan, and other areas where former battlefields are littered with antipersonnel explosive devices, I have directly observed the partnership between U.S. agencies and nongovernmental organizations such as The

HALO Trust and the Lebanese Mine Action Center who work together to remove landmines, cluster munitions, and other ordnance for the safety of local populations and American diplomatic and military personnel.

This week, I will be introducing the Global Demining Protection Act, endorsed by The HALO Trust, to exempt demining programs from the ongoing ban on foreign aid.

Most recently, the Trump administration launched a full-scale attack on USAID, an independent agency duly established and annually funded by Congress. The fundamental mission of this agency and its global workforce of more than 10,000 dedicated employees is to promote stable democracies abroad in the interest of U.S. national security.

First, top USAID security officers were removed for rightfully refusing to grant billionaire Elon Musk and his so-called DOGE team access to sensitive personnel files and classified systems.

Next, President Trump attempted to place all directly hired USAID employees on administrative leave, including those who are deployed overseas.

Thankfully, a Federal district judge has issued a temporary restraining order, preventing the administration from placing employees on leave or evacuating them from overseas assignments. In Mr. Musk's words: "USAID is a criminal organization. Time for it to die."

The agency that he is desperate to kill without congressional approval is one whose development mission in more than a hundred conflict countries is designed to prevent the root causes of global violence and extremism, including famine, civil war, and human rights abuses. That is why the nonpartisan American Foreign Service Association reports that development is the most important tool in our national security toolbox.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to oppose these

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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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reckless actions in the interest of the safety and security of every American.

HONORING RANDALL E. WATSON

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

Mr. ALFORD. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor our February Veteran of the Month, Randall E. Watson. Randall is a retired Army Chief Warrant Officer 4, or CW4, and human resources officer with more than 24 years of service. Randall got his bachelor's degree from the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg and his master's from the American Military University in West Virginia.

In April of 1990, Randall deployed to Panama with the 135th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital as a patient administration specialist to provide medical and dental service to the indigenous persons of Kuna on the San Blas Islands.

Randall Watson retired from the Army National Guard in 2014 and from the State of Missouri as the director of its veterans service programs in 2020.

In 2016, Randall received the Meritorious Service Medal from the Governor of Missouri for outstanding meritorious military service to Missouri and the United States of America.

We thank Randall for his truly admirable dedication to Missouri, America, and to veterans. Randall has left the Missouri National Guard and the Missouri veterans service programs poised for continued greatness.

We congratulate Randall on being Missouri's Fourth Congressional District's Veteran of the Month.

HONORING THAI HOUSE

Mr. ALFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor our February Small Business of the Month, Thai House, in Lebanon, Missouri.

In 2009, Chutiwan Kingnak Tracy met her husband, Michael Tracy, and left her home in Thailand to begin her journey to live out the American Dream. The Tracys worked hard to open a small business, working in different restaurants until opening up their own.

Saving her pennies, Chuti saved just enough to buy a food truck and trailer in Oklahoma. She filed for an LLC in July of 2024, and then they opened the Thai House for the first time at Lebanon Farmers Market.

Through ups and downs and after a decade of hard work, they were finally able to become American small business owners. Thai House continues to grow, despite the recent economic turmoil caused by the previous administration. They look forward to being open this spring after being closed during the winter.

Missouri's Fourth Congressional District is excited for their Thai food. I can't wait to taste it myself. We congratulate Thai House. We love to see their hard work come to fruition, and we look forward to their future success.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO CAROLYN SUE ADAMS ALFORD

Mr. ALFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say happy birthday to my mother, Carolyn Sue Adams Alford. It is her 86th birthday today.

My mother was a schoolbus driver, an executive assistant at Exxon USA, a mother of four boys, and a Sweet Adeline with always a song in her heart and great advice for her four boys. I love my mother very much. Happy birthday to my mother.

PROTECTING NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. HERNÁNDEZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HERNÁNDEZ. Mr. Speaker, the administration recently announced sharp cuts to Federal grant funding for universities, medical centers, and other research institutions. These cuts will devastate our students, our professors, and our seniors.

What concerns me the most is these cuts will devastate Puerto Rico. Why?

The NIH, the target of these cuts, funds critical medical research. During the past year, the NIH has supported 73 projects and provided up to \$53 million for Puerto Rico's universities, hospitals, and research centers like Centro Medico in San Juan.

These cuts threaten local programs studying diseases that disproportionately affect Puerto Ricans, like diabetes, Alzheimer's, cancer, and other rare diseases. These cuts will hinder scientific research and progress. These cuts will hinder people's access to healthcare. These cuts will set us back vis-a-vis China and our geopolitical rivals.

The government cannot treat people like numbers on a spreadsheet. We can't cut corners on healthcare and education. We can't fall behind our global rivals. We must protect the NIH.

Now, for the benefit of my constituents, I will repeat my remarks in Spanish.

(Spanish translation of the statement made in English is as follows:)

Señor presidente:

La Administración anunció recientemente recortes drásticos en la financiación de subvenciones federales para universidades, centros médicos y otras instituciones de investigación.

Estos recortes devastarán a nuestros estudiantes, nuestros profesores y nuestros adultos mayores.

Lo que más me preocupa: estos recortes devastarán a Puerto Rico.

¿Por qué?

Los NIH, el objetivo de estos recortes, financian investigaciones médicas cruciales.

Durante el último año, los NIH han apoyado 73 proyectos y proporcionado hasta \$53 millones a universidades, hospitales y centros de investigación en Puerto Rico como el Centro Médico en San Juan.

Estos recortes amenazan programas locales que estudian enfermedades que afectan

desproporcionadamente a los puertorriqueños, como el cáncer, la diabetes, el Alzheimer y otras enfermedades raras.

Estos recortes nos harán retroceder la investigación y el progreso científico.

Estos recortes dificultarán el acceso del pueblo a la atención médica.

Estos recortes nos harán retroceder frente a China y nuestros rivales geopolíticos.

El gobierno no puede tratar a las personas como cifras en una hoja de cálculo.

No podemos recortar en salud y educación. No podemos quedarnos atrás frente a nuestros rivales globales.

Debemos proteger a los NIH.

HONORING STATEN ISLAND'S BLACK ANGELS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. MALLIOTAKIS) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Mr. Speaker, as our Nation celebrates Black History Month, I rise to honor Staten Island's own Black Angels.

Seventy years ago, tuberculosis plagued our Nation, killing over 1 billion worldwide and accounting for nearly 18 percent of all deaths in New York City alone. Fear of this unknown, highly contagious, and deadly disease led many nurses who were treating tuberculosis patients to quit.

In search of staff, New York City turned to African-American nurses from the Jim Crow south who could not find jobs due to segregation, and 300 women bravely accepted New York City's request to help to serve sick patients, taking advantage of the opportunity for employment in a career field often withheld from them. They became known as the Black Angels.

These nurses selflessly cared for 2,000 patients in my district at Staten Island's Sea View Hospital. They played a significant role in the first ever human trials and the first drug to cure tuberculosis.

Since its discovery in 1952, tens of millions of lives have been saved, and these women all did it at a time when they didn't even have equal rights in our country.

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I am proud to represent the last remaining Black Angel who worked during the trial. Staten Island's Virginia Allen began as a 16-year-old pediatric nurse's aide and worked in the ward for 10 years.

She was there during the clinical trials and is one of the two Black Angels who are still alive today. She continues to selflessly serve our community as president of the North Shore, Staten Island Section of the National Council of Negro Women.

Last year, I honored Virginia, along with Curlene Jennings Bennett, who had later on come to serve at Seaview in 1957 in the adult pavilion.