

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution as follows:

H. CON. RES. 11

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the two Houses of Congress assemble in the Hall of the House of Representatives on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at 9 p.m., for the purpose of receiving such communication as the President of the United States shall be pleased to make to them.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ELECTING A MEMBER TO A CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. AGUILAR. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Democratic Caucus, I offer a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 125

Resolved, That the following named Member be, and is hereby, elected to the following standing committee of the House of Representatives:

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS: Mr. DeSaulnier.

Mr. AGUILAR. (During the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be considered as read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H. RES. 23

Mr. MOYLAN. Mr. Speaker, I hereby remove my name as cosponsor of H. Res. 23.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's request is granted.

REMEMBERING MARK SPAIN

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

Mr. McGUIRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the award-winning TV anchor, Mark Spain. On December 18, central Virginia lost a friend in WSET ABC 13 News anchor Mark Spain after a battle with pancreatic cancer.

Mark Spain was known for his sense of humor, his smile, and his positive nicknames for his friends in the office. Mark was a consistent voice in the community and will be remembered as a pillar in the Lynchburg, Virginia, area.

On January 4, a day after being sworn into Congress, I attended Mark Spain's celebration of life at the Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia.

Mr. Speaker, today from the House floor I want to take a moment to remember Mark Spain and say that Tracy and I join our community in praying for Mark, his wife Lynita, their three children, and the WSET ABC 13 News family during this difficult time.

USAID FUNDING

(Mrs. TORRES of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. TORRES of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deep concern over the cancelation of an appropriations subcommittee hearing by my Republican colleagues and the decision to replace it with a private briefing to silence Democrats.

I am alarmed by the illegal impoundment of Federal funding and the attempted destruction of USAID. Americans deserve to know why this decision was made.

The administration's decision to close USAID is a direct violation of our Constitution and the law. USAID is essential in stopping the flow of drugs, gangs, human trafficking, and migrants across our borders.

Why are Elon Musk and the Trump administration working to dismantle the very agency that addresses the root causes of migration, violence, and drugs that are devastating our communities?

USAID's work is critical to combating criminal organizations and strengthening international partnerships with the FBI, DEA, and the Department of Justice. Earlier this year, USAID's support was acknowledged as critical when top MS-13 leaders were arrested on terrorist charges.

Mr. Speaker, I demand answers. If our Republican colleagues are too scared to push back, then Democrats will do our job.

HONORING MATT ROSENDALE FOR HIS YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

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

Mr. DOWNING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my predecessor, Matt Rosendale, for his years of public service to this House of Representatives and to the people of Montana.

Like me, Congressman Rosendale served as Montana State auditor and commissioner of securities and insurance before making his journey to the Nation's Capital.

Congressman Rosendale was one of Washington's fiercest advocates for fiscal conservatism, border security, and the rights of the unborn. He never shied away from doing what he thought was right nor speaking up for what he believed in.

I wish Congressman Rosendale and his wife, Jean, all the best in their years ahead, and I thank him for his service.

RECOGNIZING AND CELEBRATING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF QUINYON MITCHELL

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the achievements of Quinyon Mitchell, a proud University of Toledo Rocket and now a Super Bowl champion with the Philadelphia Eagles.

Mr. Speaker, last year I stood before you and said that Quinyon Mitchell would make northwest Ohio proud on the national stage, and he has done exactly that, helping lead the Eagles to victory in Super Bowl LIX.

His dedication, discipline, and talent have set him apart, earning him respect across the league as a key player of one of the NFL's top defenses.

Mr. Mitchell is not the only Rocket making waves on football's biggest stage. I want to extend special recognition to fellow Eagle, Dallas Gant. He also won the Super Bowl alongside Quinyon.

Their journeys from Toledo to the grandest stage in football are a living testament to the strength of our athletic programs and the hardworking spirit of the people of northwest Ohio's communities.

Congratulations to the Philadelphia Eagles on their championship. To Quinyon and Dallas: You make us proud and all of northwest Ohio proud. Go Rockets.

RECOGNIZING WILLIAM SMITH

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

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize my Chief of Staff, William Smith, who is leaving our office. He has faithfully served the American people for over 20 years and has served alongside me since my first day in office in 2015.

Before agreeing to lead my staff, he worked for Senator Jeff Sessions on the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Senate Budget Committee.

Within 5 minutes of talking to William, Mr. Speaker, you will know he loves the Lord; he loves his wife, Diamond; he loves his family; and he loves his country. When people ask how I have such a great staff, I always point them to William. He leads by example and embodies the idea of servant leadership.

If you know William, Mr. Speaker, you also know he is a true conservative who proudly stands for his beliefs, even if he is the only one standing. He demonstrates his joy and his convictions, and it truly makes him the consummate happy warrior.

His departure is not only a loss for our office, but Capitol Hill as a whole. I thank him for all of his years of service to our country, and I look forward

to seeing what he will accomplish in this next chapter of service.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES

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

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the continued suffering and amazing destruction caused by wildfires in southern California and the critical need for this body and for the President to aid those Americans affected by this natural disaster.

Over 16,000 homes and structures were destroyed in the L.A. fires, and at one point, 200,000 residents were under evacuation orders. Severe drought and powerful winds made firefighters' jobs even more difficult.

While we should be discussing how we, as Americans, help other Americans, as we have always done in other disasters, somehow we have gotten distracted with political theater and trying to score political points.

Successful recovery from any disaster wherever it is takes cooperation across all levels of government. We have done it before, and we can do it again. We can't afford to waste time with political games or unnecessary conditions on aid.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides to do the right thing and deliver aid to their fellow Americans who have had their lives upended by tragedy.

□ 1415

ADDRESSING THE HACK OF U.S. TREASURY PAYMENT SYSTEMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BAUMGARTNER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. CASTEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, HALEY STEVENS and I introduced the Taxpayer Data Protection Act last week. This is a very simple but, tragically, an urgently necessary bill to address the hack of the U.S. Treasury payment system by Elon Musk and his band of IT goons last week.

This bill would limit the Secretary of the Treasury's ability to give access to the payment system only to people who: A, have a top secret security clearance; B, have no conflicts of interest; C, are not special government employees; and, D, have been Federal employees for at least a year.

Why is this necessary?

What happened last week comprised one of the most significant breaches of privacy and threats to our national security, perhaps ever. I am not exaggerating.

This was done with the consent of Treasury Secretary Bessent. This point

is important because some of my colleagues across the aisle have suggested that somehow what they are doing is just normal diligence.

This is decidedly abnormal. It is so abnormal, in fact, that, when David Lebryk, the Fiscal Assistant Secretary of the Treasury and former Acting Secretary of the Treasury, refused to grant access to Elon Musk, Secretary Bessent fired Mr. Lebryk so that Musk could force his way in.

Let's understand the scope of what happened. The Treasury Department manages a \$5 trillion-a-year Federal payment system. This is the way that every branch of government pays their bills. Like any accounting system, it is critical that all of the bills it pays are approved, legal, and accurately recorded in our ledger.

This is how we make payments on savings bonds and other debt borrowed by the United States. It is how we pay employees. It is how we pay contractors. It is how we provide foreign aid. It is how we pay tax refunds, veterans' benefits, and Social Security reimbursements. It is how we distribute money to our intelligence agents and to intelligence assets who are embedded in hostile foreign governments. Take control of this system, and one can, quite literally, destroy the United States. To put it mildly, it is a target for our adversaries.

Yet, last week, unvetted, unelected, and unconfirmed individuals hacked into that system using insecure software and hardware.

Did they tamper with the code?

Did they manipulate payment systems to prioritize payments to companies controlled by Mr. Musk?

Did they inadvertently use hardware that had been infiltrated by our allies?

Did they take classified information with them on the way out that could make them a security liability?

As we sit here right now, we don't know the answers to any of those questions. All we have is denials from the hackers.

Mr. Speaker, on what basis should we trust them?

After all, they forced their way into the system with the full consent of someone who lied to his wife and was convicted of 34 counts of fraud for lying to financial and election regulators. As the saying goes: Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me every single time, shame on me.

I would suggest that we should instead trust what this individual said when he was on the campaign trail, when he promised to enact revenge on his political enemies.

Trump and Musk now have information that they could use to identify individual taxpayers who, I don't know, contributed to a charity that they oppose for selective retribution.

If they got control of the stop payment controls, they could now block congressionally mandated payments for healthcare, roads, and bridges; or to Governors or attorneys general who

are currently suing to block their unconstitutional actions in the courts.

With the personal information that they have hacked into, they could go after judges who have forced them to pay hundreds of millions of dollars in penalties after being convicted in jury trials of fraud and defamation, and they could go after companies who compete with one of their many private entities.

As long as those risks remain, we have to assume that this is going to make every single American less likely to trust that they can provide their personal information to the United States Government.

To put it bluntly, what they did last week compromised the full faith and credit of the United States. If the President and Elon Musk were acting under the direction of a hostile foreign government, this is exactly what they would do.

Mr. Speaker, I am not saying that they are. I don't know. What I am saying is that, if their actions serve only to weaken the United States, that is at the benefit of Russia, China, Iran, and all of the other countries that my colleagues across the aisle claim to love less than the United States.

A functioning Congress would provide oversight. A functioning Congress would be subpoenaing witnesses and demanding public testimony. A functioning Congress would be treating this like the five-alarm fire that every American understands that it is.

Yet, here we find ourselves knowing only that the Republican leadership is completely unwilling to fulfill their oath to defend our country against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and unwilling to protect the prerogatives of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that I am wrong, but my fear is they are a lost cause, which brings us to my bill with Congresswoman STEVENS.

I know that there are Republicans in this body who love our country. There are Republicans in this body who I truly love and enjoy their company, and I know that they have told me privately that they are offended and ashamed by what Donald Trump is doing to it. Some of the Republicans have even called it out.

All it takes now is for three of my colleagues across the aisle to stand up to ensure that these last 22 days are an anomaly in our history rather than the beginning of its end.

For any Republicans watching who are, shall we say, democracy curious in this moment, who privately acknowledge that this has gone too far but worry about the political and, worse, personal threats that will surely come if Republicans stand up to Donald Trump, I leave my colleagues with the empathy and the wisdom of Thomas Paine:

These are the times that try men's souls. Many will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country, but he that stands by it now deserves the love and thanks of