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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 3, 2025.

I hereby appoint the Honorable PETE STAUBER 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.

MIGRANTS FLEEING RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. ANSARI) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ANSARI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my outrage and strong opposition to the inhumane treatment of migrants fleeing religious persecution.

Earlier this month, the Trump administration deported roughly 300 men, women, and children seeking refuge in the United States to Panama on U.S. military aircraft, locking them in

hotel rooms without access to basic rights or counsel.

This includes asylum seekers from Iran, China, and other countries known to persecute religious minorities. They have since been deported to detention camps in a remote jungle and are being forced to live in degrading and dangerous conditions with little to no access to the outside world.

Among them is Artemis Ghasemzadeh, an Iranian woman who fled Iran after converting to Christianity, a crime punishable by death under the brutal Islamic regime.

Artemis converted to Christianity in secret through a network of underground churches and online classes in Iran. Last December, she set out for the United States in search of a new life. In a haunting image, she was photographed from inside her detention room in Panama with the words "help us" written on the window in her red lipstick.

Artemis is 1 of 10 Iranian Christians, including 3 children, who are detained in Panama. These people sought safety and refuge in the United States. Instead, they were rounded up, flown thousands of miles away, and imprisoned in detention camps in brutal conditions. They are afraid for their lives as they wait to be sent back to their home countries to face deadly consequences for their human right of religious freedom, what this country was founded on.

The United States should never be responsible for sending people to face persecution, especially those who have risked everything to seek refuge right here. These actions not only violate our moral responsibilities and our shared humanity, but they are in direct conflict with the values upon which our Nation was founded.

I am the proud daughter of immigrants from Iran. My parents came to the United States fleeing the brutal revolution that led to the current re-

gime. This country welcomed them with open arms, allowed them to work hard and succeed, and in just one generation, they have witnessed their daughter make history as the first Iranian-American Democrat ever elected to Congress.

Asylum seekers come to this country to escape violence and persecution. Turning these people away is cruel, fundamentally un-American, and does nothing to fix our broken immigration system. That is why I plan to introduce legislation that would halt expedited removal for individuals fleeing countries noted for persecuting religious minorities. We can have secure borders and also have an immigration system based in empathy and humanity.

Mr. Speaker, I urge this administration to uphold our Nation's legacy as a beacon of hope and a defender of religious freedom, not a facilitator of suffering.

GOLDEN AGE OF AMERICA

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

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow President Trump will deliver his first joint address to Congress of his second term in office.

Less than 2 months into his term, President Trump has already begun the work to fulfill the campaign promises that the American people voted for and again encouraged him to step up to the plate. The American people wanted to see that the dangerous illegal immigrants were removed from our communities, and they wanted to see that we could unleash, once again, the American energy that is under the feet of my constituents in Pennsylvania.

Tomorrow, during his address, I look forward to hearing the President share his vision for continued success and a path forward, a path that builds upon

□ 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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President Trump's successes to strengthen our economy, to make our streets safer, and our Nation healthier.

The American people are crying out for change, and tomorrow night President Trump will detail this change for the entire world to hear. The golden age of America is opening doors for all Americans.

PROTECTING AMERICAN HOMELAND FROM
CHINESE INFLUENCE

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the Chinese Communist Party continues to infiltrate our homeland by purchasing American farmland and property around government installations.

I have heard the concerns from many farmers throughout Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District about the aggressive infiltration of the Chinese Communist Party into American farmland as they outbid American farmers for critical land.

We cannot sit back as our sovereignty is threatened. To push back against the Chinese aggression, I cosponsored the Protecting American Agriculture from Foreign Adversaries Act and the No American Land for Communist China Act.

These commonsense pieces of legislation will allow the U.S. Department of Agriculture to review land purchases by foreign entities and ban China from buying land next to Federal property.

The Chinese Communist Party has tried to undermine not just our values but American industries for decades. It is time that we give the American people peace of mind and protect our American homeland from Chinese influence.

I am proud to support these efforts to protect our national security and our food security, and I look forward to working with President Trump on making these bills the law of this great land.

HONORING THE MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS OF
THE SHADY GROVE RURITAN CLUB

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the members and volunteers of the Shady Grove Ruritan Club in Franklin County, Pennsylvania. These are individuals who have participated in Hurricane Helene relief efforts for the devastated rural areas of North Carolina.

Delivering supplies ranging from nonperishable food and water to clothes and basic necessities, the Shady Grove Ruritan Club has made 12 deliveries of aid since October of 2024 worth over \$300,000.

In collaboration with other North Carolina Ruritan Clubs, the Shady Grove club even served a traditional Christmas dinner for the Newland, North Carolina, community and delivered wrapped gifts for the children there.

Under the leadership of Shady Grove Ruritan Club Vice President Seth Martin, individuals, families, churches, and businesses have mobilized to give aid, support, and comfort to the victims of Hurricane Helene.

I could not be more proud of everyone involved with the Shady Grove Ruritan Club. Their compassion for their fellow Americans serves as an inspiration for all Americans.

DRAINING THE SWAMP IN ORDER
TO PUT AMERICA FIRST

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

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I want to make it very clear to my constituents in Kentucky what my objectives are over the next 22 months of the 119th Congress.

First of all, President Trump received an overwhelming mandate not just in Kentucky's First Congressional District, but all across Kentucky.

The mandate was to do two major things. First of all, obviously, the mandate involved draining the swamp. That is what President Trump campaigned on; and, secondly, to pass an America First agenda.

With respect to draining the swamp, President Trump nominated disrupters to lead his Cabinet and agencies, people like Kash Patel at the FBI; John Ratcliffe at the CIA; and RFK, Jr., at HHS.

I was proud to support every single nominee, and I am pretty confident that every single nominee will win Senate confirmation, which has never happened before.

With respect to passing an America First agenda, the first step in that was what we voted on last week, a budget reconciliation bill. I was proud to work with our House Oversight and Government Reform Committee as a major committee of jurisdiction on the budget reconciliation bill. We pledged to come up with \$50 billion in savings to go along with the first real effort in the entire 8 years I have been in Congress by this body to actually save money and to cut wasteful, unnecessary expenses which is what the mandate was all about.

This is what President Trump campaigned on not just in Kentucky but all across America. I pledge to continue to work with President Trump.

Next, he has asked us to pass a continuing resolution. It is a shame that Congress is broken. In the entire 8 years I have been here, the Senate has failed to pass any individual appropriations bill, and this is what we have to do to be able to pass the Trump agenda with respect to renewing the Trump tax cuts, with respect to creating and passing legislation to prohibit tax on tips and tax on overtime, and all the new blue-collar, working-class tax cuts that President Trump campaigned on and received a mandate to do.

After the mandate, draining the swamp, and passing the America First agenda, next is to work with DOGE. In the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee we created a DOGE Subcommittee. I asked MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE from Georgia to lead that subcommittee.

The first three hearings of that subcommittee have involved improper payments and looking at the USAID's mishandling of funds. The next hearing will be on defunding NPR and other government-funded media outlets.

This is exactly what President Trump campaigned on. This is exactly what I talked about with my constituents when I ran for reelection last November. We want to look at the spending. I know there are protesters, there are the Indivisible groups funded by George Soros who also funded the Congressional Integrity Project who spent at least \$2 million harassing me over past 2 years with banners and all the TV cameras, the mobile TV units that drove through rural Kentucky trying to intimidate me from the Biden investigation, which, by the way, ended with Joe Biden's last act as President of the United States to pardon his entire family.

I know my friends on the other side of the aisle don't like to think about that, but that is a fact.

All DOGE is wanting to do is look at spending and see if we can cut out unnecessary spending. I think the American taxpayers want that. We continue to pledge to see if we can find wasteful spending and eliminate it altogether.

RECOGNIZING TERRY FORCHT OF THE FORCHT
BANK

Mr. COMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Terry Forcht, Forcht Group of Kentucky chairman and CEO of the Forcht Bank, for an impressive 40 years of service and dedication to communities across the Commonwealth, including in the First Congressional District.

The core banking principles of Forcht Bank are respecting the customer, offering competitive rates, and serving the community. Across Kentucky, with 23 banking centers and three loan production offices, Forcht Bank continues to serve Kentuckians and Bluegrass businesses.

Mr. Forcht's role has allowed for the enhancement and visionary leadership of Forcht Bank to celebrate this 40th anniversary signifying exceptional dedication and service to Kentucky communities.

I consider Terry Forcht a close friend, and I appreciate all that he has done for all the communities in Kentucky and all the charitable organizations. I congratulate him on his outstanding achievement.

□ 1215

ENSURING VETERANS RECEIVE
CARE THEY EARNED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. VASQUEZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of the men and women who have served this Nation and defended our freedoms. They now face unnecessary obstacles in accessing the care and support that they have earned.