

Brett's journey reminds us that the sport can unite us and inspire the next generation to push beyond its limits. As Team USA takes the ice in March in the Paralympics, we will be cheering on loudly for Brett Bolton and his teammates as part of Team USA.

Go USA!

RECOGNIZING A MANATEE RESCUE IN
MELBOURNE BEACH

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the dedicated effort of first responders and wildlife experts who rescued a trapped manatee from a storm drain in Melbourne Beach.

Local police officers, firefighters, and wildlife officials quickly responded to the call. Working carefully and patiently, they assessed the situation, monitored the animal's condition, and coordinated a safe extraction.

This rescue highlights something special about our coastline communities. Floridians understand that protecting wildlife is part of protecting our way of life. Our waterways are home to remarkable species, and safeguarding them requires vigilance and teamwork.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the Melbourne Beach Police Department, local fire crews, and wildlife partners for their swift action. Their professionalism protected one of Florida's most cherished marine animals.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 24 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

Reverend Jonathan Slavinkas, St. Bernard's Church of Our Lady of Providence Parish, Worcester, Massachusetts, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, Lord of all nations, we ask Your blessing upon this assembly and upon the people they serve. In a time marked by division, anxiety, and uncertainty, grant these leaders wisdom to seek the common good, courage to choose what is right over what is easy, and the humility to listen with open hearts.

Where there is anger, sow patience. Where there is mistrust, build understanding. Where there is fear, awaken hope. Remind us that beyond every difference, we remain one people, entrusted with the care of this Nation and of one another.

Bless those who defend our freedoms, those who serve in our communities,

and those who struggle quietly, wondering if their voices still matter. May this Chamber be guided not only by power, but by conscience, always mindful of the dignity of every human person.

May all who lead do so in a way that would make the people back home proud to say that they were heard here. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania 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.

WELCOMING REVEREND
JONATHAN SLAVINSKAS

The SPEAKER. Without objection, Mr. MCGOVERN of Massachusetts is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, this morning I am honored to have my dear friend, Father Jonathan Slavinkas, pastor of St. Bernard's Church of Our Lady of Providence Parish in my hometown of Worcester, Massachusetts, give today's opening prayer.

Father Jonathan, as he is known by his parishioners, is a true force of good in the Lincoln Street area. He is always a welcoming and friendly face who is known for buying pizza for the neighborhood kids or opening up the gym for pickup basketball games.

He is also the chaplain for both the Worcester Police Department and the Worcester Fire Department. He cares deeply about our immigrant community.

Day in and day out, Father Jonathan lives out his Catholic faith in big and small ways. He shows up for his community and is always there for his people, especially when they are going through rough times.

Father Jonathan has long been a cherished friend of the entire McGovern family, especially of my daughter, Molly, who sadly passed away last April. Lisa and I will forever be grateful to him.

Mr. Speaker, with a friendly smile and a touch of humor, Father Jonathan goes out of his way to make those around him welcome both in the church and in the neighborhood. We should all be inspired by his remarkable example.

CELEBRATING STUDENTS AT
PENN STATE UNIVERSITY

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate an incredible group of students at Penn State University who have helped raise money for pediatric cancer patients.

THON is a year-long fundraising effort that culminates in a 46-hour dance marathon. THON is the largest student-run philanthropy event in the world and will help to financially support almost 5,000 families with children who are battling cancer.

This weekend, students, staff, and volunteers filled the Bryce Jordan Center to raise awareness and money for the Four Diamonds Foundation. Over 700 THON participants danced for 46 hours straight.

THON was first originated in 1973 by Bill Lear as a proposed dance marathon to raise money for a good cause. Mr. Speaker, 78 students participated, and over \$2,000 was raised. Over 40 years later, more than \$236 million has been donated, and not a single Four Diamonds family has received a medical bill. This year, THON raised over \$18 million.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the legacy that THON has established, and I am proud of the children and families who fight every day against pediatric cancer.

THANKING THE PEOPLE OF
DENMARK AND GREENLAND

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank the people of Denmark and Greenland for their quick professional evacuation last Saturday of a U.S. submariner on board the USS *Delaware* 7 miles off Greenland's coast. The submariner was experiencing an acute medical problem that required immediate hospital care.

Mr. Speaker, I had the honor of representing the Connecticut submarine base where the USS *Delaware* and its crew are homeported. In the north Atlantic, our subs have conducted joint NATO patrols in the waters off Greenland, Iceland, and the U.K. for many decades which benefits U.S. Homeland Security. It is a team effort and Denmark's response to a U.S. sailor in distress is a powerful example of how the NATO alliance is not just based on words but rather meaningful deeds.

Mr. Speaker, for some reason, there has been deafening silence from our Commander in Chief and Navy leadership to publicly thank Denmark for its act of friendship on Saturday.

As the Representative of the USS *Delaware's* home port and ranking member of the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, I will publicly tell the people of that nation that

your caring response to one of our sea servicemembers in distress is deeply appreciated and will be long remembered.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ONDER). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1600

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WITTMAN) at 4 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

ADVANCED CAPABILITIES FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE OPERATIONS ACT

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 390) to utilize the Advanced Capabilities for Emergency Response to Operations project of NASA to improve aerial responses to wildfires, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 390

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 "Advanced Capabilities for Emergency Response Operations Act" or the "ACERO Act".

SEC. 2. ADVANCED CAPABILITIES FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE OPERATIONS.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—The Administrator shall leverage NASA-developed tools and technologies to conduct research and development activities under the Advanced Capabilities for Emergency Response Operations (ACERO) project, or appropriate successor project or projects, to improve aerial responses to wildfires.

(b) *GOALS.*—The research and development activities conducted under subsection (a) may include the following:

(1) *Advanced aircraft technologies and airspace management efforts to assist in the management, deconfliction, and coordination of aerial assets during wildfire response efforts.*

(2) *Information sharing and real-time data exchange for wildfire response teams.*

(3) *Development of an interoperable platform to provide situational awareness of aerial assets during wildfire response.*

(4) *Establishment of a multi-agency concept of operations, which may involve Federal, State, and local government agencies, to enable coordination of aerial activities for wildfire response.*

(c) *COLLABORATION.*—In carrying out this section, the Administrator—

(1) *may coordinate and collaborate with other Federal, State, and local government agencies, regional organizations, and commercial partners and academic institutions involved in wildfire management; and*

(2) *shall, to the maximum extent practicable, consult with the heads of other Federal departments and agencies to avoid duplication of activities.*

(d) *PROHIBITION.*—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—Except as provided in this subsection, the Administrator may not procure an unmanned aircraft system to conduct activities described in this section if such unmanned aircraft system is manufactured or assembled by a covered foreign entity.

(2) *EXEMPTION.*—The Administrator may waive the prohibition under paragraph (1) on a case-by-case basis if the Administrator—

(A) *determines that the procurement of an unmanned aircraft system is—*

(i) *in the national interest of the United States; and*

(ii) *necessary for the sole purpose of improving aerial responses to wildfires; and*

(B) *notifies the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate not later than 30 days after a determination in the affirmative under subparagraph (A).*

(e) *ANNUAL REPORTS.*—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and annually thereafter until December 31, 2030, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Science, Space and Technology of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report describing the activities, including results, carried out pursuant to this section. Each such report, at minimum, shall contain the following:

(1) *A description of any research and development activities.*

(2) *A description of the Administrator's activities pursuant to subsection (c).*

(3) *An identification of any topics related to improvement of aerial responses to wildfires that could benefit from further research.*

(4) *A description of any continuing efforts under this section.*

(5) *Any other information determined appropriate by the Administrator.*

(f) *DEFINITIONS.*—In this section:

(1) *ADMINISTRATOR.*—The term "Administrator" means the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

(2) *COVERED FOREIGN ENTITY.*—The term "covered foreign entity" has the meaning given such term in section 1822 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024 (Public Law 118-31).

(3) *NASA.*—The term "NASA" means the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

(4) *UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM.*—The term "unmanned aircraft system" has the meaning given such term in section 44801 of title 49, United States Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SUBRAMANYAM) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 390, the bill that is now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 390, the ACERO Act, sponsored by Representatives FONG and MCCLELLAN. This important, bipartisan legislation will enhance our ability to respond to wildfires and mitigate the destruction that they cause.

Each year, wildfires burn millions of acres, threatening lives, destroying homes, and causing billions of dollars in damage. Federal agencies are increasingly turning to advanced technologies to improve wildfire detection, response, and suppression efforts.

Aerial capabilities are critical tools in combating wildfires, enabling crews to monitor fire behavior and spread, conduct suppression activities, and support ground operations. As unmanned aircraft systems continue to mature, they present new opportunities to strengthen aerial operations. Drones can map fire perimeters, assist with suppression efforts, enhance communications across large or remote areas, and even deliver equipment. In the future, some missions currently carried out by piloted helicopters may be performed by unmanned aircraft, which reduces risk to human life.

At the same time, aerial wildfire operations face significant challenges. Heavy smoke can severely limit visibility, grounding aircraft and disrupting response efforts. Rapidly changing fire behavior can complicate navigation and real-time coordination among multiple aircraft operating simultaneously. These airspace management challenges can hinder operations at the very moment decisive action is required.

NASA's Advanced Capabilities for Emergency Response Operations, or ACERO, project seeks to improve airspace management and coordination during emergency response activities. Building on prior NASA research, ACERO aims to enhance information sharing, communications, and airspace coordination while developing interoperable tools to improve situational awareness. More timely and accurate information can support safer, more effective decisionmaking and better coordination among Federal, State, and local agencies during wildfire events.

This legislation directs NASA to leverage its unique research and development expertise in aeronautics, airspace systems, and advanced technologies to further the objectives of the ACERO project in support of wildfire response.

This is a practical, forward-looking application of American innovation to protect lives, including those of our first responders. These brave men and women who risk their safety to combat wildfires deserve every available tool to bolster response capabilities and enhance operational safety.

I thank Representatives FONG and MCCLELLAN for their work to address this pressing need.