

PRAYER

Reverend John Kellogg, Christ Church Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

Gracious God, we give thanks for the goodness of this Nation and for the Representatives who offer themselves in service to lead our country.

Bless, guide, and protect them, along with their families, staffs, and all who serve in this building.

Grant them strength, courage, and resilience as they face the challenges before them, and help them to make wise decisions for the well-being of our people.

Keep this Nation ever under Your care.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House the approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. DAVIDS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas 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.

RECOGNIZING PINE CREEK RAIL TRAIL

(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 recognize the beautiful Pine Creek Rail Trail, which was recently named Pennsylvania's 2026 Trail of the Year by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

This 62-mile trail connects Jersey Shore, Pennsylvania, and Wellsboro, Pennsylvania. Visitors hike through the scenic Pine Creek Gorge, better known as the Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania.

The Pine Creek Rail Trail was first used by the Iroquois nation and then later developed as a railroad in the 19th century. For more than 100 years, this railroad helped move tons of iron, coal, and lumber through the region. In 1989, the railroad ceased operation.

Today, the nationally recognized trail attracts more than 44,000 visitors each year and generates more than \$5 million in local revenue.

Mr. Speaker, the Pine Creek Rail Trail is a shining example of the beautiful landscapes in the Commonwealth, and I thank all the volunteers and offi-

cialists who work tirelessly to upkeep the trail and ensure that visitors can experience the beauty of the region.

MAKING OUR SKIES SAFER

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

Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the bipartisan ALERT Act.

Last year, 67 lives were lost in a tragic midair collision of a flight from my home State of Kansas to Washington, D.C.

Those 67 people were parents, children, and friends. Their families' lives changed in an instant. In the weeks that followed, I met with those families. I listened and made a commitment to turn their grief into action.

This bipartisan bill reflects that work. It takes commonsense steps to make our skies safer, modernizing collision avoidance technology, strengthening training, and closing dangerous communications gaps.

It also acts on the National Transportation Safety Board recommendations, turning lessons learned into real action.

We cannot bring those 67 people back, but we can honor them by preventing this from happening ever again.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote "yes" and, after the passage of this bill, work together on a final, fully thought-out bill that ensures safety measures are efficiently implemented. The families deserve nothing less.

AMERICA LIBERATES NATIONS

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the American military has liberated more countries than any other Nation in history. I have witnessed personally in Sofia, Bulgaria; Seoul, South Korea; Monrovia, Liberia; and Bogota, Colombia, the success of American liberation.

Mr. Speaker, 2026 has seen spectacular achievements with the leadership of President Donald Trump, Secretary of War Pete Hegseth, Chairman of Joint Chiefs Dan Caine, and Secretary of State Marco Rubio.

The dictator of Venezuela has been arrested. Ukraine maintains sovereignty, defeating war criminal Putin; and the mass murderers of Iran are eliminated.

President Trump has unified support in Latin America and strengthened NATO defense spending, and Arab Gulf states stand with America.

As the son of a World War II Flying Tiger, I appreciate those who fought to liberate China, and I have had four sons who have served in the Middle East.

In conclusion, God bless our troops as Trump is reinstating peace through strength, revealing war criminal Putin lies, insulting and mocking Trump, with Putin providing Iran satellite targeting to murder Americans.

OPERATION DEMOCRACY AND FLAGS FOR FREEDOM

(Mr. SUOZZI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SUOZZI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Operation Democracy and their Flags for Freedom program.

In my district, the hamlet of Locust Valley proudly founded Operation Democracy's sister city program in 1947, partnering with the first town, Normandy, France, liberated on D-day.

Now, Oyster Bay-East Norwich and Cold Spring Harbor, also in my district, participate in the Flags for Freedom program, as well.

Operation Democracy was founded in the wake of World War II as a humanitarian effort to rebuild war-torn cities across the globe. Since then, it has connected more than 500 communities with partner communities throughout the world, fostering diplomacy, peace, and mutual understanding.

Their Flags for Freedom program builds powerful bridges between generations. Through American Legion posts, local veterans present American flags to graduating high school seniors.

Nearly 10,000 flags have already been presented as living lessons of service, sacrifice, and citizenship.

I encourage every congressional district across the country to enter into the Flags for Freedom program. It is a simple, nonpartisan tribute to our veterans and our Nation's flag, and it is rooted in both history and gratitude.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 8 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1501

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HAMADEH of Arizona) at 3 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE TONY GONZALES, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable TONY GONZALES, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 14, 2026.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Enclosed is my resignation letter to Texas Governor Greg Abbott, effective April 14, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. EST. It has been my privilege to serve the residents of Texas' 23rd Congressional District.

Sincerely,

TONY GONZALES,
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 14, 2026.

Governor GREG ABBOTT,
Office of the Governor,
Austin, TX.

DEAR GOVERNOR ABBOTT: I am writing to notify you of my retirement as a Member of the United States House of Representatives for the 23rd Congressional District of Texas, effective April 14, 2026, at 11:59 pm EST. It has been my privilege to serve the people of Texas' 23rd congressional district.

Sincerely,

TONY GONZALES,
Member of Congress.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE ERIC SWALWELL, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable ERIC SWALWELL, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 14, 2026.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER JOHNSON: I am deeply sorry to my family, staff, and constituents for mistakes in judgment I've made in my past. I will fight the serious, false allegations made against me, however, I must take responsibility and ownership for the mistakes I did make.

I am aware of efforts to bring an immediate expulsion vote against me and other members. Expelling anyone in Congress without due process, within days of an allegation being made, is wrong. But it's also wrong for my constituents to have me distracted from my duties. Therefore, I plan to resign my seat in Congress effective at 2:00 pm ET on April 14, 2026.

I will work with my staff in the coming days to ensure they are able, in my absence, to serve the needs of the good people of the 14th Congressional District.

Sincerely,

ERIC SWALWELL.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 14, 2026.

Hon. GAVIN NEWSOM,
Governor of California,
Sacramento, CA.

DEAR GOVERNOR NEWSOM: I write to inform you of my resignation as United States Representative for California's 14th Congressional District, effective at 2:00 pm ET on April 14, 2026.

Sincerely,

ERIC SWALWELL.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the resignation of the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL), the whole number of the House is 431.

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 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.

EMERGENCY CONSERVATION PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2025

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1011) to amend the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 to remove barriers to agricultural producers in accessing funds to carry out emergency measures under the emergency conservation program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1011

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 "Emergency Conservation Program Improvement Act of 2025".

SEC. 2. EMERGENCY CONSERVATION PROGRAM.

Section 401 of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2201) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by inserting "AND OTHER EMERGENCY CONSERVATION MEASURES" after "FENCING"; and

(B) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

"(1) IN GENERAL.—With respect to a payment to an agricultural producer under subsection (a) for the repair or replacement of fencing, or for other emergency measures to rehabilitate farmland or to repair or replace a farmland or conservation structure, the Secretary shall give the agricultural producer the option of receiving—

"(A) before carrying out such replacement or rehabilitation, not more than 75 percent of the payment for such replacement or rehabilitation, which shall be based on the fair market value of the replacement or rehabilitation, as determined by the Secretary; and

"(B) before carrying out such repair, not more than 50 percent of the payment for such repair, which shall be based on the fair market value of the repair, as determined by the Secretary.";

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(c) WILDFIRES.—A wildfire that causes damage with respect to which a payment may be made under subsection (a) includes any wildfire that is not caused naturally, including a wildfire that is caused by the Federal Government, if the damage is caused by the spread of the fire due to natural causes."

SEC. 3. IMPROVING THE EMERGENCY FOREST RESTORATION PROGRAM.

Section 407 of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2206) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (f); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (d) the following:

"(e) ADVANCE PAYMENTS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall give an owner of nonindustrial private forest land the option of receiving, before the owner carries out emergency measures under this section, not more than 75 percent of the cost of the emergency measures, as determined by the Secretary based on the fair market value of the cost of the emergency measures using the estimated cost of the applicable practice published in the Field Office Technical Guide of each State by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

"(2) RETURN OF FUNDS.—If the funds provided under paragraph (1) are not expended by the end of the 180-day period beginning on the date on which the owner of nonindustrial private forest land receives those funds, the funds shall be returned within a reasonable timeframe, as determined by the Secretary."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) and the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. TOKUDA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1011, the Emergency Conservation Program Improvement Act, introduced by Representative LETFLOW of Louisiana.

The Emergency Conservation Program, or ECP, and the Emergency Forest Restoration Program, EFRP, are two important cost-share programs available to landowners following a natural disaster.

Under ECP, landowners can receive technical and financial assistance for repairs and restoration of land adversely affected by natural disasters, including floods, hurricanes, wildfires, and droughts. Additionally, EFRP offers financial assistance to nonindustrial private forestland owners for recovery efforts following similar natural disasters.

In recent years, agricultural producers have witnessed firsthand the devastation caused by numerous disasters. The recovery efforts and associated costs have underscored the importance of these programs during times of great need for our Nation's farmers.

Over the past decade, we have seen some of the largest and most destructive wildfires on record, particularly in