



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 112th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 157

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22, 2011

No. 90

House of Representatives

The House met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WEBSTER).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

June 22, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DANIEL WEBSTER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2011, 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 each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:20 a.m.

THREE OF THE TOP PERFORMING MIDDLE GRADES SCHOOLS IN THE COUNTRY

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this week, three middle schools located in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District—Mount Nittany Middle School in State College, Park Forest Middle School in State College, and Titusville Middle School in Titusville—have been named three of the top performing middle grades

schools in the country by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform. I rise today to recognize and congratulate these three schools for this noteworthy achievement.

The National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform is an alliance of more than 70 educators, researchers, and officers of national associations and foundations dedicated to improving schools for young adolescents across the country. Every year, the forum, through their Schools to Watch program, identifies schools across the United States for their high performance.

The forum's members believe that three things are true of high-performing middle grades schools: They are academically excellent; developmentally responsive schools that are sensitive to the unique developmental challenges of early adolescents; and socially equitable, schools that are democratic and fair, providing every student with high-quality teachers, resources, and supports.

Later this week, these three schools will be recognized with 97 other high-performing schools from across the Nation during the forum's annual conference. I am proud to represent these incredible teachers, administrators, and students. These outstanding efforts deserve recognition, and I want to congratulate all of you for this awesome achievement.

PROTECT OUR WORKERS FROM EXPLOITATION AND RETALIATION ACT

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

Ms. CHU. I rise today to announce the introduction of legislation that will finally provide protection to immigrant workers from exploitation, the Protect Our Workers from Exploitation and Retaliation Act, the POWER Act.

Too often, unscrupulous employers threaten or retaliate against workers who complain about illegal working conditions. Today, employers can use a worker's immigration status and threaten them so that they will fear reporting them to the authorities. The abuse of these vulnerable workers undermines working conditions and wages for all U.S. workers.

The POWER Act protects these workers. Under current law, the U visa provides temporary status for immigrants who are victims of crimes, including domestic violence and rape. The POWER Act ensures that this visa protection is also provided to these workers who risk everything by reporting to authorities the employers who break the law by committing serious labor violations.

Today, such workers are silent out of fear, but silence can mean the difference between life and death. Take the case of Mr. Asuncion Valdivia, a farmworker who came from Mexico seeking a better life. One day, during the hot summer months, he picked grapes for 10 hours straight in 105 degree temperatures. Then he fell over, unconscious and ill. Instead of calling an ambulance, Giumarra Vineyards told his son to drive Mr. Valdivia home. On his way home, the father started foaming at the mouth and died of a heat stroke. A son had to witness his father die, a preventable death, at the age of 53.

After hearing about this tragedy, I had to act. For 15 years, the farmworker advocates had petitioned Cal OSHA for minimal health protections for the workers who perished and died working in heat, but they were always ignored. So I carried a bill in the California legislature that required that farmworkers and all outdoor workers have basic protections from the heat: water, shade, and rest periods. It passed and became the first law of its kind in the Nation.

□ 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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