

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. ALLEN 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.

REMOVAL AND APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication from the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 2, 2015.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: I am writing to advise you of my intention to retire from federal service in early 2016. Accordingly, I hereby resign as Chief Administrative Officer of the House effective upon the election of my successor, or as you otherwise direct.

It has been a high honor and distinct privilege to serve you and your colleagues, past and present, since the 1970's; and especially so, to serve alongside the extraordinarily dedicated men and women in the Office of the CAO during the 113th and 114th Congresses.

In order to ensure a seamless transition, I am pleased that Clerk of the House Karen Haas has graciously detailed to my office Mr. Will Plaster, a senior member of her staff, to serve on an interim basis as Deputy Chief Administrative Officer.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate more than words can adequately convey the priceless opportunities afforded me throughout my career to serve this magnificent—and uniquely American—institution we call the people's House.

I congratulate you on your election as Speaker, and wish you all the best in the challenging days ahead.

Sincerely,

ED CASSIDY.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 1 of rule II, Mr. Ed Cassidy, of the State of Connecticut, is removed effective December 31, 2015.

Pursuant to the provisions of section 208(a) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, the Chair appoints William Plaster of the Commonwealth of Virginia to act as and to exercise the duties of Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives, effective December 31, 2015.

The Chair will administer the oath at this time.

Mr. Plaster appeared at the bar of the House and took the oath of office, as follows:

Do you solemnly swear that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which you are about to enter, so help you God.

The SPEAKER. Congratulations.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HALT ON K-1 VISA PROGRAM

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the terrorist attack in San Bernardino, the deadliest attack on U.S. soil since September 11, made it clear that our homeland is vulnerable to terrorists.

The terrorist couple's attack also made it clear that there are serious screening problems associated with the K-1 fiancé(e) visa program. That is exactly how the wife involved in these attacks came to the United States to begin with.

Mr. Speaker, protecting our homeland is my most sacred duty, which is why I want the American people to know that right now, I will be introducing legislation to put a halt on the K-1 visa program until the Congress votes to resume it.

In the meantime, my legislation would require the GAO to review the national security risks associated with this program and to submit findings to the Congress.

This is the right and commonsense thing to do. We must protect our homeland.

PANTHER PRIDE

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

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, the color purple and Panther Pride are alive and well in Texas.

Ridge Point High School has been open for 5 years—5 short years—yet last Saturday, they took us to heights that schools that have been around for 50 years have never achieved. They made the Final 4, the Texas 5A Division 2 State semifinal football playoffs.

Mr. Speaker, the Panthers came up a little short, but fans like me walked out darn proud of our guys. They never quit, and they never will.

I have a warning for teams we play next year: Panthers don't retreat—we reload.

FUNDING TO TEST RAPE KITS

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the House will vote on an omnibus spending bill, and I look forward to supporting that bill because it does so much good for America, moves us forward, and brings us together as a body to move America forward. Included in there is the amendment I have had on

the House floor, and the Senate accepted to add an additional \$4 million to test rape kits.

Mr. Speaker, there is a horrific backlog of rape kits in this country, and the Federal Government has stepped forward. Now we will step forward with \$45 million—last year it was \$41 million—to give to local governments to reduce the backlog. That means we will be able to catch the guilty and stop them before they violate the law again and violate another woman, because rapists are often serial offenders.

I look forward to supporting the omnibus bill, protecting women in America, and finding justice for criminals.

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF FAILED EXCHANGES ACT

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, the only thing 5 years of ObamaCare has shown us has been its multiple and continuous flaws. When this legislation was signed into law, the President freely gave money away to establish State exchanges. However, they forgot one piece of the puzzle: They provided no provisions for recouping funds when the State exchanges failed.

Mr. Speaker, these accounts spent billions of taxpayer dollars and provided zero solutions to protect taxpayers when States decided to stop operating the exchanges. Where is the accountability? This burden cannot be placed on the taxpayer.

Today I introduced the Transparency and Accountability of Failed Exchanges Act to ensure Americans are not on the hook for the billions that were recklessly doled out to the States to establish these State exchanges. By promoting accountability and transparency, my legislation fixes the problems by providing clear steps to recover Federal funds when State exchanges fail, and it requires unused funds to be returned back to the Treasury Department to pay down the national debt.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation that promotes accountability and transparency.

BOOSTING TIMBERING IN THE ALLEGHENY NATIONAL FOREST

(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 once again reinforce the importance of proper management of our Nation's national forests.

Over the past two decades, timber harvests in the Allegheny National Forest have fallen dramatically, following a trend we have seen in national

forests nationwide. This has a domino effect on communities and school districts in and around the forest, because, since 1908, counties in national forests are entitled to 25 percent of the receipts from timber sales under the 1908 Good Neighbor Compact.

These are communities which were built on the lumber industry and natural resources. Many are among the most rural, poorest in Pennsylvania, and the funding from timber sales is critical for schools, roads, and other public services, something these towns and school districts depend on.

Due to this diminished revenue and various challenges forest communities continue to face, we must pass real reform that leads to good management practices in our national forests. As such, I continue to support the Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2015, or H.R. 2647. I believe this legislation is a key to increasing timber harvests in our national forests, which will not only benefit our communities but will create a forest that is healthier and less prone to wildfires and invasive species.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA ACADEMY NOMINEE ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce my nominees for appointment to our Nation's service academies. With the recommendations of my Veterans Council, we have nominated a group of young men and women that are committed to representing the First District and our great Nation.

For the U.S. Naval Academy, we have Trent Foster; we have Kody Rulofson and David Shattuck.

For the U.S. Military Academy, we have Nicholas Katz, Bradley Salyer, and Wyatt Wyckoff.

For the U.S. Air Force Academy, we have Christiana Jackman.

For our Merchant Marine Academy, we have Anna Lewis and Garret Reader.

For the U.S. Naval Academy and the U.S. Air Force Academy, we have Mason Royse.

And for the U.S. Naval Academy and the U.S. Military Academy, we have Rory Sprague.

Congratulations to them all.

We thank the Veterans Council for helping with the interview process and vetting these young people.

We thank the parents for raising them to be the go-getters that they are and for the dedication required to get to this point. And we thank the nominees themselves for the hard work that it takes and the service that they are willing to do and put out and their sacrifice for us.

God bless them all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PALAZZO). 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 on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

STEM CELL THERAPEUTIC AND RESEARCH REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2015

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 2820) to reauthorize the Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Act of 2005, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the Senate amendment is as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Reauthorization Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF THE C.W. BILL YOUNG CELL TRANSPLANTATION PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 379(d)(2)(B) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 274k(d)(2)(B)) is amended—

(1) by striking "remote collection" and inserting "collection"; and

(2) by inserting "including remote collection," after "cord blood units,".

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 379B of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 274m) is amended—

(1) by striking "\$30,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2011 through 2014 and"; and

(2) by inserting "and \$30,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020" before the period at the end.

(c) SECRETARY REVIEW ON STATE OF SCIENCE.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Director of the National Institutes of Health, the Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, and the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, including the Advisory Council on Blood Stem Cell Transplantation established under section 379(a) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 274k(a)), and other stakeholders, where appropriate given relevant expertise, shall conduct a review of the state of the science of using adult stem cells and birthing tissues to develop new types of therapies for patients, for the purpose of considering the potential inclusion of such new types of therapies in the C.W. Bill Young Cell Transplantation Program (established under such section 379) in addition to the continuation of ongoing activities. Not later than June 30, 2019, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives recommendations on the appropriateness of such new types of therapies for inclusion in the C.W. Bill Young Cell Transplantation Program.

SEC. 3. CORD BLOOD INVENTORY.

Section 2 of the Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 274k note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking "one-time";

(2) by striking subsection (c);

(3) by redesignating subsections (d) through

(h) as subsections (c) through (g), respectively;

(4) in subsection (d) (as so redesignated)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking "paragraphs (2) and (3)" and inserting "paragraphs (2), (3), and (4)";

(B) in paragraph (2)(B), by striking "subsection (d)" and inserting "subsection (c)"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(4) CONSIDERATION OF BEST SCIENCE.—The Secretary shall take into consideration the best scientific information available in order to maximize the number of cord blood units available for transplant when entering into contracts under this section, or when extending a period of funding under such a contract under paragraph (2).

"(5) CONSIDERATION OF BANKED UNITS OF CORD BLOOD.—In extending contracts pursuant to paragraph (3), and determining new allocation amounts for the next contract period or contract extension for such cord blood bank, the Secretary shall take into account the number of cord blood units banked in the National Cord Blood Inventory by a cord blood bank during the previous contract period, in addition to consideration of the ability of such cord blood bank to increase the collection and maintenance of additional, genetically diverse cord blood units.";

(5) in subsection (f) (as so redesignated)—

(A) by striking paragraph (4); and

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (5) and (6) as paragraphs (4) and (5), respectively; and

(6) in subsection (g) (as so redesignated)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking "\$23,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2011 through 2014 and"; and

(ii) by inserting "and \$23,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020" before the period at the end; and

(B) by striking paragraph (2).

SEC. 4. DETERMINATION ON THE DEFINITION OF HUMAN ORGAN.

Not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall issue determinations with respect to the inclusion of peripheral blood stem cells and umbilical cord blood in the definition of human organ.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

□ 0915

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2820, the Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Reauthorization Act, introduced by my colleagues, Representative CHRIS SMITH of New Jersey and Representative DORIS MATSUI of California.

This bill is another example of the Energy and Commerce Committee's ongoing effort to work together in a bipartisan manner to strengthen public health and solve problems in our Nation's healthcare system.

H.R. 2820 reauthorizes the National Cord Blood Inventory program and the C.W. Bill Young Cell Transplantation Program through fiscal year 2020,