

Today, many Americans might be surprised to know that in a nation of more than 330 million people, less than 1 percent—let me repeat that again, less than 1 percent—of the Nation serves in all of our military, including our Reserves and National Guard and in the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps VISTA, Teach For America, Senior Corps, City Year, and Corporation for National and Community Service.

□ 1215

The Corporation for National and Community Service has indicated, last year more than 400,000 of your fellow Americans wanted to serve their country, and yet they were turned away because of a lack of financing. Imagine in this day and age, with our budgets coming out, when we know, in fact, from all sources that the volunteerism that is provided more than pays for itself at almost a 4-to-1 clip.

That is why, this Thursday, we are going to drop a bill on national service. It is called ACTION, because that is what this country needs. We find too many Americans who want to serve their nation but are unable to do so, especially those who want to serve in a capacity other than the United States military. So it is up to this Congress to make sure that we provide an alternative to do just that. So we will drop a bill this week and are looking for original cosponsors who will sign on to that bill that says simply this: If you are willing to serve your country in any of those capacities, if you are willing to serve your country, we will help you get a college education. If you have a college education and you have been out looking for a job, and you have been unsuccessful, but you still would like experience and to serve your country, we will pay for that as well. The bottom line: Serve your country, and we will take care of your college debt or help you get to college.

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 18 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MITCHELL) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We ask Your blessing upon the men and women of this, the people's House, as they return from a weekend at

home. Help them, and, indeed, help us all to obey Your law, to do Your will, and to walk in Your way.

We ask Your blessing this day as our President visits holy sites in the Middle East and the various leaders in the region. Grant that Your children of different cultures and faiths might come together in peace and understanding.

May all that is done this day be done for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KILDEE 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.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S FIRST OVERSEAS VISIT

(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, President Donald Trump gave a remarkable speech yesterday during his first overseas visit. Speaking to over 50 representatives from Muslim nations, the President outlined the future for positive relations between the United States and predominantly Muslim nations around the world.

The President's remarks in Saudi Arabia were extraordinary. I was especially grateful to hear his call for unity of all people and all regional faiths—Islam, Christianity, and Judaism—as well as a strong condemnation of Islamic extremism and terrorism.

President Trump remarked: "We pray this special gathering may someday be remembered as the beginning of peace in the Middle East—and maybe, even all over the world. But this future can only be achieved through defeating terrorism and the ideology that drives it." The President also cited 95 percent of victims of terrorism are Muslim.

I appreciate the warm welcome the President received in Saudi Arabia as he promotes peace through strength.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Our sympathy to the family of Navy Captain Ken Clark of Swansea, South Carolina, a Naval Academy graduate of great service.

INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION INTO RUSSIAN MEDDLING IN U.S. ELECTION

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that a special prosecutor has been named to conduct an independent investigation into Russia's meddling in our 2016 election and any connections between the Trump campaign and Russia.

Appointing Robert Mueller is a step in the right direction, but he must be able to operate independently, without interference from the White House, without interference, even, from the Justice Department or any other administration officials.

We must also keep in mind that this particular investigation will be limited in its scope in the sense that it will be looking only at counterintelligence issues and only at potential criminality arising out of the investigation. What it won't do is give us that bigger picture, give the American people the sense of the connection that may have occurred between the campaign of Donald Trump and the Russians.

In order to get to that, in order to restore faith and confidence in our democracy and our national security, we need an independent commission to look at that bigger picture and let Congress deal with the big questions that the American people sent us here to address. That is the direction we must take.

VICTOR ACT

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

Mr. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the promise we made to our veterans and introduce the Veterans Increased Choice for Transplanted Organs and Recovery Act of 2017, the VICTOR Act.

The VICTOR Act will allow veterans who live more than 100 miles from one of the Nation's 14 VA transplant centers to receive care at a local, federally certified facility.

From Florida's Second District, the closest VA facility which performs heart, lung, and liver transplants is in Nashville, Tennessee. A veteran in Ocala would have to travel more than 600 miles to receive a new liver, despite there being seven federally certified centers in Florida.

As a surgeon, I know that timely organ transplants can make the difference between life and death, and yet our veterans sit on waiting lists for organs they may never receive. Government bureaucracy should not hurt our Nation's veterans when they are in desperate need of care. The VICTOR Act will give those who fought for our freedom a fighting chance here at home.