

things we would have to learn to live without. It is easy to take these services for granted, but it is important to remember the people who make it all possible.

Earlier this year, we witnessed the valuable and honorable service these individuals provide when severe thunderstorms and tornadoes tore through Georgia over 3 days. Homes and businesses were destroyed and thousands of citizens were left in the dark. Crews of linemen all across the State joined together and selflessly worked for 2 weeks until every light was back on.

It is our duty not to overlook the workers and services that make our lives easier. I want to take this time and sincerely thank not just linemen in Georgia, but all linemen across the Nation, for powering the life inside our homes.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 51 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Bishop Stephen E. Blaire, Diocese of Stockton, Stockton, California, offered the following prayer:

O God, in this House, many words are spoken just as in our houses of worship.

Grant us, O Lord, the wisdom to speak words that will always be edifying—to build up our Nation as a people.

Let our words not only denounce war, violence, and injustices, but promote all that is necessary for building genuine peace through right relationships.

Let our words not only condemn exploitation, racism, and abuses of wealth, but demonstrate that the cries of the poor and excluded have been heard. Let our words promote building just systems that ensure the common good and protect the inherent dignity of every human life.

Let our words not only lament environmental degradation but promote all that is necessary for respecting the Earth as our common home.

Lord God, grant that our words will always build “one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's pro-

ceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. BROWN of Maryland 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 BISHOP STEPHEN E. BLAIRE

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCNERNEY) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to be joined by a special guest from my district, Bishop Stephen Blaire, who had the privilege of leading us in our opening prayer. Bishop Blaire oversees the Diocese of Stockton, and he was appointed by Pope John Paul II in 1999, becoming the fifth Bishop of Stockton.

Throughout his career, he has been a staunch advocate for workers' rights, commonsense legislation to reduce gun violence, and has promoted and worked towards social justice gains. As a newly appointed bishop, he followed in the footsteps of his predecessor, continuing to address the needs of Spanish-speaking parishioners by bringing more Spanish-speaking priests to the diocese and maintaining the ministry to migrant workers.

I want to leave Members with some words of wisdom from Bishop Blaire that I believe we can all take to heart as we head into the Fourth of July holiday. When he was appointed Bishop of Stockton, he said that his vision was to build a church that was strong in faith but also strong in service to the community. As we head home to celebrate the birth of our Nation, let us remember that, as Members of Congress, our job is to build a government the American people have faith in because of our commitment to serving their needs.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

ACA'S ONGOING COLLAPSE

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

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, every day there are more stories about the

Affordable Care Act's, or ObamaCare's, ongoing collapse.

Insurers have been dropping out of the ACA's markets for 3 years now. It is estimated that two out of every five, or 40 percent, of all counties in the country will have only one insurer on the exchanges, and many markets may soon have none at all.

The House passed compromise legislation to provide the American people, especially those in the individual market, with more flexibility and choice and fewer Washington mandates, all while putting Medicaid, a critical safety net program, on a sustainable path.

Critics of this legislation have responded with hyperbolic, irresponsible rhetoric, and no solutions, other than higher taxes, more spending, and more Washington control.

Some ACA defenders are actually calling for a single-payer system, which would result in unbearably high taxes, even tighter grips from Washington, and unsustainable spending. It would destroy innovation, create scarcity, degrade quality, and drive up costs. Even the liberal California legislator seems to have abandoned the single-payer fantasy this week.

Instead of careening toward single payer, let's keep the promises we made to repeal and replace ObamaCare and meet the expectations of those who sent us here.

DEMOCRACY AND AUTONOMY FOR HONG KONG

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on July 1, 1997, Britain transferred sovereignty over Hong Kong to China. Under a “one country, two systems” arrangement with London, Beijing promised to allow universal suffrage as an ultimate aim, along with other freedoms.

But 20 years later, that promise remains unfulfilled. Last March, a new chief executive was elected, not by the people of Hong Kong, but by a committee whose members have close ties to the Chinese Government. Human rights groups have documented an erosion of press freedom and growing threats to judicial independence. Hong Kong's freedoms are at grave risk.

This Saturday, Chinese President Xi Jinping will visit Hong Kong to mark the 20th anniversary of the handover. Some protesters have already been detained, including Joshua Wong, who I have met, and newly elected legislator, Nathan Law.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members of this Chamber to hold China to its word and speak out in support of democracy and autonomy for Hong Kong.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

(Mr. DESJARLAIS asked and was given permission to address the House