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Senate

The Senate was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Monday, July 17, 2017, at 3 p.m.

House of Representatives

FRIDAY, JULY 14, 2017

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

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 14, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MICHAEL K. SIMPSON to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

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

We commend to You the Members of Congress, the President, his Cabinet, and all who struggle to lead Your people. May they acknowledge Your sovereignty over all events and times.

Renew America in confident faith and deepen our commitment to seek peace—help us to work together when confronting those whom we find it difficult to trust, but with whom we must try to forge a common future of security and prosperity.

In all, inspire the Members of this people's House with Your spirit, that all might seek to find first areas of agreement where possible, and openness to honest exchange where it is not.

May all that is done within the people's House be 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 Illinois (Mr. BOST) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BOST 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to advocate for the victims of human trafficking and for the law enforcement and organizations who are on the front lines combating this growing problem. Human trafficking is a growing problem in Illinois where we rank ninth in the Nation in reported trafficking cases.

Cases are on the rise nationwide. As a father of three and grandfather of 11, I am angry. We must wipe out this evil before it does any more harm.

I am proud that Republicans and Democrats came together to pass three antitrafficking bills this week.

Our work is far from over, but these bills are vitally important to help protect American families.

RECOGNIZING RICHARD DEWITT SMITH

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to recognize Richard DeWitt Smith, a native of my home State of North Carolina and a graduate of our alma mater, North Carolina Central University.

Tomorrow night, Richard will be honored by the NCCU Alumni Association with the prestigious Alumni Founder's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Richard is most deserving of this great honor. Since graduating in 1981, Richard has been a dedicated alumnus to the university, always exemplifying our motto of Truth and Service.

□ 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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Richard continues to serve NCCU and its alumni community in numerous capacities at the local, State, and national levels. He gives of his time, talent, and resources to help students from across the country succeed in obtaining a quality education from Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Richard Smith has been married to Jacqueline Beatty Smith for 28 years. They met 40 years ago as NCCU students.

Mr. Speaker, time does not permit me to fully describe Richard's many other contributions; but suffice it to say that Richard Smith is most deserving of this high honor—the NCCU Alumni Association 2017 Alumni Founder's Lifetime Achievement Award.

I am proud of Richard Smith, and I thank him for his extraordinary work. I ask my colleagues to join me today in congratulating this great American hero.

HEALTHCARE TOWNHALLS

(Ms. ADAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, 118,000—the number of people in my district alone who will lose healthcare if TrumpCare passes.

250—the number of people who joined me for a healthcare townhall on Monday in Charlotte.

Zero—the number of public hearings the Senate has held on TrumpCare.

Despite the potential for 22 million people who will lose their healthcare if TrumpCare passes, Senator McCONNELL hasn't asked to hear from any of them.

On Monday, I held a townhall where my constituents shared their stories and asked that I share them with you.

Katie Mpelkas, a mother of a 3-year-old with autism, relies on Medicaid for her son's healthcare. She is terrified at the thought that without Medicaid coverage her son won't get the care he needs.

Adrienne Gonzalez's son, diagnosed with autism at age 2, has been receiving care paid for by Medicaid since he was 11 months old.

Sadly, their stories aren't unique. Thirty-nine percent of children are on Medicaid for the care they need, and TrumpCare cuts the program by 35 percent by 2036.

Our constituents are begging for help. It is our responsibility to fight for them.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOST). Pursuant to House Resolution 440 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2810.

Will the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SIMPSON) kindly take the chair.

□ 0906

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2018) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, with Mr. SIMPSON (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole House rose on Thursday, July 13, 2017, a second set of amendments en bloc, offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. THORNBERRY) had been disposed of.

It is now in order to consider amendment No. 16 printed in House Report 115-217.

AMENDMENT NO. 17 OFFERED BY MR. BYRNE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 17 printed in House Report 115-217.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Chairman, I rise as the designee of the gentlewoman from Florida, and I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of title XXXV add the following:

SEC. . APPLICATION OF LAW.

Section 4301 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) For purposes of any Federal law except the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.), any vessel, including a foreign vessel, being repaired or dismantled is deemed to be a recreational vessel, as defined under section 2101(25), during such repair or dismantling, if that vessel—

“(1) shares elements of design and construction of traditional recreational vessels (as so defined); and

“(2) when operating is not normally engaged in a military, commercial, or traditionally commercial undertaking.”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 440, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Chairman, this straightforward and bipartisan amendment would provide important clarity for the recreational marine industry as it relates to workers' compensation coverage.

For decades, Federal law stated that individuals who build, dismantle, or repair recreational vessels less than 65 feet could be covered under State workers' compensation law instead of the Federal Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act.

Under the Democrat-controlled Congress in 2009, the law was simplified by eliminating the size limitation, which

allowed more employers to purchase State workers' compensation.

Unfortunately, in 2011, the Department of Labor issued a burdensome and confusing rule creating a new definition of recreational vessel. This change contradicted legislation passed by the Congress in 2009, and effectively denied recreational vessel repair workers access to more affordable State workers' compensation insurance.

This regulatory confusion and uncertainty is reducing access to affordable workers' compensation policies and also hurting the overall recreational repair industry.

Our bipartisan amendment increases strong protections to ensure that no vessel used for commercial or military purposes is inappropriately excepted from the Federal requirements.

This amendment would provide regulatory relief for small businesses, including those in coastal Alabama, while also ensuring the maritime workers receive the protections they need.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Connecticut is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment that is offered by my good friend from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE).

I would just note that this is an amendment that has been around the last couple Congresses, and the intent clearly is to carve out a larger exemption from the longshoremen's act which is a law that goes back to 1927.

I would note that if that is the intent, the language of this amendment actually is kind of like legislating with a chainsaw instead of a scalpel because by carving out a larger exemption for recreational vessels above or beyond 55 feet long, basically there is a whole series of Coast Guard rules and regulations that have been enforced by the Coast Guard for many years that this amendment, unfortunately, is going to sweep up and undermine, including the rules related to alcohol on board vessels, waste management, Coast Guard inspection categories, vessel sales to non-U.S. citizens, tonnage taxes, and safety management systems.

The Coast Guard is out there every single day making sure that these rules which really protect our ports and make sure that particularly foreign, large, super yachts are paying their fair share, in terms of the costs of environmental protection, and boating safety is enforced. That is, again, what this amendment will undermine.

That is why last year the Coast Guard issued a statement pointing out the fact that because of the broad sweep of the language of this amendment, it is really undermining some key missions that the Coast Guard has been doing for decades for the American people.

So I would note that, at the outset, obviously there is, I think, another