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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 23, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DAVID KUSTOFF to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2017, 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. All time shall be equally allocated between the parties, and in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS IN UNIVERSITIES

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Angie described Amherst College as her dream school. A vibrant American teenager, she couldn't wait to start her new life at the perfect college.

Like all universities, Amherst painted itself in a positive light. It had a good reputation. But Angie had no way of knowing the dark reality hiding behind that facade.

Her initial memories of her freshman year play along a familiar and happy college narrative. Her life was full of new friends, new experiences, and new challenges. But on May 25, everything changed. That happy narrative came to a screeching halt.

An acquaintance of hers invited her over to watch a movie in his campus dorm room. Tired from a long day of classes, Angie finally drifted off to sleep. The next thing she knew, she woke up to find this individual on top of her sexually assaulting her.

The morning after the attack, Angie felt that she was in a daze, and she acted like she was in a daze. The illusion of college life filled with smiling faces and good times had been shattered.

Mr. Speaker, according to the Department of Justice, one in five women are sexually assaulted during college in the United States—one in five. Of those, less than 25 percent report the sexual assault.

So Angie, fearing that she would be ignored, doubted, and dismissed, carried on in hopeless silence. In the 4 months following her rape, she fell deeper and deeper into depression.

Finally, when the burden became too heavy to bear, she summoned all her remaining strength and courage and went to the campus counselor. But she was shocked at the counselor's response.

The counseling center didn't believe she was sexually assaulted. The counseling center said that she should forgive the rapist. They told her there is nothing they could do or would do. There was no point in pressing charges; her rapist was close to graduating anyway.

But she could not forget what had happened to her. She couldn't deal with the sexual assault. Mr. Speaker, a rape victim cannot just forget what has happened to them.

Mr. Speaker, I was a judge for 22 years and a prosecutor for 8 in Texas. I

saw a lot of sexual assault victims, a lot of them. They deal with what happened to them every day, and they feel like the rapist tried to steal the soul of the victim.

A rape victim once told me: "Judge, rape is a fate worse than death." And to a lot of victims, that is exactly the way they feel. It is worse than being murdered.

These sexual assault victims need support, understanding, and care to become survivors. They first need somebody who will listen to them.

Amherst utterly failed Angie, and that failure pushed her deeper and deeper into despair. When she voiced that she had been having suicidal thoughts, university police forcibly escorted her to the emergency room and left her there.

The doctor who examined her had no training on how to deal with traumatized rape victims. Utterly lacking in any kind of compassion for what had happened to her, the doctor told her that she was being irrational and that her story just didn't make any sense to the doctor. He didn't believe a school like Amherst would allow her to be raped, and he thought she just must be crazy. He ordered that she be admitted into a psychiatric ward and washed his hands of the entire situation.

For 5 days, Mr. Speaker, Angie sat shaking in a sterile room behind locked doors. She becomes the prisoner for the sexual assault that happened to her.

A victim's pain and suffering should never be increased because the hospital doesn't have staff trained to provide victim services for sexual assault victims. So to ensure this doesn't happen to more victims like Angie, I have introduced legislation, along with the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY), my good friend, that would require a hospital to provide access to a staffer who is properly trained to provide care sensitive to the

□ 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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