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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MARSHALL).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
December 12, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ROGER W. MARSHALL 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 11:50 a.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA FOOTBALL

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

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of our football teams back home. These are the Ramblers from Erie Cathedral Prep. This is an outstanding football team.

Oftentimes, when we come here, we talk about things and we tend to go around what is going on in our district

and things that we are proud of. I think in things like these types of championships that are won, while it happened last weekend, it is something that every single player will remember for the rest of his life, their parents will remember it, and the members of the community will remember it. So to be able to stand here today to talk about the Ramblers is really an opportunity for me and truly an honor.

This is the second straight Pennsylvania Quad A State Championship. Cathedral Prep beat Imhotep Charter last week by a score of 38–28. This year's championship makes the Ramblers back-to-back Pennsylvania State champions, and it is their fourth State football title overall. Led by Coach Mike Mischler, the Ramblers have now gone 42–2, appearing in the finals each year and racking up 28 consecutive wins over the last three seasons.

Now, achieving back-to-back State titles sets these Ramblers apart even in the storied history of western Pennsylvania high school football, and they deserve every bit of adulation that they have received. They are a great source of pride for not only the city of Erie, but all of northwestern Pennsylvania.

It is also worth mentioning that the Wilmington High School Greyhounds in Lawrence County gave it their all in a loss last week in Pennsylvania's PIAA Class 2A State title game at Hersheypark Stadium.

Now, this was the Greyhounds' third trip to the title game under legendary Coach Terry Verrelli, who announced his retirement after 40 years on the job right after the game. In those 40 years, Coach Verrelli amassed 314 wins, making him only the 15th high school football coach in Pennsylvania's esteemed football history to reach the 300-win plateau. More valuable than any of his victories on the field are the countless victories he helped his young players achieve in their lives off the field.

I think that sometimes we miss the really strong point about competition at the scholastic level or any level. I would tell you for both these teams, this Erie Prep team, for a lot of these young men, this mission started when they were playing little midget football or pee wee football, and it continued all through their lives. The same thing—their parents supporting them as they go along and their communities supporting them as they go along. These guys are always one moment, one thought, and one memory away from being right back on this field in Hershey, Pennsylvania, and winning the State title.

The same with the Greyhounds. When you talk about high school football history, people talk about Texas and they talk about Pennsylvania. But I got to tell you, the Friday Night Lights story started in Pennsylvania, so with all due respect to my friends from Texas, the Keystone State was the first when it came to Friday Night Lights and the great pride it brought to these communities.

The 2017 teams at Cathedral Prep and Wilmington High School in Pennsylvania's Third District, along with the championship-winning Pine-Richland Rams—which is just outside the Third District, and they won the State championship—again, they add to this really storied history of football in western Pennsylvania. More importantly, they add to the local lore and pride that strengthen communities like Erie and New Wilmington, Pennsylvania.

The hard work, perseverance, and hometown pride that allowed each of these teams to reach the championship is a reflection on the communities, the families, and the people who live in these towns.

So, again, I say to the Cathedral Prep Ramblers, to Wilmington High, and to the Pine-Richland Rams: On outstanding, history-making seasons, congratulations. Great job, guys.

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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