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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. WEBER of Texas).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC.

April 18, 2018.

I hereby appoint the Honorable RANDY K. WEBER, Sr., 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 8, 2018, 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.

CUBA'S SCAM TRANSITION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, today, many around the world might herald what they call a transition of power in my native homeland of Cuba, but that couldn't be further from the truth.

This sham transition is more smoke and mirrors—another play out of the Castro playbook. The reality is that Raul Castro will continue to maintain

his grip on power. The reality is that the Cuban people will be no closer to freedom today than they were yesterday—no closer to democracy today than they were yesterday.

The reality is that the murderous regime in Cuba will continue to oppress and will continue to abuse the people of Cuba.

We are not fooled, Mr. Speaker, and U.S. law dictates that we do not recognize this so-called transition government or any successor government until certain conditions are met, conditions such as: all political prisoners be released; until free, fair, and transparent elections monitored by international observers are held; and until the Cuban people's human rights are respected.

Until then, and only then, Mr. Speaker, we must continue to oppose this farce orchestrated by Castro and, instead, we must stand with the people of Cuba in their fight for freedom, democracy, and human rights.

CHANGES TO SNAP IN THE NEW FARM BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) for 5 minutes.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, a major responsibility of the farm bill is intended to address the growing issue of food insecurity in America. As a matter of fact, roughly one out of every six individuals in Dallas County will go to sleep each night not knowing where their next meal will come from.

Hunger is not just a major issue within any one district, but it is one that affects Americans in virtually every district in every part of the country. It is an important issue. It is one on which Congress needs to focus.

Sadly, the farm bill introduced last week will hurt far more Americans

than it will help. The proposed changes for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program within the farm bill are downright draconian. SNAP was intended to help the poor so they can find meaningful work on a full stomach. The new proposed work requirements would starve individuals who are unable to find sustainable employment due to economic, medical, or family-related issues.

Organizations such as Feeding America and the Food Research & Action Center have come out opposing these changes because they would lead to an increase in hungry Americans and is counterproductive to solving America's hunger problem. It is much harder to climb out of poverty and onto a path of independence when you must devote much of your energy in wondering where your next meal may come from.

Instead of throwing people off SNAP, Congress should be focused on giving greater access to nutritional meals so that these individuals are able to go on living their lives and trying to find employment that will get them out of poverty and into the middle class.

SNAP was intended to assist the working poor to ensure they are able to put food on the table for their children. These changes would throw many children off the program and subsequently deny access for them to get food from school breakfast and lunch programs. The cuts in SNAP benefits for these students would force them to face the challenges of hunger in addition to the rigors of school.

Countless studies show that students retain more information when their focus is on school in front of them and not on the fear that they will go to bed hungry.

Making certain that the next generation of Americans have every opportunity to grow up with a healthy diet and learn on a full stomach is not just an investment in the fight against hunger; it is also an investment in this country's future.

□ 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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