



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 164

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 2018

No. 75

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 9, 2018.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JAMES COMER 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.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of every family struggling to pay rent, every student facing homelessness, and every city that is seeing historic communities displaced.

We are facing an affordable housing crisis, and we cannot ignore this epidemic. Over 38 million families struggle to pay rent and put food on the table every day because they spend more than a third of their income on

housing. Now, in my district, in the East Bay in northern California, the average renter in Oakland would be forced to spend a staggering—mind you, staggering—70 percent of their income on housing if they were to move today. That is 70 percent. Clearly, the affordable housing crisis is off the scale in my district.

In April, I sent an email to my constituents asking for their stories and suggestions on how to address this very important issue. Today I would like to share just a few of those stories which really touched my heart.

One woman shared how, being unable to afford a place to live, she had to put herself in harm's way to have shelter. She said: I stayed in an unsafe and shared housing situation much longer than I would have had I been able to find an affordable place to move. I have found a place now but no longer have any disposable income. I worry that an unexpected event could lead to being unhoused. I have many friends who are single mothers with children who are sleeping in cars or bouncing from couch to couch.

The housing crisis has also taken a devastating toll on seniors in my district. One woman wrote: Many of my longtime friends and acquaintances have been forced to move out of the State. My husband and I have lived in an old place for a long time, and the rent is relatively low; but the building may be sold, and I don't know what we would do. I am a cancer survivor and fear moving out of the State would make me lose my health insurance. I would also have a hard time finding a new job at 62. We have applied at numerous senior housing apartments, but all have long waiting lists.

These stories also highlighted the impact of the housing crisis on public sector workers and students in our community.

One gentleman wrote: As a teacher, I cannot afford to stay in Oakland. Home

ownership is out of the question. Even as a dedicated public servant, I can't afford to work in urban schools in the Bay area.

A former student wrote me: I had to withdraw from classes at UC Berkeley so I could find stable housing and enough income to afford my monthly rent.

Mr. Speaker, our community, our country, cannot function without nurses, teachers, or young people living in decent affordable housing. We need to solve this crisis before it is too late. These stories represent just a small number of the responses I received. I heard from many constituents who are delaying having children and passing up opportunities to open a business or switch careers because they cannot afford to move or to live where they want to live.

I heard from some residents who live in cars, on couches, or on the streets because the cost of rent has soared. Now I see, sadly, homeless camps with sofas, chairs, and tables. So many people have been evicted with nowhere to go.

Believe you me, there are many more in my district and across America who are homeless right now: seniors, veterans, single moms raising children. They have nowhere to sleep at night. We must do better so that no one is forced to live on the streets. We must do better to ensure that no child is homeless. And we must do better to ensure that no senior has to choose between food and rent. We must do better because there is no option. The affordable housing crisis is tearing apart families and communities. This is not a partisan issue; it is a human one.

That is why I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will cosponsor my affordable housing resolution which I introduced yesterday, H. Con. Res. 120, and affirm that all people deserve access to basic living standards. We need to begin this debate, and it needs

☐ 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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to be bipartisan. People deserve to hear that from their representatives.

And I hope that these stories which I shared will inspire all of my colleagues to ask their constituents about this crisis and convince them to join me in bolstering Federal resources for affordable housing. We can't delay any longer.

Mr. Speaker, as a person of faith, there is no way that I can stand by and watch so many people living on the streets without shelter, without food. They deserve a chance at the American Dream, also.

HONORING MARTIN TWENHAFEL

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an Illinois hero who passed away this last week.

Martin Twenhafel of Gorham, Illinois, passed at the age of 92. He joins his wife, Katherine, who passed in March. Martin was a U.S. Army veteran and served in Europe during World War II. He was a life member of the American Legion Paul Stout Post 127 and VFW Post 7190 in Murphysboro for over 70 years.

Martin, a farmer, was a lifelong resident of southern Illinois, where he farmed corn, soybeans, and wheat with his sons on the Twenhafel Farms. He was so moved by his time in the war that he wrote and published a book titled "Far from the Farm" to save and share those experiences with his grandchildren and children.

Martin, it is with a heavy heart that we thank you for your service to southern Illinois and our Nation.

TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during Teacher Appreciation Week to honor America's teachers.

I still know the names of my first nine teachers at the Houghton-Kearney Elementary School in Fresno County because they all made a difference in my life: Ms. Waiye, Ms. Seely, Ms. Clark, Ms. Piper, Ms. Collins, Mr. Garfield, Mr. Weens, Ms. Collins again, Mr. Reed, and Mr. Jones, our principal.

Like so many teachers across our country, these educators dedicated their careers to helping generations of students learn and grow. Teachers today provide us with the tools we need to achieve our goals and to be successful because they understand dedicating their lives to this profession educates the future of America, our Nation. It creates the foundation that lies ahead that ultimately creates the opportunities that we as Americans pursue.

So I would like to take this opportunity to thank the teachers in the San Joaquin Valley and across the Nation, throughout the United States, for all

that they do. Those first nine teachers who taught me, they saw something in me and in thousands of students whom they have taught. You know what: they made a difference. They made a difference in thousands of lives, as teachers across the country do every day. So we should—it is fitting and appropriate—honor the teachers of our Nation.

MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Military Appreciation Month. This is a time that we dedicate throughout the month of May honoring and celebrating those who have served our Nation, sacrificed; those of our military servicemembers, their families, both past and present, because families are a key part of those who have served our Nation. Their courage and their sacrifice, therefore, should never, ever be forgotten.

As a nation, on Memorial Day, later this month, we will honor and remember the men and women who have given their lives to serve our great Nation. Every year I join in the Memorial Day ceremonies across California's San Joaquin Valley. This year I will participate in the Memorial Day ceremony at the San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery in Santa Nella. Hundreds will gather there with us. In Fresno, I will be speaking both at the Veterans Liberty Cemetery and the Avenue of Flags at Memorial Gardens.

But I believe most Members of Congress weekly—I certainly do—meet with veterans. We meet to listen and to hear their concerns, as well as men and women serving in Active Duty. Last week, when I was in the district, I visited the Veterans Administration clinic in the city of Merced to listen to veterans getting their healthcare, to their concerns, to their needs, to ensure that they get the care that they deserve.

And just yesterday, I spoke with a group of Valley veterans visiting Washington, D.C., through the Central Valley Honor Flight. We have these Honor Flights all across the country. It is the 16th Honor Flight in 7 years from the San Joaquin Valley. Twenty-two of them were World War II veterans, and they also served in Korea and in Vietnam.

It is appropriate to say "thank you" to them and to those men and women we see across the country in uniform. I always remember to say "thank you."

As President John F. Kennedy once said: "As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words but to live by them."

With these words in mind, I call on my colleagues and my fellow Americans to come together. America wants us to come together, not only during this month but throughout the year, and thank those servicemen and -women, the veterans, and their families; but also to do more than just utter words of gratitude, because we can do better. We must, and we should, work to ensure that our servicemem-

bers, veterans, and military families receive the resources, the justice, and the benefits that they have earned.

These are our true American heroes.

LIMIT MUELLER INVESTIGATION

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

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I am sending a joint letter to Attorney General Jeff Sessions asking him to limit the Mueller investigation in two respects. The letter to Attorney General Jeff Sessions states:

We, the undersigned, urge you to, one, limit Special Counsel Mueller's investigation to, A, alleged Russian interference with the 2016 Presidential election, herein referred to as "Russian interference," and, B, alleged collusion between the Trump campaign and Russians with respect to the alleged Russian interference, herein referred to as "Trump collusion."

Two, terminate the investigative phase of Mueller's authority no later than July 5, 2018, which is the 2-year anniversary of the date on which the FBI began investigating alleged Russian interference with the 2016 Presidential election.

We respectfully request that you consider the following reasoning for our request.

First, with respect to limiting the Mueller investigation scope, the letter states:

You recused yourself "from any existing or future investigations of any matters related in any way to the campaigns for President of the United States." This request does not conflict with your recusal because it asks that you direct Mueller to cease investigation of matters that go beyond allegations of Russian interference and Trump collusion. For emphasis, matters beyond alleged Russian interference and Trump collusion, if any, can and should be treated like any other matter investigated and prosecuted by Federal law enforcement officials and the Department of Justice.

While public opinion must not always dictate justice, it is important to emphasize that the expansion of Mueller's work scope goes way beyond the alleged Russian interference and Trump collusion that was the public basis for the appointment of a special counsel. As such, continuation of Mueller's work scope beyond alleged Russian interference and Trump collusion betrays the public trust on which America's justice system is founded.

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Second, with respect to termination of the Mueller investigation on the 2-year anniversary of when the FBI and Department of Justice began the Russian interference investigation, the letter states:

The investigation of alleged Russian interference began almost 2 years ago. Two years is more than enough time for a competent and thorough prosecutor, backed up by the resources of the FBI and Department of Justice, to do his job.

If no harm was being done by the tardiness of an investigation, that would be one thing. But in this instance, Mueller's tardiness is damaging America. The alleged Russian interference and Trump collusion investigations have taken on the character of an endless political persecution that not only harms America's trust in the justice system