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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. BYRNE).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 17, 2018.

I hereby appoint the Honorable BRADLEY BYRNE 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.

VITALITY AND THE IMPORTANCE OF INCENTIVIZING HEALTHY EATING

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, as we look toward ways to help our constituents live healthier lives and address the rising cost of healthcare, I would like to draw attention to successful partnerships that are working to address these challenges.

We know that diet-related diseases are driving up healthcare costs. Re-

search from the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University estimates that diabetes costs our healthcare system an astounding \$327 billion per year, and cardiovascular-related diseases cost more than \$317 billion a year.

Much of this cost, and the human suffering it represents, could be lessened or prevented through greater access to nutritious foods and better eating.

I am proud that stakeholders in my home State of Massachusetts, including nonprofits, advocacy organizations, hospitals, universities, and other private sector partners, are coming together to examine the impact of hunger and diet-related disease on our health system.

One shining example of a collaboration formed to tackle this terrible problem is Vitality. John Hancock, a leading life insurance company based in Boston, has partnered with the Friedman School at Tufts University on an innovative life insurance product that helps to encourage healthier behaviors.

John Hancock clients complete an online health review and engage in activities like preventative care, physical activity, smoking cessation, education, and improved nutrition to earn points that translate into discounts on insurance and other products. What is particularly impressive about the program is the discount it provides to participants who want to increase their purchases of fruits and vegetables. Those who sign up receive a 25 percent discount on healthy food at more than 14,000 grocery stores across the country.

The Vitality program is one example of the positive impact incentives can have on our collective public health when they motivate and reward individuals to take up healthy behaviors. We should learn from this innovative model and look at ways to expand upon

its reach to greater segments of the population.

Some Federal programs already allow for incentive-based programs. Within SNAP, our Nation's first line of defense against hunger, we know that incentives work. My home State of Massachusetts has been a leader in the effort to help ensure SNAP recipients have access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

In 2011, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts worked with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to pilot a first in the Nation initiative to provide incentives for the purchase of healthy foods. The pilot enabled participants to increase their consumption of fruits and vegetables by 26 percent and led to the creation of USDA's Food Insecurity and Nutrition Incentive, known as FINI.

FINI has provided States and localities across the country with Federal resources to expand incentive programs for SNAP beneficiaries. Massachusetts currently uses Federal FINI dollars in conjunction with private donations and State resources to increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables.

It is working. In our State, FINI has helped more than 63,000 SNAP recipients increase their fruit and vegetable intake in 1 year alone. Estimates suggest this increase can mean savings of more than \$1.1 million in public health costs. So imagine the impact these sorts of programs and incentives could have if they were replicated and expanded on a larger scale.

New research from Tufts' Friedman School shows that incorporating technology-based incentives for healthier eating into other Federal programs like Medicare and Medicaid would be highly cost-effective, saving millions of lives and billions of dollars in healthcare costs.

We should also look at how we can reach beyond Federal health and nutrition programs to encourage private worksite wellness programs.

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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