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AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: We give You thanks, O God, for giving us another day.

We ask Your blessing upon this people's House as we are in the beginning days of this new Congress. Encompass with Your power all the walls of this building, truly a symbol to the world of inalienable rights and the freedom of people.

Guide and protect Your elected servants in government and all who work in this place. May all who visit here be treated with respect and kindness.

May the comings and goings of Your people be under the seal of Your loving care, and all work accomplished here this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

EQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

(Ms. GABBARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GABBARD. Madam Speaker, it has been nearly 100 years since women fought for and won the right to vote. Yet, we still do not have equal rights and protection under the United States Constitution.

There are too many examples in our everyday lives where women still do not get equal pay for equal work and where we still face discrimination simply for being women.

In 1923, the Equal Rights Amendment was introduced in Congress to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex and was reintroduced every session until it finally passed in 1972.

However, with an arbitrary deadline in 1982, by that time, only 35 States out

of the required 38 had ratified the amendment. In the past 2 years, we have inched forward with successful votes in Nevada and Illinois, and now we are just one State away from finally passing the Equal Rights Amendment.

This is not about politics. It is about equality. It is about humanity. It is long overdue that we pass the Equal Rights Amendment and include equality between men and women in the United States Constitution.

JANUARY IS NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the incredible role mentors play in the lives of young people.

January is National Mentoring Month, which brings national attention to the need for mentors. Individuals, businesses, government agencies, schools, faith communities, and nonprofits can all engage their constituents to become mentors for the next generation of leaders.

When children have strong role models in their lives, they grow up to be good neighbors and good citizens. As a co-chairman of the Congressional Career and Technical Education Caucus, I know firsthand how essential mentors are for students seeking a career in technical education.

From agriculture to the arts, from marketing to manufacturing, CTE programs work to develop America's most valuable resources: its people. CTE has established itself as a path that many high-achieving students choose in pursuit of industry certification and hands-on skills that they can use right out of high school, in skills-based education programs or in our colleges.

Many CTE instructors are mentors who inspire students to reach their full potential and follow their dreams wherever they may lead.

Mr. Speaker, I thank every mentor in America for providing students the guidance and confidence that they need to find success.

WORK TOGETHER TO KEEP GOVERNMENT OPEN

(Ms. PELOSI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call attention to the fact that so many—800,000—Federal workers were out of work when the government was shut down, and now, happily, they will be back at work. Soon, all of them will be getting a paycheck.

This was very sad for their families, very sad for their communities where their financial viability is important, and very sad for our economy. Happily, the government is reopened, but not without paying a price.

I was very pleased that last week, on Thursday, so many Members came to the floor to tell the stories of the families affected by the shutdown, and then we had a Special Order and people sought comfort in the fact that we were recognizing the value that our public employees add to our economy and also concern for their well-being.

I want to tell one story that I thought was just so remarkable. Yesterday, I went to help with meals for the families who still have not gotten a paycheck. Even though government is open, it will be a couple of more days. While I was there, I met a woman who seemed young to me, but I guess she must have been middle-aged. They told me, after I was with her for a while, that, on Friday, she would be going to hospice, but it was a comfort to her to spend her last days before hospice feeding the hungry, having empathy for those who had that uncertainty in their lives.

What a blessing she is. Let us all have that empathy for those who are placed in that financial insecurity, and let us work to keep government open, to come to agreement so it can resolve all doubt in anyone's mind that that is not a reasonable path, to seek agreement holding hostage our public employees.

We thank them for what they do for our country. We sympathize with them. At this time, we are happy that government is open. Let's work together to keep it so.

THANKING ROBERT COLBY HALE FOR HIS SERVICE

(Mr. WILLIAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to recognize and thank a friend and confidant who has been by my side for the last 15 years.

I first met my chief of staff, Robert Colby Hale, when he was 22 years old. I was the commencement speaker at his graduation ceremony at Hardin-Simmons University, and he introduced me on stage.

In that moment, I never imagined so many years later our paths would take us to the Texas secretary of state's office in Austin and now to the U.S. House of Representatives.

I gave Colby his first job and watched him grow from a recent college graduate into the husband, father, and professional that he is today.

He has been my right-hand man since before I decided to run for Congress in 2012. He believed in me, and he encouraged me every single day.

There is no one's counsel that I have trusted more. Colby will be missed around our office, but he is leaving his legacy in the capable hands of those he trained and those he mentored.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 25th Congressional District of Texas and the United States Congress, I thank Mr. Colby Hale. I thank him for his years