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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. TED LIEU of California).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

March 5, 2019.

I hereby appoint the Honorable TED LIEU to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Mariel Ridgway, one of his secretaries.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2019, 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 1:50 p.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

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

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, in recent weeks, it has been sad to read that a judicial nominee, Brian Buescher from Nebraska, has been targeted for his membership in the

Knights of Columbus as a part of his Senate Judiciary Committee's review of qualifications.

The assertion that being a Catholic and being a member of the Knights of Columbus would prevent Mr. Buescher from properly and effectively serving our Nation is preposterous.

Religion should not be a factor when measuring someone's ability to serve their country.

I remind Senators that our Constitution, in Article VI, states that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States."

The Knights of Columbus was originally founded over 120 years ago. It is a society for working-class and immigrant Catholics and is still true to its founding principles of charity, unity, and fraternity.

As a Catholic, my faith plays a significant role in every aspect of life and fosters a respect for the religious rights and freedoms of others.

I was encouraged to see last month that the Senate unanimously passed a resolution confirming that membership in a religious organization does not make a person unfit for public office.

Fundamental American values, among which are commitments to religious freedom and human rights, will always be the cornerstones of U.S. domestic and foreign policy.

I will continue to advocate for the rights of individuals to express their feelings without living in fear of violence and persecution.

RECOGNIZING MATTHEW ZAJAC

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Matthew Zajac, a double amputee Army vet, for his remarkable service to our country and welcome him to his new home in Little Rock, Arkansas.

In 2007, during a deployment to Iraq, Matt and members of his unit encountered an IED, which exploded under their Humvee.

Matt lost both of his legs; shrapnel tore through his wrist; and severe burns covered the right side of his body. He received the Purple Heart for his injuries and was medically retired.

Mr. Speaker, 2013 marked the start of a downward spiral for Matt after losing his grandmother and his dad, a man who had stood by his side throughout the entire recovery process.

Matt came to Arkansas seeking more than just help. He needed a community. Today, central Arkansas community groups, veterans support organizations, and our VA hospital are helping Matt restart his life.

He is seeking proper treatment for his PTSD and acts as a spokesman for our Second Congressional District veterans group, We Are the 22, which offers assurance and hope for veterans who are considering suicide.

Matt's sacrifice for Arkansas and America will never be forgotten, and I join all Arkansans in offering Matt a heartfelt welcome to his new house in North Little Rock.

HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN VENEZUELA

Mr. HILL of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Venezuela and the ineffective, inhumane, and irresponsible actions of the Maduro government.

For years, Venezuela's United Socialist Party has pushed a once-prosperous nation towards desperate poverty and open tyranny.

Today in Venezuela, Maduro celebrates while his people eat garbage.

For too long, the authoritarian regime has acted without accountability. Water sanitation is nonexistent, and hospitals stand without power or medicine, the results, Mr. Speaker, of 20 years of irresponsible socialism under the Chavez and Maduro regimes—all this while 200 tons of U.S. food and medical assistance sit unused at the Venezuela-Colombia border, blocked by Maduro from entering the country.

I stand with the Organization of American States and over 50 countries

□ 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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